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Thursday,  
Feb. 18, 2021

# Spartan Daily

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## County expands vaccine eligibility

By Bryanna Bartlett  
NEWS EDITOR

The Santa Clara County Public Health Department announced during a press conference Wednesday that workers in education and child care, food and agriculture, emergency services and adults 65 years or older are eligible to receive the coronavirus vaccine beginning Feb. 28.

Dr. Sarah Cody, Santa Clara County's public health officer, said this is phase 1B, tier-one under the California vaccine distribution system.

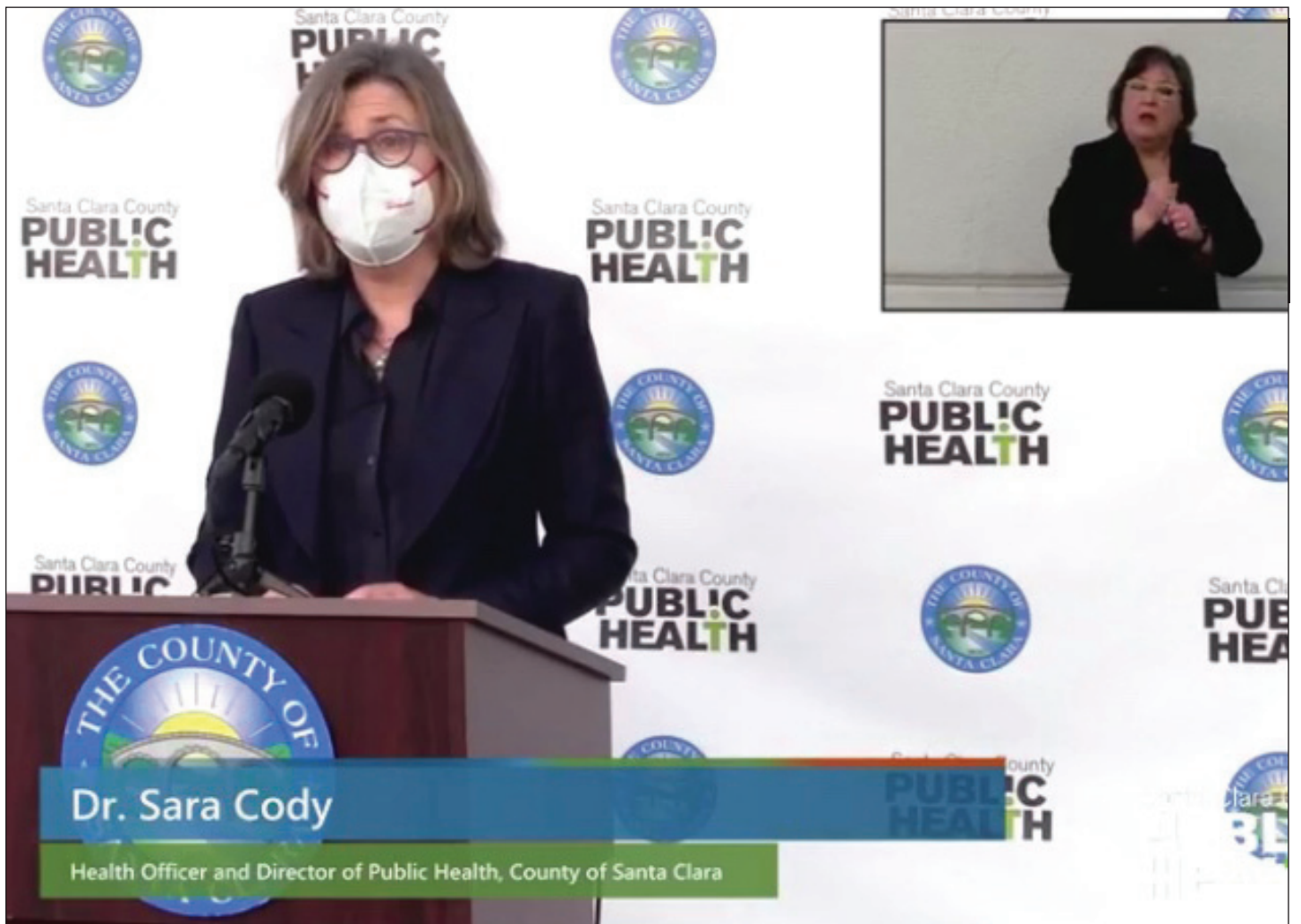
She said the transition is possible because the number of residents getting vaccinated and vaccine supply to the county have gradually increased, while the number of COVID-19 cases has gradually decreased since the first week of January.

“In our own county health system, a vaccine provider, we have had nearly 10,000 vaccination appointments scheduled just for [Wednesday],” Cody said during the press conference which was livestreamed on Facebook.

The Moderna and Pfizer vaccines have been supplied to Santa Clara County totaling a combined 327,251 administered doses as of Wednesday, according to the California COVID-19 website.

The county's mass vaccine

VACCINES | Page 2



SCREENSHOT BY BRYANNA BARTLETT

Dr. Sarah Cody, Santa Clara County's public health officer (left), announces expansion of COVID-19 vaccine eligibility to phase 1B, tier-one while an ASL translator (right) communicates to livestream during Wednesday's press conference.

## A.S. talks boosting first-gen resources

By Stephanie Lam  
ASSISTANT NEWS EDITOR

The San Jose State Academic Affairs board of directors examined how the university can provide more academic and financial support to first-generation college students during Wednesday's Zoom meeting.

Anoop Kaur, the Associated Students director of academic affairs, said providing more resources is one of her top priorities.

“As a first-generation student, I had no support coming into SJSU,” Kaur said during the meeting. “I would really like to see something developed.”

The Academic Affairs Committee addresses student's academic needs and growth by reviewing university policies and communicating with faculty members, according to the A.S. committee webpage.

Kaur said she and SJSU Chief Diversity Officer Kathy Wong Lau brainstormed ways to provide more resources after the Spring 2020 Campus Climate Survey reported 54% of its respondents were first-generation students.

The Campus Climate Survey defines first-generation students as those whose parents or guardians haven't completed high school or college.



As a first-generation student, I had no support coming into SJSU. I would really like to see something developed.

Anoop Kaur

Associated Students director of academic affairs

The survey is sent to students, faculty, staff and administrators every few years to ask questions about their campus experiences, according to the SJSU Campus Climate Survey webpage.

“I asked [Wong-Lau], ‘Why does SJSU only offer The Education Opportunity Program (EOP) as support for first-generation students when half of [the survey respondents] are first-generation?’ ” Kaur said. “So we started talking about ways to increase support.”

EOP provides academic support to first-generation, low-income and educationally disadvantaged students,

MEETING | Page 2

### IN BRIEF

- Ideas are in the works to help first-generation college students including revitalizing previous SJSU mentorship program.
- 54% of respondents in a Spring 2020 Climate Campus Survey are the first in their families to attend college.
- A.S. committees have \$20,000 each to plan committee activities and provide giveaways for students.

INFOGRAPHIC BY BRYANNA BARTLETT

## Seniors stay hopeful about job market

By Jacqueline Vela  
STAFF WRITER

Some San Jose State seniors are maintaining a positive attitude about finding employment after they graduate amid the coronavirus pandemic.

Psychology senior Alice Tsvinev, who is expected to graduate in May, said although she's

“terrified” when it comes to searching for a job, she remains hopeful about her future.

“This whole pandemic has just really taught me to embrace the unexpected, but adapt and prepare how to handle every situation I can think of,” Tsvinev said in a Zoom call. “Getting through these times is hard, but we are working on it.”

Before the pandemic,

college graduates were stepping into an economy with a low unemployment rate of around 4%, according to a Feb. 5 U.S. Department of Labor Statistics press release. The press release showed that unemployment spiked in April at 14.6% but as of January 2021, unemployment is at 6.3%.

While the current U.S. labor force is 2.2% smaller

than in the beginning of 2020, 2.2% equates to a loss of 3.7 million workers, according to a Dec. 3 2020 Wall Street Journal article.

Since the job market was flourishing and students had myriad opportunities, students must now prepare for unpredictable job availability, according to a May 2020 EdSource article.



The whole pandemic has just really taught me to embrace the unexpected, but adapt and prepare how to handle every situation I can think of.

Alice Tsvinev  
psychology senior

JOB MARKET | Page 2

# GARDEN CALENDAR



# 2021

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SJSU | ASSOCIATED STUDENTS

SJSU.EDU/garden



VACCINES

Continued from page 1

distribution site, Santa Clara Valley Medical Center, distributes both vaccines to be administered to more than 6,000 residents per day at multiple sites within the county, including sites at Burger Drive and the Santa Clara County Fairgrounds, according to the public health department's website.

"As we continue as we expand this access, we will continue our focus on equity to ensure that those who are living in communities that have been hardest hit by COVID-19 have access to vaccines and get vaccinated," Cody said.

“As we continue as we expand this access, we will continue our focus on equity to ensure that those who are living in communities that have been hardest hit by COVID-19 have access to vaccines and get vaccinated.”

Dr. Sarah Cody  
Santa Clara County public health officer

Rosa Luna, public health deputy director, said the county has conducted a

multi-layered outreach and access strategy to ensure equitable distribution.

"No one size fits all and we need to decrease barriers," Luna said during the press conference.

She said the public health department is planning to provide more evening and weekend hours to facilitate better vaccine access for essential workers, full-time caregivers or those who face other barriers to accessing vaccines during the weekday.

Mike Wasserman, public health president of the board of supervisors, said the county will heal and "return to normalcy" when herd immunity is attained, which is when 85% of residents have been vaccinated.

He also encouraged county residents to motivate their relatives to get vaccinated.

"Each of you has parents or grandparents in the age group that's allowed to be vaccinated," Wasserman said during the press conference. "Please call them up and say 'Hey, have you been vaccinated? Do you want me to register you?'"

Cody said the county's goal is to vaccinate 85% of the eligible population, which is 16 years old and older, by summer.

She said it's unclear when the county will move to the red tier from the purple tier, which indicates substantial spread of the virus instead of widespread numbers, according to California's Blueprint for a Safer Economy.

"Of course it depends

IN BRIEF

■ Workers in education and child care, food and agriculture, emergency services and adults 65 years or older are eligible to receive the coronavirus vaccine beginning Feb. 28.

■ Santa Clara County has been administered 327,251 vaccine doses as of Wednesday.

■ The public health department plans to provide more evening and weekend hours to facilitate better vaccine access.

on the vaccine supply, but you need to set a goal," Cody said. "There are many variables in the mix, including we know that some of these new variants are circulating in the area and it's difficult to say how that might impact the case rates."

The public health department announced on Feb. 10 that the South African variant of COVID-19 was identified in Santa Clara County in an immediate release statement.

The release stated two residents returned from international travel in mid-January and experienced symptoms several days later.

The pair followed the county's 10-day mandatory travel quarantine guidelines for the infectious period.

The only other surrounding case of the variant was in Alameda and is still under investigation, according to the immediate release.

Charlie Faas, San Jose State vice president

and chief financial officer, said in a Feb. 11 campuswide email that the university was recently contacted by the county to establish the campus as a COVID-19 vaccination site.

"A cross-divisional Vaccination Planning Support Task Force has been established and is currently in the midst of planning and determining the support efforts necessary to host such a site," Fass stated.

Cody said while she does have authority to close schools including SJSU, she doesn't have the authority to reopen schools.

"We have a team that supports schools [and] answers questions," Cody said. "We're doing everything that we can think of to enable schools to open and we will continue to do that."

Follow Bryanna on Twitter @brybartlett

MEETING

Continued from page 1

according to its website.

The list of Wong and Kaur's ideas include allocating a page on SJSU's website where first-generation students can easily access resources for scholarships and student organizations.

Another idea involved revitalizing the Generate: First-Generation College Student Program, an academic mentoring program adopted by the MOSAIC Cross Cultural Center in 2014.

Kaur said A.S. directors will choose one idea to support and elaborate upon in the committee's future meetings.

Yareli Sanchez, a justice studies junior and first-generation student, said she appreciates the committee's ideas, especially providing mentors for students.

"I think mentors would really help first-time students who come in with a lot of fear about failure and not knowing how to navigate their way through college," Sanchez said in a phone call.

She said while she's a part of EOP and uses the Chicana/Latina Student Success Center in the Student Union, she's concerned about the lack of resources available for first-generation students.

"It doesn't add up that there is so much diversity and a lot of Latino first-generation students at SJSU, yet people don't take us into consideration and [realize] how big of an impact [more resources] would be for us," Sanchez said.

Academic Affairs Budget

Samantha Quiambao, the leadership and government program coordinator, encouraged directors to use money in the A.S. account to plan committee activities and provide giveaways for students.

She said all of the A.S. committees, with the exception of the Programming Board Committee, share \$20,000 that directors can spend to create various events, programs or giveaways.

"The main thing I want [Academic Affairs] to know is that you have this pool of money that you can use towards your programs and projects," Quiambao said during the meeting.

A.S. has 12 committees that specialize in different areas including reviewing A.S. finances or planning campus life events, according to the A.S. committee webpage.

Quiambao said so far A.S. has spent \$3,000 of the \$20,000 on publicity and promotion expenses, such as gift cards to students or to advertise their committee's activities online or in person.

"I think this is where a majority of our money has been going lately," Quiambao said.

Quiambao said whatever money is left over will be placed in a reserved fund for the committees to access for future financial needs.

A.S. committees will also receive money from new student fees collected by the university once fall semester begins.

"It's important that [the money is] used [to help] students in the right way," Quiambao said.

Follow Stephanie on Twitter @StephCLam

JOB MARKET

Continued from page 1

Anita Manuel, interim director of the SJSU Career Center, said she noticed a decrease in job postings on Handshake because of the pandemic.

Handshake is an app offered by the Career Center to help students find jobs and networking events. The center prepares students to transition to career life after college, according to the official SJSU Career Center website.

"[Job opportunities] are probably down at least a good 40% of what our normal capacity is," Manuel said in a Zoom interview. "There is definitely a drop in the number of positions."

Although Manuel noticed the drop in positions, she said there are still jobs available for students on Handshake.

"Right now, there are actually 2,500 positions in Handshake for our students that are posted just as remote [jobs]," Manuel said.

Tsvinev said the competition among recent college graduates is nerve-racking with unemployment so high.

"There are so many of us [graduating seniors] here that want jobs and there are so many jobs that are limited," she said.

Manuel mentioned that students should continue to be optimistic.

"We see a steady

“[Career counselors] can help talk through how to best brand and promote yourself because the fact that you are still learning and going to school in a [remote] environment shows a lot of resiliency.”

Anita Manuel  
SJSU Career Center interim director

stream of internships and jobs that are still being posted," Manuel said. "A lot of employers are now hosting virtual sessions like meet and greets and coffee chats."

She said the Career Center and advisers have also been shifting services online to better equip students.

"We focus on [students]," Manuel said. "Making sure that our students are just aware of all the online tools that they have so that employers can find them more easily and then they can best market themselves."

She encourages students to take time making an appointment with a career counselor.



ILLUSTRATION BY NICK YBARRA

"If you are nervous, I would say definitely connect with your career counselor so that we can talk through it and also practice," Manuel said. "[Career counselors] can help talk through how to best brand and promote yourself because the fact that you are still learning and going to school in a virtual environment shows a lot of resiliency."

Although Tsvinev said she's worried, she's not

letting the pandemic hold her back.

She said she frequently talks with professors to ensure she is becoming well-equipped for her future.

"A lot of [professors] influenced my mindset in terms of taking advantage of things," Tsvinev said. "If you have the right mindset and you have the right capabilities of achieving those goals, there should be nothing that stops you

[from succeeding in your future]."

Systems physiology senior Ginny Mehrok said even though the current job market is bleak, she plans to take a gap year after graduation for an externship, a program that consists of job shadowing an individual whose profession aligns with the student's interest.

She said an externship at home in Lodi, California is the best

opportunity to become a medical assistant because it'll build her network connections.

"I think that is something really cool that this pandemic has allowed me to take advantage of," Mehrok said. "If I was back in San Jose, I probably wouldn't have been able to do this medical assisting course [at home]."

Follow Jacqueline on Twitter @Jacqueline\_v20



# Netflix show erases BDSM myths

By Madison Fagundes  
STAFF WRITER

Despite sex work and BDSM consistently being featured in the Hollywood spotlight, these communities have historically been perceived as taboo. The media has the power to change these derogatory perceptions and one Netflix series is bringing the community to light.

BDSM stands for bondage and discipline, dominance and submission, sadism and masochism. It includes a wide variety of sexual and nonsexual activities that can be practiced casually or as a lifestyle, according to a Feb. 12 Cosmopolitan article.

"Bonding," a Netflix series that follows the life of a dominatrix Mistress May and her assistant, released its second season on Jan. 27.

A dominatrix is a woman who takes the dominant role in BDSM activities, whether in paid jobs or within a relationship, according to Dictionary.com. The role of a Domme is similar to a Dom, except a Dom is usually male.

The first season of "Bonding" received backlash from the BDSM and sex work community, according to a Jan. 27 Variety article.

Members of the community argued that the writer, Rightor Doyle, was not truly connected to the BDSM world and made

a comedy out of experiences that were not his.

Some BDSM community members also criticized the inaccuracy of how the BDSM community was represented throughout the show.

A former dominatrix, who prefers to be referred to by her domme name for privacy concerns, Princess Sophie, thought the show portrayed the BDSM community inaccurately in its first season.

"The show doesn't encompass how consent between [submissive and dominant partners] really works and the small details aren't entirely accurate," she said.

According to the same Variety article, Doyle agreed with the first season's backlash. He aimed to make the second season more educational and true to the BDSM community.

This is a big step toward normalizing the BDSM and sex work culture. The way the media portrays these types of communities can have an immense impact on how sex workers are treated.

SJSU media and culture lecturer Apryl Berney said that media portrayal, especially in a capitalist society, has a great influence on what we value.

"It guides and shows us not only what is possible in terms of the lives that we've lived, but also what is

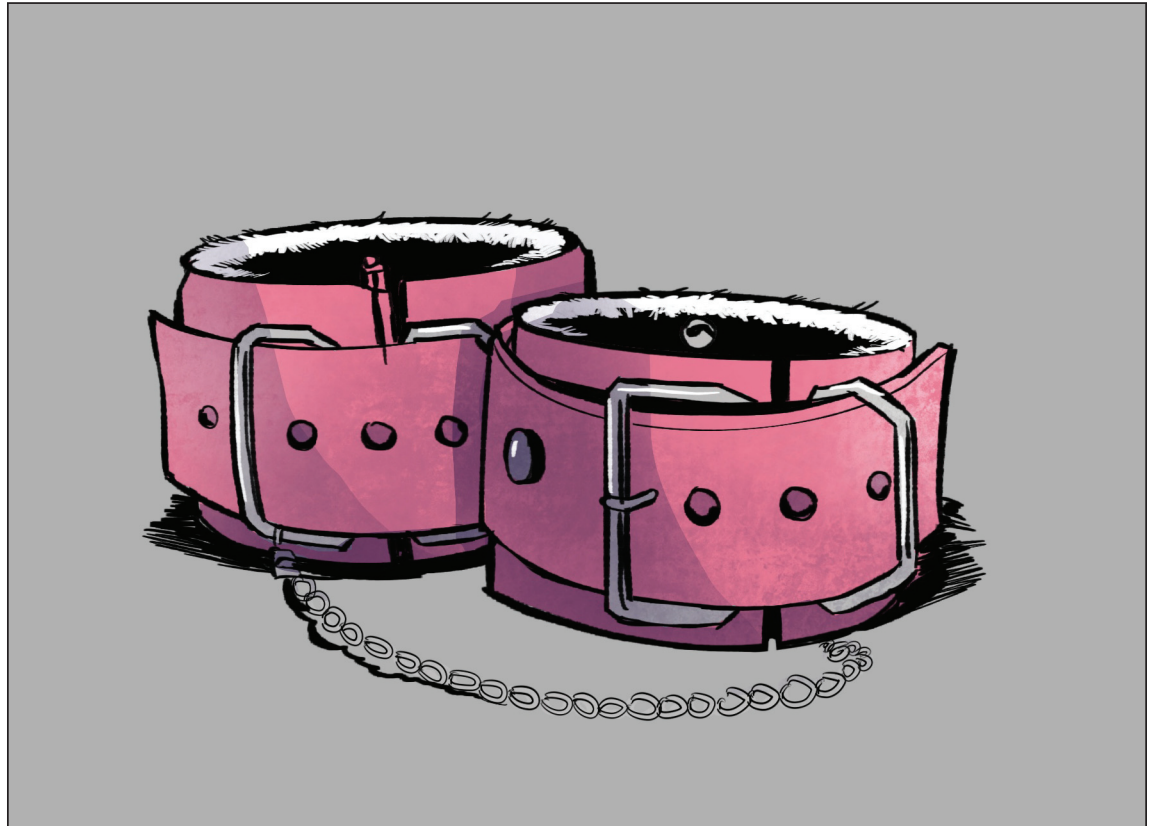


ILLUSTRATION BY AUDREY TSENG

good or bad," Berney said.

To increase the authenticity of the second season Doyle hired Olivia Troy, a BDSM professional and founder of Reps On Set, a production consultancy that is dedicated to telling underrepresented stories responsibly.

Troy made sure to create scenes that challenged the incorrect notion that dom and sub relationships are dirty or disrespectful.

"The relationship is often quite caring and quite devoted," Troy said in the same Feb. 4 interview with Bustle.

Troy also emphasized the mutual respect between dom

and sub relationships into the filming process. She worked with actors throughout the filming of BDSM scenes to ensure their comfort and safety.

A former sex worker, who preferred to go by "Mr. R" because of privacy concerns, said the responsibility also falls on the actors to make sure the BDSM community is accurately represented.

"[The best thing an actor can do] is to give truth to the environment that they're in and to play the character as best as they can, which I think they did," Mr. R said.

The second season of Bonding is not perfect, but it

is an example of how media creators should learn about communities they portray.

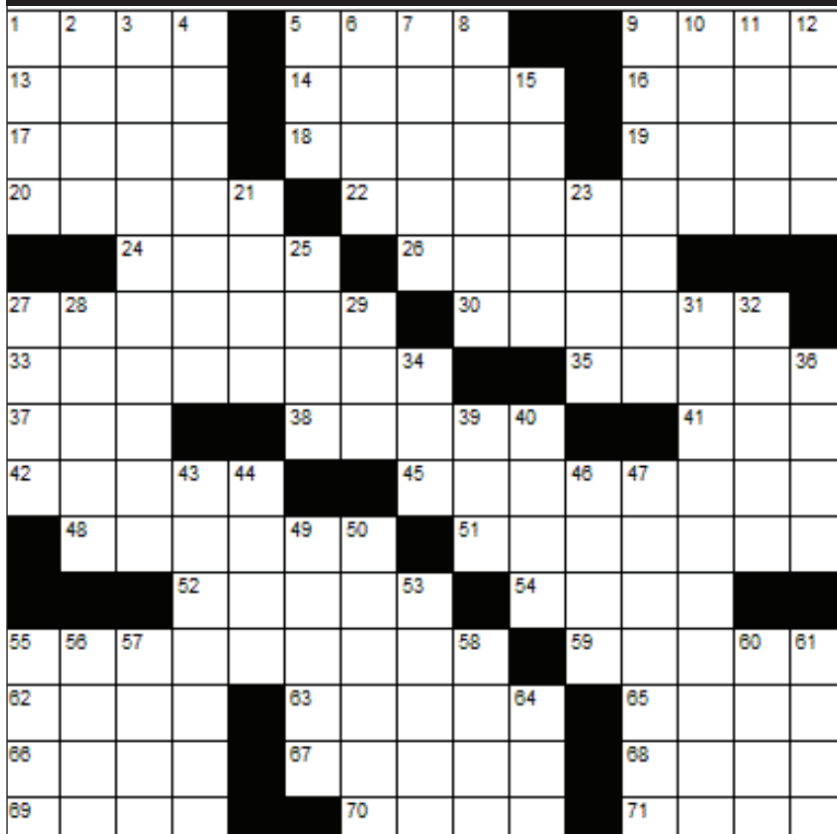
Accurate representation is absolutely necessary for combating intolerance of the BDSM and sex work community.

"It is important for the media to portray these communities because hopefully, more exposure will lead to normalization," Princess Sophie said. "Sex work has a negative connotation and proper media attention can help destigmatize fetishes and sex work."

Follow Madison on Twitter | @maddxsunn

## CLASSIFIEDS

### CROSSWORD PUZZLE



**ACROSS**

- 1. Nets
- 5. Joke
- 9. Drudgery
- 13. Incite
- 14. Large body of water
- 16. Church alcove
- 17. Memo
- 18. 8th Greek letter
- 19. Govern
- 20. Go in
- 22. Perfects
- 24. Sweeping story
- 26. Truth
- 27. Position of an earl
- 30. Unpleasant person (British)
- 33. Estates
- 35. Anagram of "Coast"
- 37. Fury
- 38. Pantywaist
- 41. Explosive
- 42. Shades
- 45. Praise formally
- 48. Cultural
- 51. Sleeping chamber
- 52. Radiolocation
- 54. Average

**DOWN**

- 55. Citadel
- 59. Investment
- 62. Murres
- 63. Energize
- 65. Wild goat
- 66. Lean
- 67. Frighten
- 68. Run away
- 69. Comply with
- 70. Margarine
- 71. Cravings
- 1. Diminish
- 2. Black, in poetry
- 3. Improvement
- 4. Spire
- 5. Scribble
- 6. Reflected sound
- 7. Oozes
- 8. Shred
- 9. Xylophone
- 10. Creative work
- 11. Small island
- 12. Dregs
- 15. Nigerian monetary unit
- 21. Purges
- 23. Mongrel
- 25. Defrauds
- 27. Modify
- 28. Eagle's nest
- 29. Japanese apricot
- 31. Affording grounds to sue
- 32. Crazy
- 34. South southeast
- 36. Flower stalk
- 39. A type of large sandwich
- 40. Anagram of "Lyme"
- 43. Low-pitched
- 44. Break
- 46. Poems
- 47. Pander
- 49. Graven images
- 50. Spotted cat
- 53. Challenger
- 55. Car
- 56. Baby's bed
- 57. Anger
- 58. Avid
- 60. Avid
- 61. Former lovers
- 64. Prefix meaning "Modern"

### SUDOKU PUZZLE

Complete the grid so that every row, column and 3x3 box contains every digit from 1 to 9 inclusively.

	3			7	2			1	8
6	1							5	9
4		2	7	6					1
1				2	3	9			7
	5	3						7	4
7	4		8	3				5	

### SOLUTIONS 2/17/2021

S	Y	S	O	P	D	O	M	E	O	V	A	L			
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5	4	9	8	3	2	1	6	7
8	2	6	1	4	7	3	5	9
2	9	7	3	5	6	8	1	4
6	8	5	4	2	1	9	7	3
4	3	1	7	9	8	6	2	5
7	1	4	2	8	9	5	3	6
3	5	2	6	1	4	7	9	8
9	6	8	5	7	3	2	4	1

### JOKIN' AROUND

What do you call a group of disorganized cats?

A cat-tastrophe.

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OPINION

# LeBron and Serena, greatest of all time



**Giorgina Laurel**  
STAFF WRITER

The argument around which athlete is the greatest of all time (GOAT) is something upon which no one can seem to agree.

But I would argue there are multiple GOATs within the history of sports.

There are many factors when discussing and identifying who is the GOAT.

Some people like to bring retired or deceased athletes into the conversation, but for the sake of this discussion I'll only look at active athletes as opposed to all athletes who've ever lived.

Through that lense, Los Angeles Lakers star LeBron James is the GOAT of team sports and Serena Williams is the GOAT of individual sports.

Individual sports and team sports are very different and sports in both categories require varying athletic abilities.

Individual sports, including tennis, require the athlete to be responsible and in control of themselves.

Team sports, including basketball, make it necessary for athletes to be in tune with their teammates on the playing field.

When debating whether James is the GOAT, many bring world-famous retiree Michael Jordan to the conversation.

People tend to compare James' and Jordan's win

and loss records in the NBA Finals.

Although Michael Jordan has won all six of the NBA finals he's been to, James has played in far more.

According to an article on Fansided, a website designed for fans by fans passionate about sports, James has been to 10 NBA Finals but has only won three.

It may sound like a small feat, but competing in the NBA Finals is a big accomplishment that many athletes can't reach because of its high difficulty and intense competitiveness.

James is also an amazing facilitator and overall team player.

He has a record of more than 9,000 assists and 9,000 rebounds as of April 2020, according to the statistics website Clutchpoints.

James is an amazing athlete overall with a stellar record.

When James returned to the Cleveland Cavaliers in 2014, he took the team to the finals the following four years from 2015-18.

He led the Cavaliers in beating the strongest team at the time, the Golden State Warriors, in 2016 from a 3-1 deficit.

He has the ability to single-handedly improve the performance of any team.

He is the GOAT of team sports.

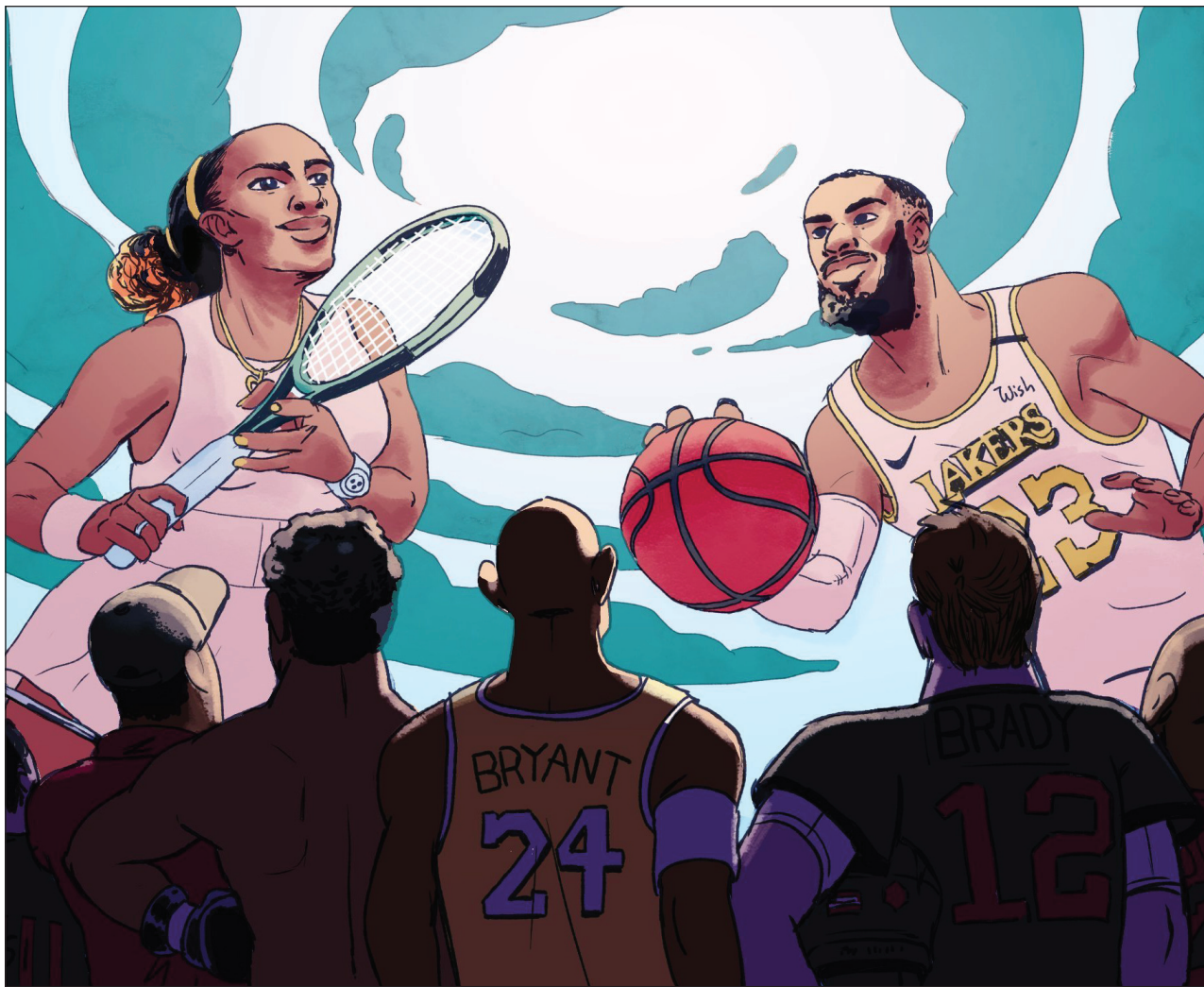


ILLUSTRATION BY RYAN JOHNSON

## Los Angeles Lakers star LeBron James is the GOAT of team sports and Serena Williams is the GOAT of individual sports.

When it comes to individual sports, the GOAT is Williams.

I conducted an Instagram poll on Feb. 9-10 that received 87 votes for Serena Williams to be named the

GOAT, between her, Tom Brady, James and Steph Curry.

Even former NBA star Dwayne Wade agrees Williams is the GOAT, according to a Feb. 9 tweet from Twitter

account @NBAonTNT.

Not only do her 23 Grand Slam titles and four Olympic gold medals speak for themselves, but it's the biggest point Wade made while on the postgame show, NBA on TNT.

Williams even won the Australian Open while she was pregnant.

Pregnancy is incredibly difficult on its own, but to continue competing and still win the Australian Open is an enormous accomplishment.

Being a female athlete has its own obstacles, including some people's beliefs about women not being as athletically gifted

as men, yet Williams is able to shut critics up with her performances.

With so many variables to consider when deciding who the GOAT is, there will always be different GOATs for different sports.

But for today, it is LeBron James and Serena Williams.

Follow Giorgina on Twitter @ItsGiorgina



ABOUT

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ILLUSTRATION BY BIANCA RADER

# Do political statements belong in sports?

## Yes, athletes should use their platforms for change



**Jovanna Olivares**  
SENIOR STAFF WRITER

Athletes are entitled to use their platforms to bring awareness to social and political issues encountered on and off the field.

The discussion of politics in sports has created opportunities for action that can combat racial injustices that have been ignored.

It would be a waste to use such a visible and prominent social platform for nothing more meaningful than a game.

The book "Not for Long: The Life and Career of the NFL Athlete," by Robert W. Turner II examines the long-term physical and mental effects of playing in the NFL as a Black athlete, a demographic that makes up 70% of the NFL.

Corporations spend millions contributing to Political Action Committees (PAC) and political campaigns, yet receive no backlash for fiscally combining sports and politics.

After Nike's 2018 "Just Do It" anniversary ad campaign starring former 49ers quarterback Colin Kaepernick, Nike reported a 10% profit jump totaling \$847 million as a result of the campaign, according to a Sept. 2018 ABC News article.

Corporations shouldn't benefit from appropriating social movements, including the Black Lives Matter movement once it becomes "trendy", and manipulate its original message to make money.

Protests are not aimed towards gaining corporate buzz but rather igniting social movements in society for change.

While the corporate giant gave the illusion of being socially and politically conscious, Nike and its PAC contributed \$424,000 to the Republican Party and its candidates in the 2018 election cycle.

This compares to Nike only contributing \$122,000 to the Democrats, according to Open Secrets, a nonpartisan research center for responsive politics.

Nike monetized the face of Kaepernick and the notion of protest and proceeded to give money directly to the GOP, a party known to denounce the Black Lives Matter movement.

If people really want to keep politics out of sports, then flags shouldn't be permitted in stadiums and the national anthem shouldn't be played.

There shouldn't be an overwhelming military presence, because I don't understand what the Air Force has to do with football.

Mark Cuban, owner of the NBA Dallas Mavericks, announced the teams would stop playing the national

anthem before home games this season, according to a Feb. 9 ESPN article.

NBA Chief Communications Officer Mike Bass released a statement the following day in response, despite no acknowledgement until Cuban's public confirmation on Feb. 9.

"With NBA teams now in the process of welcoming fans back into their arenas, all teams will play the national anthem in keeping with longstanding league policy," Bass stated.

We're a divided country that shouldn't be broadcasted as unified and harmoniously singing the national anthem, when in reality its players are being censored.

**It would be a waste to use such a visible and prominent social platform for nothing more meaningful than a game.**

It's not patriotic to enforce participation of the national anthem. Instead it exemplifies the prominent and damaging nationalistic values of the U.S.

The double standards set upon white and Black athletes are uncanny.

It's somehow "OK" to separate Tom Brady's association with Donald Trump from his game, but not OK to do the same with Kaepernick.

While Kaepernick faced death threats and promptly lost his NFL career because of his symbolic protest on police brutality, Brady can choose when to enter and leave the conversation and be shielded from accountability.

Brady was seen being drunkenly dragged from a boat parade after celebrating Tampa Bay's Super Bowl victory and immediately went viral, according to a Feb. 11 Daily Mail article.

Every time Black athletes use their platforms to bring visibility to social issues, they're vilified by the public and at worst, even receive death threats.

Yet socially unacceptable behavior such as Brady's is glamorized.

Sports and politics can coexist and bring long-term significance and impact to sporting events.

Turning a blind eye towards major social issues is damaging, irresponsible and is a major characteristic of a totalitarian state.

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## No, unfortunately activism can harm athletes' success



**Ruth Noemi Aguilar**  
SENIOR STAFF WRITER

Political statements don't belong in sports, not because athletes shouldn't voice their activism or don't deserve the right to support movements, but because they can greatly harm their careers.

From Tommie Smith and John Carlos to Colin Kaepernick, athletes have made political statements for decades yet continue to be blacklisted and experience harm to their careers.

One of the first cases of activism within the sports world was in the instance of boxer Cassius Marcellus Clay, Jr., more commonly known as Muhammad Ali.

Ali was sentenced to five years in prison in 1967 after refusing to participate in the Vietnam War for religious and political beliefs.

He was stripped of not only his championship title, but respect and support from fans, according to a Jan 13. Britannica webpage.

Although Ali was eventually allowed to box again years later, his career was never the same and the stigma surrounding Ali's refusal still persisted.

No matter the movement, speaking out about personal political beliefs is a danger to athletes' careers.

The career of former 49ers quarterback Kaepernick is proof of that.

After his political statement in 2016 where he knelt during the national anthem in support of the Black Lives Matter movement, Kaepernick was left unsigned from the NFL after becoming a free agent, according to a New York Times timeline.

The movement that Kaepernick began within the sports world created a whole wave of U.S. activism, but the message has become lost as people and corporations participate in performative activism.

The NFL has ironically been an example of that, capitalizing off the Black Lives Matter movement as a trend, most recently in this year's Super Bowl when the league released its "Inspire Change" ad promoting a campaign to end systemic racism.

But the league has yet to release an apology specifically acknowledging Kaepernick's career decline, according to a June 7, 2020 ABC news article.

The article discussed the NFL's apology in light of the Black Lives Matter movement where commissioner Roger Goodell said the league was "wrong for not listening to NFL players earlier."

The inconsistency between the two is ridiculous and directly correlated with politics.

Some supporters of the Black Lives Matter movement said getting the message out is still important, but it's become harshly criticized on a larger scale.

Even though it's not the fault of the movement or the advocates, the truth is that criticism and mocking could've been avoided by leaving political statements off the field.

U.S. athletes have the constitutional right of free speech and can openly support their political views in their own time, however those with views that might be "controversial" shouldn't have their success taken away.

Some sports fans can't appreciate the athleticism of certain athletes without the personal political beliefs of those athletes overshadowing their talent.

**With a clear separation of sports and politics, fans can be more unified over the actual game rather than the views of the athletes playing.**

Tom Brady has been seen with a "Make America Great Again" hat in his locker, a symbol of former President Donald Trump who's famously denounced the Black Lives Matter movement.

Connor McGregor is one of the best UFC fighters and also an avid Trump supporter.

Many fans can't support these athletes because of their political views, even though they're reputable players, according to sports columnist Nancy Armour in a Feb. 2 USA Today article.

Some would ask how are fans expected to support a certain team or player that is physically talented, but don't share their same values?

With a clear separation of sports and politics, fans can be more unified over the actual game rather than the views of the athletes playing.

The slander that is directed at athletes after they show support for political movements during a game, can overshadow the importance of that activism. While the social movements are critical, they should be left out of the game to prevent harm to an athlete's career.

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