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Segregation of low-income students, achievement gap persists

By Solomae Getahun

(Editor's Note: This article first appeared on Sacramento School Beat.)

Over the course of 15 years, the segregation of young, low-income students has worsened and the achievement gap along racial and economic lines has widened. According to a University of California, Berkeley and University of Maryland study, in 2000 the average, below poverty line child enrolled in an elementary school where the demographic included 45 percent middle-class children. However by 2015, it had dropped to 36 percent nationwide, posing fears that those schools may begin to decrease in academic achievement.

The statistic is troubling when taking into account that research indicates that students from low-income families, which tend to be families of color, do not make as much academic progress compared to their middle/upper-class peers.

The California Department of Public Health released evidence of how the COVID-19 pandemic uniquely impacted poorer, predominantly Black and brown communities, only making matters worse in terms of the learning gap. These groups are significantly lacking resources to recover, let alone respond.

"This is not surprising news if you just take a look at C.K. McClatchy High School. Most of our Black and Hispanic population come from low-income communities. Many minorities I personally know are struggling to keep up with their general education classes," said Londen Smith, Secretary of the McClatchy Black Student Union.

Today, there is increasing acknowledgement that the wealth gap between white and non-white households permeates into education and the racial, economic achievement gap. At McClatchy, a general consensus made among low income students when faced with financial disparity is to get a job to help their families, attend school less to take care of siblings, and quit extracurricular activities.

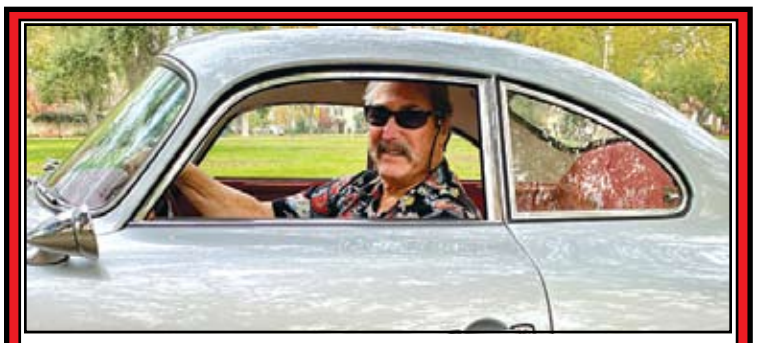
Paul Wesley Cory, member of Brown Issues Club at McClatchy, commented on these issues. "Who is taking public transportation on a daily basis? Skipping school to make money? Getting school breakfast and lunch? Not taking AP classes because they do not have the time for the academically challenging classes? It is us. The students of color who have generationally faced economic disparity."

Evidence from the U.S. Department of Education Office for Civil Rights further magnifies this divide. In 2011-12, only 57 percent of Black students had access to science and math courses necessary for college preparation, compared to 71 percent of white students and 81 percent of Asian American students. On top of this, Black and Latino students have less access to gifted and talented education programs than white students.

When asked in what ways C.K. McClatchy and other Sacramento high schools reflect this, Arieanna Hooks, activism coordinator of the Black Student Union said, "African American students are put at a disadvantage. It is an unfortunate reality that we are enrolled in schools with less qualified, novice teachers with less pay. Even when attending a decent high school with full range access to necessary classes, many have financial obligations or the past education we have received does not allow us to feel ready."

According to Education and Career News, education is a primary route for breaking the cycle of poverty. Closing the wealth and achievement gaps between people of color and whites is contingent on having the privilege to pursue education as a top priority. However, the significant disparities that exist in modern-day society deny black and brown communities of that privilege.

Solomae Getahun is a junior at McClatchy High School. Find Sacramento School Beat online at sacschoolbeat.com



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Folding the origami crane

Randall Ishida

It is believed that if you fold 1,000 Japanese origami cranes ~ one wish will come true. It takes hours to fold that many and string them on a streamer. The crane is also considered to live a thousand years. It symbolizes good fortune, longevity, peace, and represents hope and healing during such challenges, especially the ones we face today. Bring on the happiness and peace by folding a crane and sending it to someone who is down and out, someone you haven't seen during this pandemic hardship, or check on them. You can bring happiness by calling them, as well. Just imagine their smile when they hear your voice, eat your home-cooked meal, or receive the crane. Whatever gesture you choose use your intuition and envision what is best. This is a way to show your compassionate demeanor. They are strong, have survived this pandemic, and have gone this far. We too must believe everyone can live 1,000 years just like a crane, or at least live a long life of good hopes and healing.

Yes, now is the time to get together with many lost friends. People may not answer you in a timely manner but a small gesture and offering of an origami crane is one example. There are other things to offer besides something physical. It could be a home-cooked meal or helping with an errand. Just keep in touch with a friend.



Photo by Cynthia Hollenberger

Community Briefs

"I Remember Yesterday: Film Premiere":

This film, written and directed by Imani Mitchell, examines the impact of homelessness on a family and highlights the complexity of healing from repressed wounds. In this story, we are presented with a reconciliation that provides a long, overdue closure. Purchase tickets at irememberyesterday.eventbrite.com

*For entry, please provide proof of vaccination or a negative COVID test within 72 hours of testing.

Schedule of Events

6:30 -7:15pm | Doors Open/ Check-in

7:15-7:35pm | 'Untitled' Documentary Short

7:35pm-8:00pm | 'I Remember Yesterday' Short Film

8:00pm - 8:30pm | Meet the Cast/Crew Q&A

Cast & Crew

Eric - JAMES ELLISON III

Isaiah - JAMES WHEATLEY

Darlene - BJ NASH

Melonie - TAYLOR CELINE VAUGHAN

Director - IMANI MITCHELL

Director of Cinematography - JOSEPH KATCHES

Sound Technician - JENNIFER CASTILLO

All proceeds are donated to Celebration Arts, a 501(c)(3) non-profit performing arts organization dedicated to cultivating theatrical productions that explore the African-American experience.

Sunday Farmers Market

Carmichael Farmers' Market is a Certified Farmers' Market at Carmichael Park, 5750 Grant Ave. Open every Sunday, year-round, rain or shine from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m., the market offers freshly picked, seasonal produce grown by small family farms in the region! There is a wide variety of fruits and vegetables,

Continued on Page 6





Kings fans bid farewell to the former ARCO Arena

By LANCE ARMSTRONG

Thousands of people, on March 19, gathered to bid adieu to Sleep Train Arena, the North Natomas entertainment facility that was known for most of its years as ARCO Arena.

The arena, which was in active operation from 1988 to 2016, was most notably the home of the Sacramento Kings of the National Basketball Association (NBA).

Slated for demolition within the next six months, the now-vacant structure sits on property that is designated for the construction of California Northstate University's (CNU) 13-story teaching hospital.

The Sacramento Kings, in partnership with CNU and the city of Sacramento, last summer, announced the plan for the hospital and its medical center. The project will occupy 35 acres that were donated to the university by the Kings.

CNU formerly pursued having the hospital built in Elk Grove. However, as a controversial project, that proposal drew opposition from neighbors, business owners and environmentalists. It was ultimately rejected by the Elk Grove Planning Commission due to that site's existence within a 200-year floodplain.

Following that rejection, CNU briefly considered a Rancho Cordova location for their hospital/medical center.

Eager to visit the arena for the final time, people flocked to the old arena site for the March 19 event, which was titled, "Farewell to ARCO Arena."



Photo by Lance Armstrong

A fan wearing a Chris Webber Sacramento Kings jersey views a sign recognizing the March 19 "Farewell to ARCO Arena" event. One of the most popular players in the team's history, Webber was inducted into the Naismith Memorial Basketball Hall of Fame last year.

Attendees of this nostalgia-rich gathering received various memorabilia and had the opportunity to enter this facility, where countless entertainers performed.

Inside the dimly lit arena, actual recordings of classic Kings games played through speakers, and large photographs taken in the arena at professional basketball games hung as reminders of the past.

Spotlights shined on the only segment of the wooden basketball court – center court. That section featured the original red, white and blue Kings logo.

As a one-time, premier entertainment venue in the capital city, the arena presented events beyond Kings games, such as Sacramento Monarchs, collegiate and high school basketball games, professional wrestling, indoor soccer, concerts and religious events.

But most attendees of the March 19 event focused on the arena's 27-year history as the home of the Sacramento Kings.



Photo by Lance Armstrong

Attendees of the event walk in a line in front of the Sleep Train Arena, which for most of its years was known as ARCO Arena.

Many Kings fans arrived wearing Kings attire, including jerseys of some of their favorite players from the glory years of the team, which at their peak played at ARCO Arena in the series deciding Game 7 of the 2002 Western Conference Finals. The Kings ultimately lost that game by 6 points in overtime.

Although the Kings never brought a championship to Sacramento, ARCO Arena was the site of championship clinching wins by the Monarchs in 2005 and the Sacramento Knights professional indoor soccer team six years earlier.

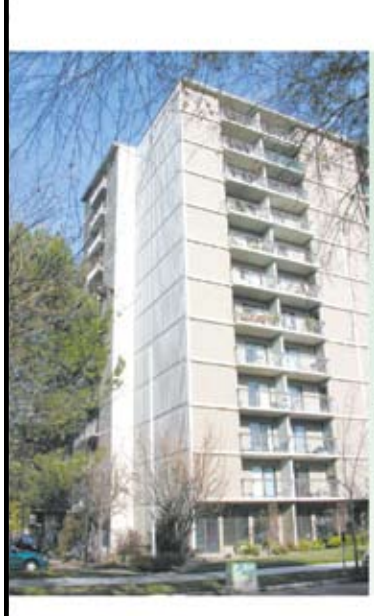
The now-defunct Monarchs were one of the original eight teams of the Women's National Basketball Association, which was founded in 1996 and presented its first season the following year.

Among the attendees of the "Farewell to ARCO Arena" event was Elk Grove resident Matt Morse, who mentioned that he will miss the Kings former home.

"I'm glad (the Kings) are still (in Sacramento)," he said. "I wish they were still (playing at the old ARCO Arena). Just the parking, just everything. It's just better in my opinion. Have you gone

See ARCO on Page 5

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Continued from page 4

to the new (Golden 1 Center in downtown Sacramento)? You don't know where you're going to park. So, here (at the old ARCO Arena) you never thought about it."

Morse added that, for him, the demolition of the old arena will be "heartbreaking."

Mark Siegling, a Kings season ticket holder, also noted that he will miss the old arena.

"It's very sentimental, bittersweet," he said. "That's why we wanted to come out here and say goodbye. So many great memories. But, you know, we've got a beautiful, new facility now and we've still got a great team, even though they could use a little help. But the fans haven't changed and it's time for the next chapter."

While wearing a Kings-colored, purple outfit and showing off her purple tinted hair, Rancho Cordova resident Courtney Leonard-Maye spoke about her memories of the old arena.

"I've come to a lot of Sacramento Kings games in here and I came to wrestling matches when I was a kid, Disney on Ice, all kinds of stuff," she said. "I probably came here for the first time in 1993 when I was a baby. I even played on the Kings (court) when I was in high school, and they let us go out there and play." Leonard-Maye also fondly recalled having the opportunity to tour the Kings locker room in about 2009.

"I got to see the Kings' (players) big, old shoes," she said.

In addition to the majority of the attendees who traveled to the old arena from various parts of the Sacramento region, some people arrived from other areas of Northern California.

Jared Warner, who traveled to the event from Redding, said that as a Kings fan, it was important to him to be a part of the March 19 gathering.

"I've been a Kings fan ever since I moved down here from Washington state when (Seattle) lost the Sonics (NBA team in 2008)," he said. "It is pretty sad (losing the old ARCO Arena). I am glad that we have the new (Golden 1 Center) and I'm glad that new things are going to be happening here (at the old arena site). So, it should be pretty cool for the community."



Photo by Lance Armstrong

Attendees of the event walk in a line in front of the Sleep Train Arena, which for most of its years was known as ARCO Arena.



Photo by Lance Armstrong

A group of Sacramento Kings fans gather around a cardboard cutout of former Kings star Mike Bibby during the March 19 event.

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Continued from page 3

honey, eggs, meat, herbs, olive oil, cheese, and olives. Most of the farmers grow their crops "naturally" and some are Certified Organic. Come get to know your farmers and learn about their farming practices. Enjoy the many craft food vendors offering hummus, yogurt, veggie dips, sauerkraut, salsa, fish, rubs, pies, cookies, bread, scones, and more! The market is a great place to shop and stock up while enjoying the many food trucks and craft corner! Crafters offer jewelry, hand-knitted hats and scarfs, baskets, wind chimes, art, and so much more.

La Sierra Community Center Pickleball

La Sierra Community Center offers indoor pickleball. The Johnson Gym has 5 indoor courts for drop-in play. If you have never tried pickleball come see what the craze is all about but beware, you will get hooked. Masks are required at all times in our gyms, regardless of vaccination status. Tuesdays and Thursdays from 9 a.m. to noon. La Sierra Community Center: Johnson Gymnasium is located at 5325 Engle Road. There are five indoor courts. Fees are $6 for a day-pass or $40 for a 10 day punch card.

Passes and Punch Cards can be purchased at the recreation office of the La Sierra Community Center, which is open Monday through Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Volleyball Leagues

The Carmichael Recreation and Park District offers volleyball leagues at the La Sierra Community Center on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursday evenings. Skill levels and format varies by league. In accordance with the Sacramento County Department of Health, 2021, masks are required at all times in the gyms, regardless of vaccination status. Registration for the spring leagues begins February 17th and closes March 8th at 10 a.m. Leagues start the week of March 21. Fees $250 for residents, $260 for non-residents.

Carmichael Senior Softball – Coed Slow Pitch League

Senior Softball is a great way to be active and social. The Carmichael Recreation and Park District offers morning leagues on Wednesdays and Thursdays. Both leagues feature competitive play in a fun, relaxed atmosphere. The main objective each morning is to enjoy the game of softball in a park setting under the sunshine and blue skies. Call the Recreation Office if you are interested in more information:(916) 483-7826.

Carmichael Elks Lodge Updates

The Carmichael Elks Lodge is located at 5631 Cypress Ave. For more information, call 916-489-2103.

The Carmichael Elks Lodge #2103 presents the 2022 Classic Car & Motorcycle Show

(1975 and older) on May 7, 2022: Located on 5631 Cypress Ave. in Carmichael, this event attracts spectators from all over the area to enjoy lots of custom and classic cars, a motorcycle display, awards, entertainment, food and more. If you are interested in being in the show or being a vendor, https://carmichaelelks2103.org/ for an application. Registration is $20; vendor fees are $20. A no-host bar would be available. The Kentucky Derby will be shown in the ballroom from 3 to 5 p.m. Breakfast and lunch are included.

Library Updates

Virtual Piñata Making Workshop with Patty Botello - Día 2022

April 30 from 2 to 3 p.m.

Sacramento Public Library is excited to welcome back artist and piñata maker Patty Botello for our 2022 Día de los niños / Día de los libros series.

We will be creating a mini fruit piñata sculpture using various piñata making techniques. This workshop will also focus on using recyclable items like cardboard and newspaper and giving these ordinary objects a new purpose.

Piñata making kits available at your local library branch while supplies last. This event will be hosted on zoom and streamed live to Youtube.

Register here to attend Zoom workshop: https://us06web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZIld-ihpzksHtL5cZ7aPt5zfDHdeeX_l8nF.

About Patty Botello: "Growing up as a kid in Los Angeles there were fruit vendor carts at gas stations, freeway exits and at every corner in downtown LA. I remember the excitement of seeing the frutero and begging my dad to stop the car so we could get fruit. My sister and I would watch in awe as the fruit vendor sliced the fruit for our order like a fruit ninja. My dad would always chat with the vendor about how business was for them that day, ask them where they were born and how life as a vendor was for them. I think those questions came naturally to him as a fellow immigrant. My dad would thank the vendor by name after we received our fruit pouches and always overpay and tell them to keep the change. It's that nostalgia that makes me want to help to tell the story of our local fruit vendors so that we might also get to know them by name and know their stories and struggles."

Patty Botello was born in Los Ángeles, California. At the age of three, she learned how Piñatas were created from her next-door neighbor and babysitter. She studied art at San Jose State University where she earned her Bachelor of Arts, Concentration in Studio Practice. While being immersed in studio art classes she fell in love with the creation of three-dimensional art. Before graduating, she began Fuzzy Lollipop, a small online business in 2009 where she sells her piñata sculptures.

Genealogy: Splitsville: Divorce Records and the Hidden Gold Within

Saturday, April 23: 1 to 2:30 p.m.

Not all marriages have ended in happily ever after. Don't despair though! Searching for a divorce record should be part of your research plan. An overview of the records and examples of how to locate divorce records will be presented. Learn how to analyze the information and the importance of these records for genealogical research.

This program will take place on Zoom. Register in advance for this meeting by clicking on the link below. After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the meeting.

https://zoom.us/meeting/register/tJEkdOCvqzwpGNLkyY4TvAdmDGV_0wyq3oEp

For more information, contact Stephanie K. West at (916) 264-2920; contact@saclibrary.org

Virtual Children's Programming

Enjoy virtual storytimes featuring popular childrens' books and activities to grow your child's vocabulary. Follow us on Facebook(Opens in a new window) and catch our live storytimes(Opens in a new window) every Tuesday and Thursday at 10:30 a.m. www.saclibrary.org/Event/Special-Events/Virtual-Programs

Dial-A-Tale

Every three days, we upload a new reading in which a passage from essays, short stories, excerpts and poetry are read by library staff. Call (916) 575-4590. https://www.saclibrary.org/Event/Special-Events/Virtual-Programs

Play and Rhyme

Join librarians on Facebook every Thursday at 10:30 a.m., starting July 8, for Virtual Play and Rhyme! This program unites playful elements of storytime with play activities and prompts that encourage families to move, bond, learn, and play. Join us for this wonderful opportunity to bring developmentally appropriate early learning ideas home. https://www.saclibrary.org/Event/Special-Events/Virtual-Programs

Dial-A-Story

Call to hear children's stories read in English and Spanish. Stories are available 24/7 and change every few days. Call (916) 441-1234 or (866) 241-7490. https://www.saclibrary.org/Event/Special-Events/Virtual-Programs

Between the Covers: A Romance Book Club

Join us on Zoom to discuss a delightfully diverse collection of romance novels on the second Saturday of the month at 1 p.m. We'll also be discussing what romance novels are making you happy while staying safe at home. https://www.saclibrary.org/Event/Special-Events/Virtual-Programs

Forever Young Book Club

Join the official Sacramento chapter of the FYABC, where we celebrate reading teen books as adults. This virtual book club meets on the last Saturday of each month at 11 a.m. https://www.saclibrary.org/Event/Special-Events/Virtual-Programs

Mystery Book Club

Join the newest virtual book club, Mystery Book Club. Read and discuss all things mystery titles the first Saturday of each month at 1 p.m. on Zoom. https://www.saclibrary.org/Event/Special-Events/Virtual-Programs

Farm and Flavor:
Neither hope nor despair

By Kerin Gould

The Schrödinger's Cat of emotional spaces. We are watching roller coaster temperatures, long fire seasons, crumbling ice shelves, and dwindling animal populations change our world, and at the same time, we fervently urge our representatives to do more and cheer on inventive solution-seekers who make bird-friendly wind turbines and vacuum boats for ocean garbage. We take our masks off and try to regain our social and economic lives even while reading about new surges in Omicron part 2 filling up hospitals abroad. We are watching the unprovoked invasion of Ukraine by Putin's far more powerful military, and wanting democracy to prevail, rooting for the spirited underdog to win out against the brutal aggressors. We follow Mr. Rogers' advice and "look for the helpers" such as the World Central Kitchen folks or the brave little girl singing in a bomb shelter to lift spirits.

At home, my little cat, Milk, has carcinoma in her liver, and the odds of survival via chemo are poor but not zero; though far too thin, she is eating, sleeping, cuddling, peeing, and pooping. I hover over her dining, keenly aware that wasting (a downward spiral of weight loss) is the direct cause of some 30% of humans who die from cancer; I don't know the feline statistic, but they are already picky eaters in the best of times. I swap out foods per her demands and keep her siblings from stealing when she is unenthusiastic. To guess what she needs, I keep everything I know about humans, chemo, and appetite in mind and try to apply it to Milk: changing taste buds and sense of smell, unpredictable nausea spells, mouth discomfort, low energy...and we just try to make every day a decent day. Neither hope nor despair. (And frustration with how little oncology has to offer in terms of effective treatment, but that's a whole other mood.)

Even planting crops is an emotional limbo, more than ever, as the traditional last-frost planting dates don't really guarantee our tender tomato seedlings are going to survive harsh winds, sudden hail, or roasting heat. Will my fruit trees have enough bee activity to create fruit or will blossoms and pollen be blown away, along with my expectations? Will it rain again before next November? We've had to water in March, so will the drought make it ridiculously expensive to irrigate? And yet, small farmers like myself go ahead and plant anyway even while wondering if we are stubborn, brave, or just bad at business math and risk assessment. People must eat, so we grow stuff. There's no crop insurance for small, mixed-crop farms. No guarantee that everything will be pretty enough to sell well if the weather goes weird or that folks will come out to the farmers' market when it's 113 degrees out.

So, when you DO see fresh produce from your local, small farms, I urge you to partake, because it's a tangible, edible, delicious, triumphant outcome. A grower's efforts have literally born fruit, despite abiding uncertainty. Even better, subscribe to a farm box service, so that you have a steady stream of vibrant, fresh food to look forward to, and so the farmer has a reliable income stream. It may even give you both hope.

Try this comfort-food recipe to take advantage of the fresh, spring greens that will not be available from local farms once the hot weather sets in. Greens are loaded with antioxidants and fiber, and this is a yummy, satisfying way to get plenty of them. Risotto is easier than you'd think. Just don't walk away and take your eye off it.



Greens and Mushrooms Risotto

Ingredients:

- 1 qt. low-sodium vegetable stock, homemade or store bought
- olive oil
- 1 large shallot and 2 cloves garlic, finely chopped
- 1 1/2 c. arborio rice
- 1/2 c. dry white wine
- 1 big bunch rainbow Swiss chard or white-veined chard, spinach, collards, etc. Any greens without a strong bitter taste will work.
- salt
- white pepper
- 8 oz. mixed mushrooms, ideally wild, sliced
- 1/2 c. grated vegan Parmesan

Directions

1. Bring stock to a simmer in a medium pot. You'll be adding it to the rice, and it needs to be hot when it goes in.

2. In a large deep-sided sauté pan, heat 2 tablespoons of olive oil over medium-high heat. Add onion and mushrooms and sauté for 5 minutes or until beginning to soften. Add rice and sauté for an additional 1-2 minutes or until it's glassy with a white spot in center of each piece of rice. Add white wine and simmer until evaporated, about 3 minutes.

3. Reduce heat to medium. Add stock in ½ cups at a time simmering and allowing it to absorb between additions, stirring occasionally. Keep adding in stock little by little, stirring occasionally until it is nearly all absorbed. This should take about 17 minutes.

4. Meanwhile, chop Swiss chard leaves into bite-size piece and dice the stems in very small pieces. About 3-4 minutes before the rice is cooked, when there is still a good bit of moisture, stir in the chopped greens (more time for thicker leaves, less time for tender spinach, for example).

5. Season with salt and pepper.

6. Once rice has absorbed nearly all the liquid , the texture should be tender but still slightly chewy, remove from the heat and let sit for a few minutes, absorbing remaining liquid. Stir in Parmesan and check the seasoning. Serve in bowls with additional grated Parmesan.

Kerin Gould, Ph.D., is a grower, writer, and educator who lives on a small farm in Elverta. Her book, "Produce with a Purpose: So Your Doctor Told You to Eat More Fruit and Vegetables…Now What?" is available from online booksellers. For more information, go to http://producewithapurpose.net

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Wednesday, April 13, 2022
8 am - 10 am



Thursday, April 21, 2022
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Local residents can file taxes online for free through United Way

Participants across Sacramento region can receive up to $8,000 in tax credits

Local residents throughout the Sacramento region are eligible to file their taxes online for free through United Way California Capital Region's Free Tax Prep program through April 18. Households that earned less than $65,000 in 2021 can file for free and receive up to $8,000 cash back from state and federal credits, including the federal and state Earned Income Tax Credits (EITC and CalEITC). The local United Way's Free Tax Prep program saves qualifying residents an average of $200 in preparer fees. When needed, the program provides free tax help virtually and in person in multiple languages. Two virtual tax workshops will be held on Feb. 26 and March 12 where certified volunteers will help participants prepare their own returns and answer questions before filing. To learn more about United Way's Free Tax Prep program or begin filing, visit YourFreeTaxPrep.org.

"Many families in our region have earned these tax credits, but often do not know they are eligible," said Dr. Dawnté Early, president and CEO, United Way California Capital Region. "These are important funds that local families can use to meet immediate needs and increase their household's financial stability. Our Free Tax Prep program is a key piece of United Way's work to help every family succeed so their community can too. That is square one for ending poverty in our region."

Households may be eligible for the CalEITC tax credit if the taxpayer is at least 18 years old and the household earned less than $30,000 in 2021. Many CalEITC-eligible households are not legally required to file taxes due to low income, but if they file, they can claim state and federal credits.

Families that received advance payments of the Child Tax Credit must file a tax return and could be eligible for additional Child Tax Credit payments. United Way's Free Tax Prep program can help non-U.S. residents apply for their ITIN, as ITIN holders are eligible for some tax credits. Experts recommend everyone files early, noting that many people do not realize that unemployment income is taxable. Even if people owe money, it is not due until April 18 no matter how early they file.

In 2021, more than 4,000 households across the Sacramento region filed their taxes through United Way's Free Tax Prep program, claiming a total of more than $7.5 million in credits and saving a total of $885,000 in tax preparation fees.

For nearly 100 years, United Way California Capital Region has brought local people together to make community change happen. With a mission to build stronger, healthier and more compassionate communities, the local United Way starts at square one: helping every family succeed so their community can too. Serving Amador, El Dorado, Placer, Sacramento and Yolo counties, the local United Way is working to meet its 20-year commitment to significantly reduce poverty in the region by helping kids excel in school, investing in families, creating meaningful partnerships and organizing to lift impacted families. For more information or to make a donation, visit YourLocalUnitedWay.org.

The Bambinis are back!





Watching the Children's Italian Folk Dance Troupe of Sacramento is like stepping back into time. Folk dancing originated as a method of entertainment during celebrations and feast days to be performed by the people of the community or "folk". The Sacramento Italian Cultural society located in Carmichael sponsors two Italian folk dance troupes for children aged 5 to 18. After two long years of necessary closure due to the Covid pandemic, these dance troupes are back and ready to perform.

These dance troupes help provide an avenue for the children to reconnect with their Italian heritage, learn about their Italian culture and showcases their talents. The younger troupe, called the Bambini dancers, perform cultural dances to traditional Italian folk music. The older dancers, La Danza, perform complex dances to both traditional folk music mixed in with some contemporary Italian music.

When you think of traditional Italian Dance the first thing that most people think of is the Tarantella. This dance originated around the 14th century and it is most commonly believed that it was used as a cure for having being bit by a tarantula spider. Townfolk would play music and the afflicted person would dance non-stop to avoid succumbing to the poison.

Another dance performed by La Danza is Bella Ciao, an Italian protest folk song that originated in the hardships of the Mondina women who worked in the paddy field during late 19th century. This song was later adopted as an anthem of the anti-fascist resistance during the Italian Civil War between 1943 and 1945. Every dance weaves a story that was originated in the past but still resonates today.

The dance troupes perform at multiple cultural events such as the Festa della Befana held at the Italian Cultural Society in Carmichael and other local cultural events throughout the Sacramento and Northern California region. Past performances have even extended as far west as San Francisco where the Bambini dancers performed for the Giants for their Italian cultural night. But whether the venue is smaller, such as at a community event, or large, like the King's Game or the Giants stadium, the children perform the dances handed down to them through the generations with pride and joy to the delight of their audiences.



The next performance planned for the dancers is going to be at Lodi Festa Italiana on Sunday, June 12, 2022. The dancers have cultural outfits designed and made by Lynne Giovannetti and these costumes represent traditional costumes that can be found in multiple regions throughout Italy. Requirements to join the Bambini dance Troupe include being a member of the Italian Cultural Society in Carmichael, commitment to the practice and performance schedule, and a small fee associated with the children's costumes.

The director of the Bambini and La Danza dance troupes is Diana Quilici who works with her daughter, Mary Quilici, who is the Artistic Director. Both Diana and Mary Quilici have taught these dance troupes for the past decade. Instruction focuses on teaching dances while incorporating the history and tradition in an enjoyable and inclusive atmosphere. As the Bambini dancers progress to La Danza, the older dancers assist in teaching the younger dancers and provide a role model for the younger children to follow. If you are interested in more information regarding joining this fun and dynamic dance troupe please contact us at ics.bambini@gmail.com.



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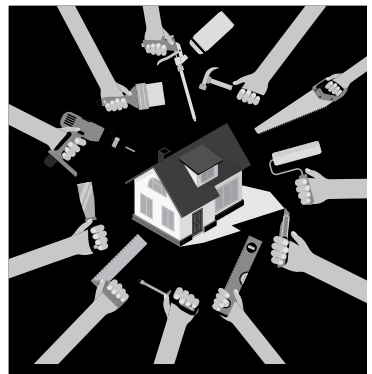
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