



Region Community Foundation Offers Scholarships for Students

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Arden Arcade News

VOL 03 • ISSUE 1

Bringing You Community News For Over 30 Years

JANUARY 9, 2026

SEE INSIDE

Small Actions, Big Impact Volunteer Opportunities in Your Community



For those interested in meeting new people while helping their community, volunteers are invited to support Arden Park Recreation and Park District with its youth programs, fitness classes and arts and leisure activities. Photos courtesy of Arden Park Recreation and Park District

By Idaly Valencia

SACRAMENTO, CA (MPG) - As the new year begins, many residents are looking for ways to give back to their community. Volunteering offers a simple way to make a difference close to home, with plenty of local opportunities available.

As Martin Luther King Jr. Day approaches on Jan. 19, community members are invited to take part in the national day of service. From supporting schools to helping at the animal shelter, Arden-Arcade residents have many ways to make a difference.

Give Back with Parks and Recreation

Arden Park Recreation and Park District welcomes volunteers who want to connect with their neighbors while supporting its youth programs,



Arden Park Recreation and Park District welcomes volunteers to help with several classes, both weekly and monthly, that feature activities available to the community such as line dance, paint and sip, book and craft club.

adult fitness classes and arts and leisure activities.

Parks and Recreation hosts several classes, both weekly and monthly,

that feature activities available to the community such as line dance, paint and sip, and book and craft clubs.

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New Laws Aim to Improve Road Safety Across State



A new law requires electric bicycles to have a red reflector or a solid or flashing red rear light with a built-in reflector during all hours of operation. Photo by u_d7hddm5o via Pixabay

By MPG Staff

SACRAMENTO REGION, CA (MPG) - New public safety laws approved during the 2025 legislative session will take effect Jan. 1, the California Highway Patrol announced in a Dec. 26 news release. The changes address school zone and highway speed limits, electric-powered bicycles and motorcycles, vehicle storage and crime prevention.

According to the California Highway Patrol, the update aims to inform drivers, promote safer decision-making and improve roadway safety as transportation technologies continue to evolve.

Several of the new laws focus on pedestrian and traffic safety, particularly speed limits.

Assembly Bill 382 allows local authorities to lower school zone speed limits from 25 to 20 miles per hour through Jan. 1, 2031. After that date, 20 miles per hour will become the standard in school zones where signs are posted.

Another traffic safety measure, Assembly Bill 1014, authorizes the Department of Transportation to reduce highway speed limits by five miles per hour and requires warning citations during the first 30 days after a reduction.

Assembly Bill 390 expands California's "slow down and move over" law to include highway maintenance vehicles and any stationary vehicle using flashing hazard lights, cones or flares. Drivers must change lanes when possible or slow to a safe speed when approaching such vehicles.

Several new laws address electric bicycles and electric motorcycles. Assembly Bill 544 requires

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STATE OF DOWNTOWN COMING FEB. 24



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STOP TRADING AWAY TALENT



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Dine Downtown Returning for 21st Year

Downtown Sacramento Partnership News Release

SACRAMENTO, CA (MPG) - Downtown Sacramento Partnership is welcoming the new year with the 21st annual Dine Downtown, announcing 30 exceptional participating restaurants and unveiling many of the specially curated menus created for this year's event. Once again, guests can enjoy three-course dinners for just \$45 from Jan. 9 to Jan. 18, offering an accessible way to experience some of downtown's most elevated dining at an exceptional value.

This year's program also continues Downtown Sacramento Partnership's long-standing commitment to giving back.

Opening Doors has been selected as the official non-profit partner, receiving one dollar from every Dine Downtown

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Pictured is a meal from Kodaiko Ramen & Bar, located at 718 K St., that will be participating in the 21st year of Dine Downtown where guests can enjoy three-course dinners for just \$45 from Jan. 9 to Jan. 18. Photo courtesy of Downtown Sacramento Partnership

Region Community Foundation Offers Scholarships for Students

Sacramento Region Community Foundation News Release

SACRAMENTO, CA (MPG) - The Sacramento Region Community Foundation invites interested students from throughout the region to consider applying for one or more of the 40 plus open scholarships available through the organization.

Ranging from \$1,000 to \$10,000, many of the open scholarships are based on financial need while some are focused on academic status or earmarked for a specific cause or area of study.

Criteria are diverse and determined based on the specific wishes of local individuals who donated to establish the scholarships.

Opportunities exist to support former foster youth, English language

learners, students living with chronic illness, those interested in veterinary medicine or sustainable agriculture and more. The deadline to apply for the majority of the open scholarships is March 13.

As one example, Abigail Canafe was a student at UC Berkeley in 2021 and received the Benny Goodman Foundation Scholarship, which supports students studying jazz or classical music.

The impact of this funding affected her so profoundly that she now volunteers as a scholarship evaluator with the Foundation.

Canafe said, "As a past scholarship recipient, I want to give back to the Sacramento Region Community Foundation and continue helping future students fund their education."

"Investing in young people, or lifelong learners, is one of the most powerful ways we can strengthen our region's future," said Sacramento Region Community Foundation Chief Executive Officer Kerry Wood.

"Scholarships reduce financial barriers and, just as importantly, they tell students that their community believes in them. We strongly encourage students from throughout the region who are interested in furthering their educational goals to review and apply for the variety of open scholarships that the Foundation is proud to offer," Wood said.

In 2024, more than \$1 million in scholarships were awarded by the foundation, which supported 400 students as they worked to achieve their educational goals.



Pictured is Benny Goodman Recipient Abigail Canafe, right, at her graduation in 2024. Photo courtesy of Abigail Canafe

For descriptions and eligibility requirements, students interested in exploring and/or applying for open scholarships, or community members considering making a tax-friendly gift of any amount to support future scholarship awards, should visit sacregcf.org/students.

Information about

the Sacramento Region Community Foundation and charitable giving can be found at sacregcf.org.

Since 1983, the Sacramento Region Community Foundation has awarded more than \$275 million in grants and scholarships on behalf of local people, families and

businesses; and through its flagship program to grow charitable giving in the capital area, Big Day of Giving.

The center of philanthropy in the capital area, the foundation's mission is to lead, serve and inspire enduring philanthropy for a just and vibrant Sacramento region. ★

New Laws Aim to Improve Road Safety Across State

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electric bicycles to have a red reflector or a solid or flashing red rear light with a built-in reflector during all hours of operation.

The bill also allows the California Highway Patrol's online electric bicycle safety and training program to satisfy safety course requirements for minors cited for helmet violations.

Senate Bill 586 defines an off-highway electric motorcycle, known as an eMoto, as a vehicle designed primarily for off-highway use that is powered by an electric motor, has handlebars, a straddle seat and two wheels and does not have pedals.

The bill classifies eMotos as

off-highway motor vehicles, subjecting them to existing regulations including helmet requirements and DMV-issued identification plates.

Vehicle storage and removal provisions are addressed in Assembly Bill 875. The law allows officers to impound a vehicle for at least 48 hours if it has fewer than four wheels, does not meet the definition of an electric bicycle, can exceed 20 miles per hour and is operated by an unlicensed driver. It also applies to class 3 electric bicycles operated by riders under 16. A safety course may be required before release when a child is involved.

Assembly Bill 289 establishes the State Highway Work Zone Speed Safety Program, authorizing a pilot program

that uses radar or laser systems to detect speeding in work zones. The system will photograph license plates and issue citations to registered owners, with procedures for review and appeal.

The California Highway Patrol also highlighted laws approved during the 2024 legislative session that take effect this year.

Beginning Jan. 1, Senate Bill 1271 strengthens safety standards for electric bicycles, powered mobility devices and lithium-ion batteries. The law requires testing by accredited laboratories, compliance labeling and prohibits the sale or lease of noncompliant devices. Starting Jan. 1, 2028, renting noncompliant devices will also be prohibited.

Self-driving cars, autonomous vehicles (Avs), oversight expands under Assembly Bill 1777.

Once Department of Motor Vehicles regulations are adopted, officers may issue notices of autonomous vehicle non-compliance to manufacturers for traffic violations. Beginning July 1, self-driving cars operating without a human driver must also include two-way communication devices for first responders.

Crime prevention measures include Assembly Bill 486, which makes it a misdemeanor to possess key programming devices, key duplicating devices or signal extenders with intent to commit burglary. Penalties include up to six months in county jail, a \$1,000 fine or both. ★

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WEEKLY MEAT SPECIALS

- Beef Cross/Rib Shoulder Roast-Bnls: **\$4.99/lb**
- Beef New York Roast Boneless: **\$5.99/lb**
- Chicken Drumsticks: **79¢/lb**
- Pork Spare Ribs: **\$3.49/lb**
- Pork Loin Chops Bone-In: **\$2.29/lb**
- Pork Cushion Meat Boneless: **\$2.99/lb**

WEEKLY HALAL SPECIALS

- Chicken Drumsticks: **89¢/lb**
- New Zealand Lamb Stew Meat Bone-In: **\$5.99/lb**
- Beef Cross/Rib Shoulder Roast-Bnls: **\$5.49/lb**

FRESH PRODUCE

- Mini Sweet Pepper 1 lb: **\$2.49/bag**
- Avocado 2 lb Bag: **\$2.99/bag**
- Lemon 2 lb Bag: **\$1.99/bag**
- Wild Wonders Tomato 10.5 oz: **\$3.49/ea**
- Fuji Apple: **69¢/lb**
- Spinach 2.5 lb: **\$5.99/bag**
- Kabocha: **79¢/lb**
- Russet Potato 10 lb Bag: **\$1.99/bag**

AMERICAN/HISPANIC GROCERY

- Pedialyte Sport Electrolyte Solutions 33.8 f.oz: **\$6.49/ea**
- Bigelow Harvest Tea 4 Kinds 1.23-1.56 oz: **\$2.99/ea**
- El Mexicano White Hominy 3.01 kg: **\$4.99/ea**
- 1,2,3 Vegetable Oil 33.8 f.oz: **\$3.99/ea**
- Clamato Tomato Cocktails 64 f.oz: **\$5.99/ea**

ASIAN GROCERY

- Three Ladies Rice Vermicelli 2 lb: **\$5.29/ea**
- Pho Story Instant Pho Soup 67g: **\$1.49/ea**
- SPAM: **\$4.99/ea**
- Spam w/ Tocino Seasoning 12 oz: **\$0.99/ea**
- Daily Farmer Condensed Creamer 13.4 oz: **\$0.99/ea**
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- Sadaf Grapeseed Oil 2 liters: **\$14.99/ea**
- Tamek Nectar Juice 4 Flavors 1 liter: **\$1.99/ea**
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Small Actions, Big Impact



Volunteers support nearly every aspect of Bradshaw Animal Shelter operations, from walking and socializing animals to feeding, cleaning, customer service, mobile adoption events and fundraisers.



A 15-minute drive from Arden-Arcade, the county animal shelter at 3839 Bradshaw Road relies on volunteers to help care for more than 14,000 animals each year, including strays, owner surrenders and cases of neglect or cruelty. Photos courtesy of Bradshaw Animal Shelter

Continued from page 1

Organizations or individuals wishing to volunteer their time, energy or materials for district programs or special projects may contact 916-483-6069. More information is available at apprpd.org.

Get Involved with the School District

San Juan Unified School District encourages parents, guardians and other community members to share their knowledge and

skills with students by volunteering.

Volunteers can serve as classroom assistants, art docents, reading tutors and more. The district also welcomes self-help projects that enhance schools, including painting, gardening and other beautification efforts.

To ensure a safe and positive experience for students and staff, all volunteers must complete a one-time verification process before participating in

school activities.

Contact the district's volunteer help desk by calling 916-971-7935 or email volunteer@sanjuan.edu to learn more or sign up for volunteer opportunities. For more information, visit sanjuan.edu/connect/volunteer.

Become a Homeless Outreach Volunteer

Volunteers are needed for the 2026 Point-in-Time Count, a community effort to identify people

experiencing homelessness in Sacramento. The data collected helps officials understand the causes of homelessness, track progress in reducing it, improve programs, and secure federal funding for local shelters and services.

The count takes place from 5 to 11 p.m. on Jan. 26 and 27. Registration is required by Jan. 15. Volunteers will receive training and materials in advance.

On the nights of the count, participants will meet at a central location before heading out on assigned routes to record the number of people living outdoors or in vehicles. Volunteers may also conduct brief surveys to learn how long individuals have been homeless and what

services could help.

The PIT Count includes both unsheltered individuals and those staying in respite centers or shelters. Volunteers must be at least 18, able to travel by foot and car to assigned locations, and bring a personal smartphone and flashlight. Those ready to help address homelessness can register at bit.ly/4qRIRK3 (case sensitive).

Explore further community service options available throughout the Sacramento area at the Regional Center for Volunteerism, HandsOn Sacramento, at handson-sacto.org.

Volunteer at the County Animal Shelter

Just a 15-minute drive

from Arden-Arcade, the county animal shelter at 3839 Bradshaw Road relies on volunteers to help care for more than 14,000 animals each year, including strays, owner surrenders and cases of neglect or cruelty.

Volunteers support nearly every aspect of Bradshaw Animal Shelter operations, from walking and socializing animals to feeding, cleaning, customer service, mobile adoption events and fundraisers. Opportunities also exist for those who prefer helping from home.

For more information, contact Volunteer Coordinator Celeste Ingrid at 916-875-5848. Look into all the different ways to get involved at bit.ly/4s-rNURI (case sensitive). ★



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State of Downtown Coming Feb. 24

Event to Outline Priorities and Initiatives Shaping 'Downtown's Next Decade'

Downtown Sacramento Partnership News Release

SACRAMENTO, CA (MPG) - Downtown Sacramento Partnership will host its annual State of Downtown event from 8 to 10 a.m. Tuesday, Feb. 24 at the SAFE Credit Union Convention Center. Presented by the Sacramento Kings, the signature program brings together public officials, business leaders and community partners to discuss the current state and

future direction of downtown Sacramento.

This year's program takes on added significance following the Downtown Sacramento Partnership's recent renewal for another 10 years. The partnership will use the 2026 State of Downtown to introduce and frame the priorities, strategies and initiatives that will guide the next decade of investment in Sacramento's urban core.

Reflecting this moment, the theme for the event, "Downtown's Next Decade,"

sets the stage to share a vision for the next 10 years, outlining how the partnership is taking the reins on building the foundation of a clean and safe central city while, alongside its partners, curating a vibrant 24-hour destination where innovation, culture and commerce converge.

Additional event details will be released in January, but those interested in attending are encouraged to buy their tickets now as capacity is limited. To purchase tickets for State of Downtown 2026,

please visit events.humanitix.com/state-of-downtown-2026.

The 2026 State of Downtown program is presented by the Sacramento Kings and sponsored by the Athletics, Tsakopoulos Investments, Five Star Bank, Kaiser Permanente, SMUD and more.

For more information about downtown Sacramento, visit downtownsac.org; for details about the State of Downtown, go to downtownsac.org/downtown-sac-experiences/state-of-downtown. ★

Dine Downtown Returning for 21st Year

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meal sold. Opening Doors empowers more than 4,500 immigrants, refugees and trafficking survivors each year across Sacramento by providing workforce development, entrepreneurship training, financial empowerment, immigration legal services and social-support programs that foster stability, self-sufficiency and belonging.

Launched in 2005, Dine Downtown was created to support local restaurants during a typically slower season.

Over the past two decades, the program has generated over \$7 million in sales for central city eateries, helping solidify Sacramento's reputation as a vibrant culinary destination and making high-quality dining experiences more accessible to



During the 21st annual Dine Downtown, Dawson's Steakhouse at the Hyatt Regency Sacramento (1209 L St.) will serve affordable three-course dinners in early January, with proceeds going to a local nonprofit. Photos courtesy of Downtown Sacramento Partnership



Tequila Museo Mayahuel, located at 1200 K St., is also participating in the 21st annual Dine Downtown from Jan. 9 to Jan. 18, joining 30 other restaurants offering specially curated menus for this year's event.

residents and visitors alike.

Participating restaurants include Butcher and Barrel, Frank Fat's, Grange, Willow, Dawson's Steakhouse, The 7th Street Standard, Kodaiko Ramen & Bar, Field-N-Flame Midtown, Pilothouse

Restaurant aboard the Delta King, Brasserie du Monde, Tequila Museo Mayahuel, La Cosecha, Octopus Peru, The Firehouse Restaurant, Bear & Crown British Pub, Ella Restaurant & Bar, Alchemist Events at

Empress Tavern, Frog & Slim, Revolution Kitchen & Winery, Tapa the World, The Lock & Key Tapas + Bar, Maydoon, Hook & Ladder Manufacturing Co., The Melting Pot, Aioli Bodega Espanola, Octopus Baja, Historic Star Lounge,

Magpie Café, Hawks Public House and The Porch Restaurant & Bar.

Dine Downtown menus are available online at downtownsac.org/downtown-sac-experiences/dine-downtown/ and reservations can be made with the restaurants directly.

For more information about Opening Doors, visit openingdoorsinc.org/.

Dine Downtown is produced by the Downtown Sacramento Partnership with support from Kaiser Permanente, FOX40, Sacramento365, Yelp Sacramento and others. ★



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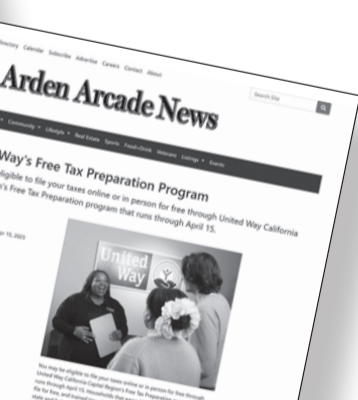
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Kings Korner

By V.G. Harris



On Dec. 27 the Sacramento Kings treated the hometown fans to a post-Christmas treat with a stirring 113-107 victory over the visiting Dallas Mavericks. It was a reminder that although Dallas is a notable team with playoff intentions, the Kings have the talent to match up nightly with any team in the NBA. They have demonstrated this repeatedly, but the conundrum has been a complete lack of consistency as it relates to game over game results.

Why, you ask? The singular question that begs for an answer.

Injuries have played a role to be certain, but every NBA club must contend with injuries.

If I had to answer this question as honestly as I could, I would turn to the one player on this year's squad that has the greatest impact and that is none other than Domantas Sabonis. Over the past 3 ½ seasons Domantas hasn't just led the NBA in rebounding and double-doubles, he's been the singular stabilizing influence on a team that needs a leader like none-other. Sabonis' nightly consistent reinforcement of the fundamentals in playing the paint the old-fashioned way, gives every player on the floor a boost of confidence.

Domantas has a motor that just won't quit, and his enthusiasm for the game of basketball is simply contagious. Players want to play with this guy, and former King Jonas Valanciunas was vocal in his admiration for Sabonis and his desire to play alongside the Kings big man.

Unfortunately, the Kings did not value the talent that Valanciunas brought to the floor and allowed him to walk out the back door. Denver did not hesitate to provide their multiple MVP center Nikola Jokic with a resplendent backup, and Valanciunas has thrived this season in his new role.

The number one problem the Kings have had to face this season is not having Domantas on the floor, and their record shows it. 8 wins in 35 contests matches the worst start for an NBA season in the Sacramento Kings franchise history, and this is not a record you want to be a part of. Getting Sabonis back on the floor will be the first step in establishing what this year's team really is, but the Kings face a real dilemma.

GM Scott Perry is making noises that this year's team is about to receive a complete face lift, and Domantas Sabonis name has been mentioned or at least rumored in possible trade rumors. That would be mistake of herculean proportions.

Breaking news, the grass is not always greener on the other side.

Do you not remember what the organization did just one year ago when it inexplicably sent face of the franchise DeAaron Fox to the San Antonio Spurs?

DO NOT trade Domantas Sabonis. Draw a line in the sand, NOW, and build around a player that gets fans on their feet every game!

Stop trading away talent that makes other NBA teams stronger such as Davion Mitchell, DeAaron Fox, Issac Jones, and Boston Celtic starting center Neemias Queta. Yes, Neemias Queta, that the Kings had the good sense to draft 39th overall in the 2021 NBA draft and then send him to the G league where he thrived.

Fans saw something in this raw rookie and gave him more votes than any other King when it came to All-star voting that season.

The front office saw things differently and waived Queta in August 2023, and he was immediately scooped up by the Boston Celtics. Signed to a 2-way contract, Queta went on to help Boston win and NBA championship that same season and has since worked his way up to become this year's starting center. In the recent 120-106 loss to the Celtics, Queta provided the Kings with an up front and personal look at why their decision to let him go should have been reconsidered. Queta held down the paint efficiently all night, while posting 13 points, 5 rebounds, and 3 big blocks.

Simply stated, the Sacramento Kings must stop giving away valuable NBA talent and find someone in the organization that can effectively grade players and determine who is and who is not a viable NBA player.

Stay tuned Kings fans because Domantas will hopefully return soon, and then we can see what this team can do with a true NBA center on the floor.

Happy New Year Kings fans and by all means do not give up hope! ★

New Year May Entertain Political Junkies, but Sluggish Economy Deserves the Spotlight



By Dan Walters,
CALMatters.org

As the new year begins, there's no shortage of political trends to keep Californians preoccupied, entertained or perhaps appalled — particularly the state's transcontinental feud with President Donald Trump.

There is Gov. Gavin Newsom's all-but-announced campaign for president, centered on his self-appointed role of resistor-in-chief to Trump. As Newsom continues to troll Trump this year we may learn whether it continues to advance Newsom as a White House frontrunner or becomes tiresome and off-putting.

As 2025 ended Axios, a news website, reported that Newsom's potential rivals are ratcheting up efforts to undermine his bid, arguing that, as a California progressive, he's unelectable.

Another point of political fixation is Newsom's successful effort to gerrymander California's 52 congressional seats to help Democrats recapture control of the House in 2026. Whether it works is a question hanging over his presidential ambitions.

Still another is the campaign to choose a successor to Newsom. It so far has attracted a large contingent of Democrats without, as yet, a clear leader. There's a theoretical possibility that with as many as a dozen Democrats in the field, the

two Republicans could finish first and second in the June 2 primary and face each other for the governorship in November, despite the GOP's very weak standing among voters.

This year's election cycle also promises to be another showdown of moneyed interests via dueling ballot measures, with those either increasing or decreasing taxes at the top of the heap.

While political junkies can feed their habits this year, the more profound issue that faces California will be its moribund economy.

Newsom often brags that California's \$4 trillion economy, were it a nation, would rank fourth in the world. However, it has seen zero net job growth since the COVID-19 pandemic ended and recently has experienced employment shrinkage.

More than a million Californians in the labor force are jobless and the state's unemployment rate, currently 5.6%, has been the highest or near the highest of any state for several years.

Employment doldrums have affected even the state's hallmark sectors, most obviously Southern California's withering film and TV production industry and the Bay Area's high technology concentration.

The latter has almost single-handedly propped up the state's economy and generated a huge portion of tax revenues, but layoffs have proliferated as artificial intelligence is increasingly employed — a syndrome that also affects Hollywood.

Stubborn, or even increasing, unemployment makes it more difficult for state and local governments to cover their budget deficits — thus underpinning the

thrust for tax increases on state and local ballots. The sluggish economy also hampers efforts to improve two of the state's most pressing socioeconomic issues, its highest-in-the-nation poverty and homelessness levels.

Even Californians who have homes and jobs are feeling the economic pinch. Combining economic data with polling results, the Public Policy Institute of California recently discovered rising economic angst among California residents.

"California is one of the largest economies in the world, but many working Californians do not feel economically secure (and) they struggle to pay their bills, save for the future, and balance the demands of work and daily life," PPIC reported, adding that polling data "indicate that pessimism about future economic opportunity has become even more pervasive amid recent economic volatility."

As he shifts into presidential campaign mode, Newsom has every reason to keep bragging about the state's economy. But those running to replace him and state legislators should make 2026 the year to recognize that California has serious problems, to bore into the underlying causes and to do what they can to once again make California thrive.

History tells us that taking prosperity for granted — think Detroit — is an invitation to economic ruin.

Dan Walters is one of the most decorated and widely syndicated columnists in California history, authoring a column four times a week that offers his view and analysis of the state's political, economic, social and demographic trends. ★

Social Security Matters My Wife Believes She Can Get a Spouse Benefit While I'm Still Alive; Can She?



By Russell Gloor,
AMAC Certified Social
Security Advisor

Dear Rusty: A friend of my wife told her, and she believes, she could receive a Social Security benefit based on my SS benefit that I'm currently receiving while I'm still alive. I told her she could only receive spouse survivor benefits. Is there any truth to what she now believes? Would you settle this issue for us please? Thank you.
Signed: Uncertain Husband

Dear Uncertain Husband: Well, surely don't want to get in the middle of your marital discussion, but I'll be happy to explain Social Security's rules about your wife's eligibility for spousal benefits while you are both still living. And just for awareness for both of you, the rules about spousal benefits are one of the most confusing areas of Social Security.

Per Social Security's rules, a spouse (e.g., your wife) can receive a "spousal boost" from you — while you are still living — if the SS retirement

benefit she is personally entitled to at her full retirement age (FRA) is less than 50% of the SS retirement benefit you are (were) entitled to at your FRA (full retirement age amounts are used to calculate living spouse benefits, regardless of when each of you actually claimed your Social Security).

So, if your FRA entitlement benefit amount is more than twice your wife's FRA entitlement benefit amount, she can, indeed, get a "spousal boost" from your record while you are both still living. The spousal boost is added to her own SS retirement amount and will be based on the difference between her FRA entitlement and half of your FRA entitlement. Thus, in this discussion, your wife may be correct — she may be able to get a spousal boost from you while both of you are living, depending on how your personal FRA retirement amounts compare. The best way for your wife to find out is to contact Social Security on 1.800.772.1213 to inquire, and if she's eligible, also make an appointment to apply for her spousal benefit.

And to clarify your wife's options as your possible widow, a surviving spouse can also get a survivor benefit if their marital partner passes away, but only if the deceased spouse's current benefit (at death) was more than the surviving spouse is already

receiving. The surviving spouse receives the higher amount, instead of their own smaller Social Security retirement benefit.

But here is an important thing to know: Whenever any Social Security benefit (including a spousal or surviving spouse benefit) is claimed before the recipient's full retirement age, the payment amount is permanently reduced (both spousal and survivor benefits do not reach maximum until the recipient's full retirement age). And just to complete the picture for survivor benefits, a surviving spouse is also entitled to a one-time, lump-sum death benefit of \$255 if their marital partner dies, in addition to any other benefit they are entitled to.

This article is intended for information purposes only and does not represent legal or financial guidance. It presents the opinions and interpretations of the AMAC Foundation's staff, founded and accredited by the National Social Security Association (NSSA). NSSA and the AMAC Foundation and its staff are not affiliated with or endorsed by the Social Security Administration or any other governmental entity. To submit a question, visit our website (amacfoundation.org/programs/social-security-advisory) or email us at ssadvisor@amacfoundation.org. ★



For elements of the anti-Israel right, it's a time when everything old is becoming new again. So, a half-century-old theory that the Jewish state deliberately attacked the USS Liberty during the Six-Day War has renewed currency.

Conspiratorial-minded influencers hostile to Israel, like Tucker Carlson and Candace Owens, have promoted the notion, and it was a topic of discussion at the recent TPUSA conference. One speaker said that the official explanation "doesn't feel like it's good enough," and floated his own wild speculation (involving the complicity of LBJ).

The fact is that the devastating Israeli attack on the Liberty, killing 34 and wounding 171, was a woeful case of mistaken identification. The series of faulty judgments that led to the incident is so grievous that, taken altogether, it is, indeed, nearly incomprehensible. Yet, when operating with incomplete information in a shooting war, such accidents happen all the time. The Israelis apologized immediately upon realizing their ghastly mistake and offered restitution.

On June 8, 1967, the 6th Fleet was keeping its distance from the hostilities in the Six-Day War, fought between Israel and Egypt, Syria and Jordan. The USS Liberty, a spy ship, had come within 13 nautical miles of the Sinai coast, though. It requested a de-

No, the USS Liberty Incident Wasn't Israeli Treachery

stroyer escort, which was denied, and orders to the Liberty to withdraw about 100 miles from the front were delayed in a communications tangle.

That morning, an ammunition dump ignited in the coastal city of El-Arish in the Sinai, and the Israelis (wrongly) believed the location had been shelled by Egyptian ships. The Israeli navy spotted the Liberty heading toward Egypt and (wrongly) concluded it had been one of the attackers. Two Israel Mirage jets saw no identifying markings on the Liberty (a later U.S. inquiry speculated that the flag might not have been visible for lack of wind) and strafed the ship. More Israeli jets napalmed the Liberty.

The absence of return fire puzzled the Israelis, who paused to ensure they weren't hitting an Israeli vessel. Assured it wasn't one of their own, they renewed the assault.

Still uneasy, they looked for identifying markers again. They saw no flag, but made out Latin, not Arabic, letters on the hull. That strongly suggested the vessel wasn't Egyptian.

Yet, a squadron of Israeli torpedo boats determined that the Liberty's silhouette matched an Egyptian supply ship. A request for identification from the Liberty received no affirmative reply.

The Liberty's captain ordered his men not to shoot at the torpedo boats, but one gunner briefly fired and there were further discharges from exploding ammunition. Believing

they were taking incoming from an Egyptian ship, the torpedo boats requested permission to fire and got reluctant assent. A torpedo slammed into the Liberty, blowing a hole 24 feet tall by 39 feet wide and killing more than two dozen sailors.

Eventually, an Israeli torpedo boat picked up a raft from the Liberty with U.S. naval markings and the Israelis realized their tragic error. They apologized instantly to U.S. naval attaché Ernest Carl Castle, and an Israeli helicopter attempted to take him out to the Liberty (the effort was foiled by darkness). The Israeli torpedo boats offered assistance to the Liberty, which was rebuffed.

As Michael Oren points out in his history of the Six-Day War, none of the common conspiracy theories makes sense. There was no way that Israel — desperate for U.S. support and wary of Soviet enmity — was going to make an act of war against a friendly superpower. Nor did Israel need, as is sometimes posited, to hide its gains in the Sinai from the U.S., or its plans to hit Syria. It hadn't executed Egyptian POWs, so that didn't justify a murderous cover-up, either.

Both official Israeli and U.S. investigations determined that the attack was a friendly fire incident, but for Israel and the Jews in the current environment, the truth is no defense.

Rich Lowry is editor of the National Review.
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ABOUT TOWN

Area Museum Experiences

A sampling of must-see and must-do experiences and special activations offered by local museums include the following:

Aerospace Museum of California – “Snoopy and the Red Baron,” extended to Feb. 15. On loan from the Charles M. Schulz Museum, this national traveling exhibit brings the full story of the World War I Flying Ace to life. Featuring original comic strips, vintage toys and rare memorabilia, it’s a fun, family-friendly

look at one of Peanuts’ most iconic storylines.

The exhibit will delight fans who grew up with Snoopy the Flying Ace and introduce new audiences to Snoopy’s adventures in the sky. Details at aerospaceca.org.

California Automobile Museum – Sunday Drives. The third Sunday of every month, enjoy a free ride (with paid museum admission) in one of the museum’s many beautiful cars from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. There’s no better way

to enjoy history than to experience it firsthand down the streets of downtown Sacramento. Details at calautomuseum.org.

California Museum – “Kokoro: The Story of Sacramento’s Lost Japantown,” through March 29.

Featuring rare family photographs drawn from the personal collections of community members, the exhibit documents the memories at the heart of a once-thriving downtown community devastated first by forced removal during World War II and again by redevelopment in the 1950s. Details at californiamuseum.org.

California State Railroad Museum – The Chinese Railroad Workers’ Experience offers visitors a view of the Chinese workers who built the western portion of the nation’s first Transcontinental Railroad. Marginalized by history, the Chinese workers were more than a nameless group of laborers. Details at californiarailroad.museum.

Sacramento History Museum – RCAF in Mictlán: 50th Anniversary of Dia de los Muertos, through April 5. The exhibit will be highlighted by public programs that document and celebrate the 50-year history of the Dia de los Muertos (DDL) observance in Sacramento.

The exhibit will demonstrate why the anniversary is a major milestone in our city’s cultural history, as well an example of the enduring impact of the Royal Chicano Air Force (RCAF), a seminal collective of artists and activists.

It will also offer the museum’s audience an exhibition and related programming that introduces or expands their knowledge of the RCAF’s contributions to Sacramento’s history. Details at sachistorymuseum.org.

SMUD Museum of Science and Curiosity – Laser Concert Series is an immersive music experience, paired with spectacular full-dome lasers. Bad Bunny laser show, Feb. 6, 2026. Details at visitmosac.org.

Elks Lodge 6 Calendar of Events

- Elks Lodge 6 Sunday Breakfast, 8:30 am-11 am; \$15 tax included.
- Yoga, Monday 12 p.m., Wednesday 3:30 p.m. Lodge members free.
- Karaoke Nights, Thursdays and Saturdays, 7 p.m.
- Martial Arts, Monday 5 p.m.
- Pickleball, Monday, Wednesday, 9 a.m.-12 p.m.; Thursday, 4:30-7:30 p.m.; Sunday, 4-7 p.m.
- Wednesday Night Dinner, 5:30 to 7 p.m. See elks6.net for weekly menu. ★

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Free Car Seat Program Protects Children

Sacramento County News Release

SACRAMENTO COUNTY, CA (MPG) - The California Office of Traffic Safety (OTS), has awarded Sacramento County Public Health a \$137,039 grant to continue and expand the reach of the car seat safety program in partnership with Dignity Health, Mercy San Juan Medical Center. The grant program runs through Sept. 30, 2026. This is the fifth consecutive year Sacramento County Public Health has received grant funding for its car seat safety program.

“Car seat safety saves lives but only when families have the knowledge and resources to use them correctly,” said Dr. Kasiry, Sacramento County public health officer. “With funding from the Office of Traffic Safety and our partnership with Dignity Health, Mercy San Juan Medical Center, we’re doing our part to make sure every child can travel safely.”

Car crashes are one of the leading causes of deaths and injuries for children and many of these injuries are easily prevented using child safety seats and seat belts. Using a properly fitted child safety seat can reduce the risk of car crash deaths by 71 percent for infants and 54 percent for toddlers ages 1-4, according to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA).

The goal of the car seat program is to give every child in Sacramento County access to the safest possible travel environment. The program provides child safety seat inspection and education classes; child passenger safety technician and recertification courses; no-cost child safety seats for families in need and community outreach efforts in underserved communities

In 2025, the car seat safety program distributed more than 400 car seats to families in need. Over 1,300 parents, grandparents and caregivers learned about correct car seat use and installation through online workshops, in-person classes, community health fairs and school resource fairs, among other events.

“The value and importance of car seats cannot be overstated, as they are directly tied to the safety



“Car seat safety saves lives but only when families have the knowledge and resources to use them correctly,” said Dr. Kasiry, Sacramento County public health officer. Photo courtesy Freepik

and lives of children. Many of our clients come from countries such as Afghanistan and various Arab nations, where car seats are not commonly used, and where their importance is not fully recognized,” said Zalmi Ahadi, a caseworker at Al-Misbaah – a faith-based nonprofit that partners with Dignity Health to distribute car seats and educate parents.

“The collaboration and educational programs offered by Mercy San Juan Car Seat Program have a vital and life-saving impact for immigrant families.”

The program hosts workshops specifically targeting underserved and refugee communities, offering resources in multiple languages to make certain families, regardless of background or ability to afford a car seat, are equipped to protect their children on the roads.

According to Loran Abassi, program manager with the Refugee Enrichment & Development Association (REDA), one client arrived in

Sacramento in April 2025 with his five-month-old twins and was struggling to navigate life in a new country while learning how to be a first-time father. Unfamiliar with U.S. car seat laws and without the financial means to purchase car seats, he faced a critical safety gap for his children.

The Dignity Health Mercy San Juan Car Seat Program provided him with hands-on education about car seat safety and two car seats for his twins. He walked away with knowledge and tools to transport his children safely as he began a new chapter for his family in Sacramento County.

The program’s success hinges on community involvement. Certified Child Passenger Safety Technicians (CPSTs) are an integral part of the program and offer hands-on assistance at car seat inspection events. They’ve helped install over 600 car seats properly for families to make sure their children are safe.

“It has been a great privilege to do my part in ensuring that underserved and low-income

families in our community have access to appropriate child safety seats, regardless of their socioeconomic status,” said Allison Boltz, a community injury prevention educator at Mercy San Juan Medical Center. “Caregivers often share their gratitude and the sense of relief that comes with knowing that they are really doing their best to keep their children safe in their car.”

Iris Austin, the First Lady at Higher Heights Community Church, shared the story of a mother who attended one of the workshops with her mother-in-law, who recalled that her own son had been in a serious car crash as a child and still carries the scar today. During the training, the grandmother became emotional, reliving the fear and trauma of that experience.

A technician with the Dignity Health, Mercy San Juan Car Seat Program took time to walk with her to her vehicle and check the car seat installation, which was found to be incorrect. When it was gently corrected, the grandmother expressed

overwhelming gratitude, saying she never wanted her grandson to go through what her son had endured.

The Child Passenger Safety Program is designed to meet families where they are, whether that’s a workshop at their church or local health center, so they can receive a free car seat or learn about the importance of safe travel for their children.

Interested participants are encouraged to make a car seat safety check appointment at Methodist Hospital or Mercy San Juan Medical Center, and can call the Car Seat Hotline at (916) 864-5779 with any questions.

For more information about the program, visit Sacramento County Childhood Illness and Injury Prevention or contact Riley Stoltenburg at (916) 875-6094 or StoltenburgR@sac-county.gov.

Funding for this program was provided by a grant from the California Office of Traffic Safety, through the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA). ★

First Flu-Related Death of the Season Confirmed

Sacramento County News Release

SACRAMENTO REGION, CA (MPG) - Sacramento County Department of Health Services, Public Health Division (SCPH) is reporting the first influenza-related death of the 2025-26 flu season.

The individual, who was a child, had no underlying medical conditions and died of complications of influenza (also known as the flu). At this time, vaccination status is unknown.

Some people are at high risk of developing serious influenza-related complications. This includes people 65 years and older, people of any age with certain chronic medical conditions (such as asthma, diabetes, or heart disease), pregnant women, and young children under 5 years old.

Influenza is a contagious respiratory illness caused by flu viruses. It can cause mild to severe illness, and at times can lead to death. The flu is different from a cold. The flu comes on suddenly. People who have the flu often feel some or all of these symptoms: fever, cough, sore throat, runny or stuffy nose, muscle or body aches, headaches, fatigue



Influenza is a contagious respiratory illness caused by flu viruses. It can cause mild to severe illness, and at times can lead to death. Photo courtesy Freepik

(tiredness), or vomiting and diarrhea.

Most people who get the flu recover in a few days to less than two weeks, but some people will develop complications (such as pneumonia) as a result of the flu, some of which can be life-threatening and result in death.

According to the California Department of Public Health, everyone over 6 months of age should receive the flu vaccine each year.

In addition to vaccination, the public is encouraged to take the following steps to protect themselves and others against flu, COVID-19 and other respiratory illnesses: wash hands thoroughly and frequently,

cover coughs and sneezes. stay home from work or school when sick, consider indoor masking in crowded places, improve ventilation by opening windows or moving events outdoors, and disinfect frequently used surfaces.

For those at higher risk who do get sick, get tested and talk with your healthcare provider about treatment options.

Flu vaccines can be accessed at your healthcare provider’s office and many local pharmacies.

For more information, visit Sacramento County Department of Health Services, Public Health Division’s list of flu and covid vaccination locations at www.sac-county.gov. ★

Volunteers Needed to Help Understand and Address Homelessness



This community effort will not only help to determine the number of people experiencing homelessness in the Sacramento region but will also help us to: understand why people in our community become homeless; create better policies, programs and services; track progress in reducing homelessness. Photo courtesy Freepik

Sacramento County News Release

SACRAMENTO REGION, CA (MPG) - Want to help Sacramento better understand and address homelessness? You’re invited to volunteer for the 2026 Point-in-Time (PIT) Count.

This community effort will not only help to determine the number of people experiencing homelessness in the Sacramento region but will also help us to: understand why people in our community become homeless; create better policies, programs and services; track progress in reducing homelessness and secure federal funding which supports local shelters and services.

The Point-in-Time (PIT) count will be held 5–11 p.m. on Jan. 26 and 27. Registration is required by Jan. 15.

“While it captures only a snapshot in time, the Point-in-Time (PIT) Count offers valuable, community-wide participation and insight. It helps us better understand homelessness in our region and ensures our community can continue accessing funding that directly supports our neighbors who are experiencing or at risk of homelessness,” said Dr. Trenton Simmons, chief program officer of Sacramento Steps Forward.

No experience is required for volunteers, with mini training video segments and other materials provided ahead of the nights of the count to help volunteers know what to expect. Volunteers will meet at one central location before heading out to predetermined routes across the County.

Volunteers will use a mobile phone app to record the number of people they encounter who said they would be sleeping outdoors or in vehicles. They also will conduct a brief survey with those willing to participate to better understand who is experiencing homelessness in Sacramento, for how long and what kinds of services could best assist them.

While volunteers focus on people living unsheltered outdoors, the overall Point-in-Time (PIT) Count includes those staying in respite centers and shelters.

To canvass, a volunteer must be at least 18 years old, be willing to travel by foot and car to predetermined locations and be willing to use their personal smartphone and flashlight.

Ready to be part of resolving homelessness in our community? Register now at www.sacramentostepsforward.org/data-and-analytics/2026-sacramento-point-in-time-count/. ★

Republic FC Adds Two Local Standouts on USL Academy Contracts

Sacramento Republic FC News Release

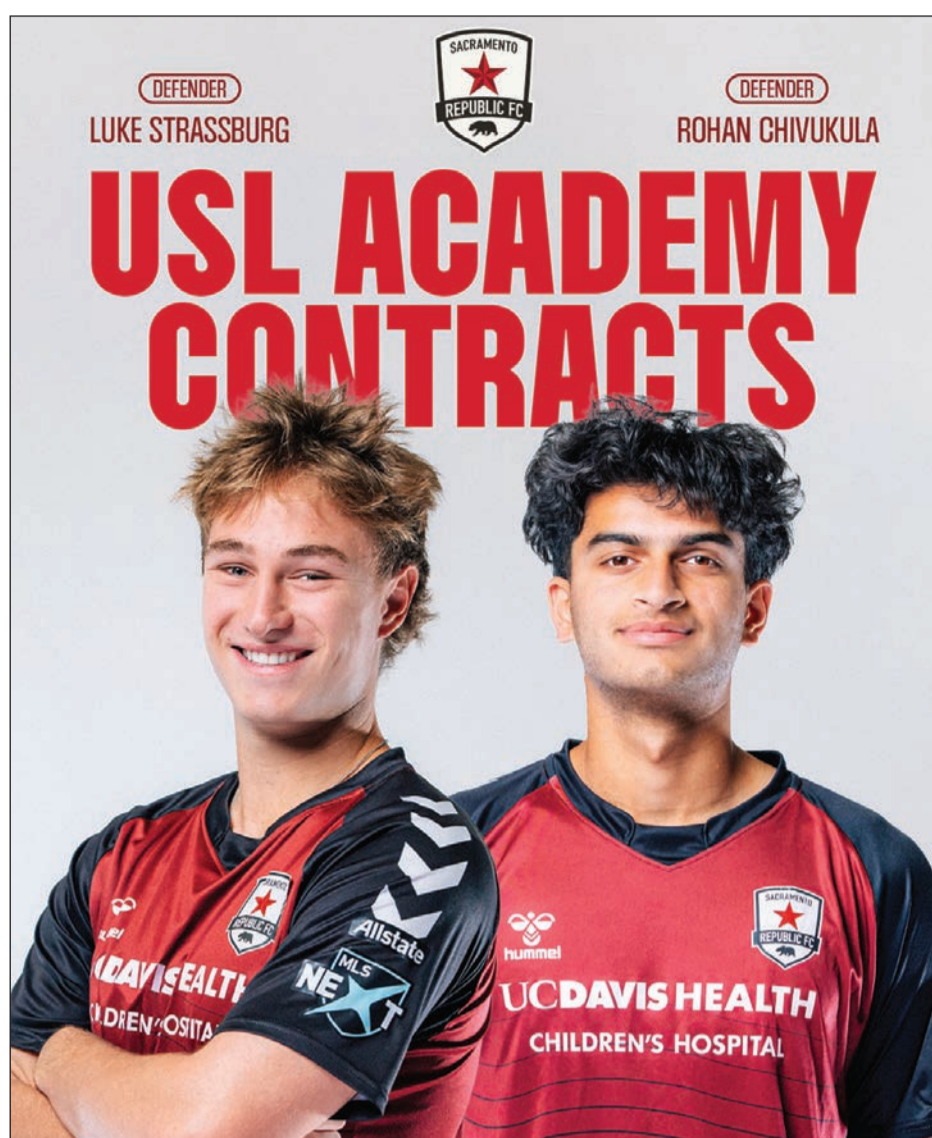
SACRAMENTO, CA (MPG) - Republic FC announced Dec. 19 the addition of academy players Luke Strassburg and Rohan Chivukula to the club's first team roster. The defenders have signed USL Academy contracts, pending league and federation approval and will be eligible to play in first team matches in 2026.

"These signings reflect the strength of our pathway and commitment to developing local talent," said Republic FC Head Coach Neill Collins. "Bringing academy players into the first team environment prepares them for the next level and we have no doubt that Luke and Rohan will continue to represent the academy well during training camp and throughout the season."

Strassburg and Chivukula both currently play for Republic FC's U-19 academy team, which has opened up the 2025-26 campaign with an impressive 9-1-1 record.

Eighteen-year-old Rohan Chivukula joined Republic FC's academy in 2024 to take the next step in his development. He quickly became a key piece of the U-19's backline and in Chivukula's first year, the squad posted an overall record of 16-3-3 and won the Northwest Division of MLS NEXT before advancing to the Round of 32 in the postseason. The Folsom High School graduate previously featured for El Dorado Hills Soccer Club and Sacramento United, and will play at the collegiate level for American University in the fall of 2026.

Strassburg is a longtime member of the Indomitable Club. The Elk Grove native joined at the U-13 level in 2020



Strassburg and Chivukula both currently play for Republic FC's U-19 academy team, which has opened up the 2025-26 campaign with an impressive 9-1-1 record. Photo courtesy of Sacramento Republic FC

and has since featured in every age group in the last five years. He has been a part of some of the top teams

in club history, reaching MLS NEXT Cup each season. During the 2023-24 season, Strassburg and the U-16

team went undefeated in 29 straight games from September in April, and in 2025 his U-17 team claimed three wins in the MLS NEXT Cup Playoffs to advance to the Semifinals – the best finish by a Republic FC squad since 2022. He has also received multiple invitations to U.S. Soccer ID camps and training camps. Prior to joining Republic FC, Luke played for the San Jose Earthquakes' youth academy and Sacramento United. He has committed to play at San Diego State in the fall of 2026.

USL Academy contracts allow academy players the chance to train and compete with the first team in professional matches while retaining their NCAA eligibility. Since its inception in 2015, Republic FC's Academy has created a strong, local pipeline of youth players ready for professional-level competition, with over 40 players earning the opportunity to join the first team on USL Academy contracts and over 25 going on to sign professional contracts with Republic FC or other clubs. In 2024, players from Sacramento's youth academy combined for 80 gameday roster selections, 56 appearances, and over 3,000 minutes.

Republic FC's 2026 season officially kicks off on March 7 when the club hosts FC Tulsa at Heart Health Park. Season ticket memberships are on sale now, offering a range of benefits including discounts on merchandise and access to exclusive fan experiences, as well as priority seat selection in the new Republic Stadium at The Railyards. For more information, or to purchase a membership today, visit SacRepublicFC.com/Memberships. ★

Carter Begins Assembling Staff with Initial Round of Hires

Sacramento State Athletics News Release

SACRAMENTO, CA (MPG) - Sacramento State head coach Alonzo Carter named several assistant coaches and staff personnel to his staff, it was announced Dec. 30. The hirings include offensive coordinator Eric Kiesau, defensive coordinator Adam Clark, associate head coach Angus McClure and general manager Jon Osterhout. Carter also retained Kris Richardson as the offensive line coach/run game coordinator, Bobby Fresques as the quarterbacks coach/pass game coordinator and Josh Brown as the safeties coach. In all, the staff will feature over 300 years of cumulative coaching experience.

Kiesau has served as the offensive coordinator at Fresno State, Boise State and Auburn during his lengthy collegiate career. He spent the past three seasons as an offensive quality control coach at Florida.

His offensive staff will include Richardson and Fresques who return for their eighth year with the program and have seen the team qualify for the NCAA FCS Playoffs four times. Richardson has mentored several FCS All-Americans, including current Tennessee Titan Jackson Slater. This past season, his group paved the way for a rushing attack which ranked third in the FCS with 365.4 rushing yards per game. In his time leading the Sacramento State quarterbacks, Fresques has guided FCS All-Americans Kevin Thomson and Asher O'Hara, as well as Jake Duniway and Chandler Konkin.

Former Sacramento State offensive lineman and assistant coach Angus McClure will return to campus as the associate head coach and work with the offensive line. Since leaving Sacramento



Sacramento State head coach Alonzo Carter named several assistant coaches and staff personnel to his staff. Photo courtesy of Sacramento State Athletics

State, McClure has had stints at Nebraska, Buffalo, UCLA, Nevada and Kansas.

Eric Scott will serve as the team's wide receivers coach. Scott has spent the last two seasons as the head coach at West LA Junior College. Prior to taking that position, Scott was the wide receivers coach and passing game coordinator at San Jose State from 2021-23 where he worked alongside Alonzo Carter.

On defense, Adam Clark will come to Sacramento State after leading the defense at Northern Arizona for the past two seasons. In his first season, NAU ranked second in the Big Sky and 12th in the FCS in interceptions. The unit also led the league in pass defense and was second in total defense.

Brown will shift to coach the safeties in 2026 after leading the team's linebackers this past season. During the year, he overcame several injuries to his position group to have three players rank among the top five on the team in total tackles.

That included Oscar Moore who led the team with 69 total stops. Brown has also coached at McNeese, UTEP, Hawaii, Nevada, Cal Poly, Kansas and Arizona State during his career.

Kenwick Thompson will coach the linebackers and brings experience as an FCS defensive coordinator as well as a position coach at the P4 level. Thompson was the defensive coordinator at Florida A&M in 2025 and was previously on Jeff Tedford's staffs at Cal and Fresno State as well as stints at San Jose State, Vanderbilt, East Carolina, UNLV and UAB.

Dakari Monroe will follow Carter from Arizona to Sacramento State and will coach the Hornet corners. Monroe was a defensive graduate assistant for the Wildcats the past two seasons and helped the team advance to the Trust & Will Holiday Bowl against SMU. He played four seasons at San Jose State where he twice led the team in interceptions before a stint with the Kansas City Chiefs.

Milo Austin will serve as Sacramento State's special teams coordinator. Austin has held the same role at Elon since 2022 where he has coached an FCS All-American kicker, punter and kick returner. He has also been the special teams coordinator at Texas Southern, Delaware State and Morehead State.

The team's personnel efforts will be led by former Sacramento State All-American Jon Osterhout who returns to campus as the general manager following a great career as the head coach at American River JC. With the Beavers, Osterhout led the team to an 88-39 overall record and took the team to seven postseason appearances, including six trips to the state playoffs. Osterhout was a four-year starter for Sacramento State on the offensive line where he garnered All-America honors while leading the way for Charles Roberts' record-setting rushing efforts.

Chris Parry, who has been on staff since 2019, will continue to serve as the assistant general manager. Parry has been a part of player evaluation, roster construction and scholarship management during the program's run of success since his arrival.

Record-setting receiver Otis Amey has been named the director of player development. Amey was an All-American for Sacramento State and still owns nearly all the career receiving records. Following his time as a Hornet, he played with the San Francisco 49ers as well as stops in the Arena League and UFL.

Kenny Macklin will remain at Sacramento State and take the position of Chief of Staff. CJ Pollard will also return as the Director of Recruiting.

The additions are the first to the staff for Carter who became the 14th head coach in school history on Dec. 15. ★

A's Agree to Terms with LF Tyler Soderstrom

Athletics News Release

LAS VEGAS, NEV (MPG) - The Athletics have agreed to terms with left fielder Tyler Soderstrom on a seven-year contract through the 2032 season with a club option for 2033, the club announced Dec. 29.

Soderstrom batted .276 with 25 home runs, 93 RBI and an .820 OPS in 158 games last season with the A's after combining

to hit .204 with 12 home runs, 33 RBI and a .636 OPS in 106 games over his first two seasons. He began the season as the A's starting first baseman, moved to left field (where he had not played professionally) when Nick Kurtz was promoted on April 23, moved back to first base while Kurtz was on the injured list from May 25 to June 8, and returned to left field after that. Soderstrom had a team-leading 93 RBI, which were the most

by an A's player 23 years old or younger since Eric Chavez had 114 in 2001. He had 11 outfield assists, which tied for third in the majors, and ranked fourth among left fielders in defensive runs saved (10).

Soderstrom is a .250 career hitter with 37 home runs, 126 RBI and a .754 OPS in 264 games in three seasons in the majors. He was the A's first round selection in the 2020 First-Year Player Draft out of Turlock High School

and was primarily a catcher in his first pro season in 2021. The 24-year-old left-handed hitter split his time between catcher and first base in 2022-23, played mostly first base in 2024 and saw his most action in 2025 as an outfielder.

Soderstrom is one of three players under contract through at least the 2028 season, when the A's are scheduled to open their new ballpark in Las Vegas. He joins Lawrence Butler, who inked

a seven-year deal through the 2031 season with a club option for 2032 on Mar. 10, 2025, and Brent Rooker, who signed a five-year contract through 2029 with a club option for 2030 on Jan. 23, 2025. ★





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