

## What's happening

### Today

■ School-age children are invited to learn about **healthy habits through hands-on activities** during an event beginning at 3 p.m. at the Stephens Branch Library, 315 E. 14th St. in Davis. The program focuses on the heart and includes a clay activity. VN Cares: Happy Hearts is sponsored by the Vietnamese Cancer Awareness Research & Education Society.

■ The **Harper Junior High Band Boosters** are hosting "Sweet Notes," a fundraising event featuring an evening of music and desserts, from 7 to 9 p.m. in the multipurpose room at Harper Junior High, 4000 E. Covell Blvd. The event includes encore performances by sixth- and seventh-grade band students as well as performances by seventh-, eighth- and ninth-graders in small groups and ensembles showcasing their musical talents. Jazzamatazz, The J St. Jazz Cats, and the Harper Jazz Band also will perform. Proceeds will help defray the band's costs to travel to a musical performance in Santa Clara in May. All ages are welcome to attend the event. Admission is \$10 per person or \$25 per family. Desserts, snacks and light refreshments will be served.

### Saturday

■ School-age children are invited to learn about **healthy habits through hands-on activities**, including making soap, beginning at 11 a.m. at the South Davis Montgomery Library, 1441 Danbury St. VN Cares: Healthy Hands is sponsored by the Vietnamese Cancer Awareness Research & Education Society.

■ It's **Family Movie Time** at the Stephens Branch Library, 315 E. 14th St. in Davis, beginning at 2 p.m. All children and their families are welcome to view a family-friendly movie (rated G or PG). For the movie title, call 530-757-5593.

■ The **Davis High School Baroque Ensemble** will hold a fundraiser, A Taste of Baroque, from 3 to 6 p.m. at the Davis Arts Center. The event will include wine tasting from local wineries, catered appetizers, a silent auction and a concert by the Baroque Ensemble. The event's proceeds will support the group's Austria/Italy summer tour. Tickets are available from any Baroque Ensemble member or by contacting Kristi Gladding at klgld@pacbell.net.

### Saturday-Sunday

■ Aspiring babysitters ages 11 to 15 can learn necessary skills at an **American Red Cross training course** that includes instruction in child and infant CPR, rescue breathing, choking rescue, disease prevention and first aid. Upon successful completion of the course, participants will receive certifications in babysitter training and pediatric CPR/first aid, which are valid for two years. The class runs Feb. 25-26 (both days are required for certification) from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the Davis Senior Center, 646 A St. The cost is \$150 and pre-registration is required. Register at the city of Davis Parks and Community Services office, 23 Russell Blvd., or online at [www.cityofdavis.org](http://www.cityofdavis.org). For more information, call 530-757-5626.

### Tuesday

■ The Davis High School PTA presents a **Gap Year Fair** for students to learn more about gap-year options. The fair will run from 6 to 8:30 p.m. at the Veterans Memorial Center, 203 E. 14th St., with speakers presenting in the theater from 6 to 6:45 p.m. and the fair taking place in the multipurpose room from 6:45 to 8:30 p.m. The event is free but space is limited. Reserve a spot at [usagapyearfairs.org/fairs](http://usagapyearfairs.org/fairs).

### Wednesday

■ **Da Vinci Charter Academy** invites ninth- and 10th-grade parents to an information night from 6:30 to 8 p.m. in the multipurpose room at the school, 1400 E. Eighth St. Student and staff teams will give presentations about the school and its project-based approach to learning. For application information, visit [www.davincicharteracademy.net](http://www.davincicharteracademy.net).

### Saturday, March 4

■ The Davis High School Band Boosters will present the **25th annual Night at the Coconut Grove** from 6 to 9:30 p.m. at Emerson Junior High School, 1212 Calaveras Ave. In addition to band performances, guests will enjoy dinner, mocktails, a silent auction and a raffle. Proceeds will support DHS band programs. Tickets are \$50 for adults, \$25 for students and \$15 for student performers. To purchase tickets, visit <http://groups.dcn.org/dhsbandboosters/paypal-page>.

### Thursday, March 9

■ Montgomery Elementary School's fifth- and sixth-graders will host a **"Museum Night"** from 6 to 7 p.m. The public is welcome to hear the students present research on topics ranging from colonial explorers to ancient civilizations. Students will present in both English and Spanish.



FRED GLADDIS/ENTERPRISE PHOTOS

Jusely Arredondo, center, receives a city Golden Heart award for overcoming personal challenges from the Davis City Council, from left Rochelle Swanson, Will Arnold (himself a former Golden Heart winner), Mayor Robb Davis, Mayor Pro Tem Brett Lee and Lucas Frerichs.

## Three honored with Golden Hearts

By ANNE TERNUS-BELLAMY  
*Enterprise staff writer*

Twenty-five years ago, Davis was rocked by the horrific death of a 14-year-old Holmes Junior High School student.

Andrew Mockus was killed by a group of Davis teens who beat him, robbed him and pushed him into the path of a moving train.

Stunned, the city responded by holding public forums to discuss the issues facing the community's youths and ways the city could do more to help. In the end, the Davis City Council adopted seven recommendations that grew out of the forums, including the creation of the Golden Heart Awards, which would honor local teens for the good that they do. The awards would be given annually in two categories: overcoming personal challenges and community service.

On Tuesday night, three Davis teenagers were honored with Golden Heart Awards during a ceremony before the City Council.

One of them — Jusely Arredondo, awarded a Golden Heart for overcoming personal challenges — even received hers from a previous recipient: City Councilman Will Arnold.

Arredondo, Arnold said, "displays an incredible amount of resilience in the face of significant challenges."

She arrived at Holmes Junior High as a seventh-grader two years ago knowing almost no English but reached out for support from adults on campus and worked tirelessly, Arnold said.

By eighth grade, Arredondo had made exceptional gains in her English and continually advocated for herself, "showing remarkable insight and maturity for someone so young," the councilman said.

That maturity was critical when her baby sister died of sudden infant death syndrome

when Arredondo was in eighth grade. She had to grow up even more overnight. But she remains a kind, thoughtful and caring student, friend, daughter and sister, Arnold said, and continues to excel at school.

"She showed so much resilience," said Holmes counselor Ellen Shields, who nominated Arredondo for the award.

Two Davis teens, meanwhile, received Golden Heart Awards for community service.

Benjamin Hoffner-Brodsky's service to the community began at a young age — he was just 9 years old when he began volunteering with his mom at Davis Community Meals and the Interfaith Rotating Winter Shelter.

As a member of the Citrus Circuits robotics team, Hoffner-Brodsky organized community service events and assisted in setting up a workshop series to make STEM education accessible to new and low-income robotics teams, Mayor Robb Davis said.

Hoffner-Brodsky even led efforts that raised more than \$140,000 in scholarships and grants for the team and assisted with a women in STEM lecture series to showcase female role models and encourage women to enter engineering fields.

Hoffner-Brodsky did all of that, Davis said, while working through his own challenges.

Two years ago, a member of the community for whom Hoffner-Brodsky's family had been providing housing stepped in front of a moving freight train and took his life.

Hoffner-Brodsky received his suicide note via email while at school. And while many spoke at the memorial service, Davis said, it was Hoffner-Brodsky's poised, deeply personal, articulately delivered and



HOFFNER-BRODSKY

beautifully crafted speech that really resonated with the entire audience.

Also honored for making an impact in her community was Da Vinci Charter Academy senior Rayna Velasquez.

"While other students may be looking for fame and glory, Rayna has her head down, working steadily with a smile on her face," City Council member Rochelle Swanson said, adding that Velasquez operates at a different level than most high school seniors.

An excellent student with a stellar grade-point average, Velasquez could have chosen from among many four-year colleges, but has decided to live with her grandmother and attend community college in Solano County. She dreams of becoming a social worker and working with foster children.

Velasquez has always been passionate about creating a strong Da Vinci community, Swanson said, and helped do so by becoming an integral member of the school's restorative practices team.

Following 20 hours of training, she helped unveil the school's restorative practices conflict guidelines and continues to serve as a member of the student facilitator team, a group of 14 students who work to model and mediate restorative conversations on campus.

Velasquez also facilitates Friendship Day, a monthly event in which a group of students come together to build community and get to know classmates with whom they would not typically interact. Her influence in creating a supportive and warm school community, Swanson said, "cannot be emphasized enough."

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ARREDONDO



VELASQUEZ

## Sometimes, starting over is best

After the hubbub of the holidays and the new year fades, some college students may feel unsure that they have chosen the right college for them.

While it is relatively common for first-year freshmen to feel some sort of homesickness — UCLA Higher Ed Institute conducted research that shows that 69 percent of first-year college students experience homesickness — if it persists for too long or negatively impacts overall emotional, physical and academic well-being, it may be time to consider re-starting at a different college.

So, what to do? First, I suggest that students who find themselves in this situation seek support from on-campus resources such as student health counselors, resident assistants and peer advisers. I am not a therapist and there may be more going on than the typical homesickness.

Second, it is a good idea to consult with family and friends who know the student and can help assess the extent of the issue. If, after going through these steps, a student still feels uncertain, re-starting may be the answer.

At the heart of it, there is no need to be miserable or unhappy for four years in college, especially because studies show that happier students perform better.



JENNIFER BORENSTEIN  
COLLEGE CORNER

It's also fairly common to transfer: A 2015 State of College Admission report, produced by the National Association for College Admission Counseling, found that nearly 40 percent of all students who began their college careers in 2008 transferred at least once over the next six years.

Therefore, if you find yourself or someone you know in this situation, the first thing to do is realize that the student will need about six to 12 months to plan for a successful transfer due to the timing of the college application process.

Meanwhile, here are some of the main issues to analyze when thinking about switching to a new college:

■ **Appropriate academic challenge.** Are you struggling to stay on top of the material even though you are putting your best effort into it? Perhaps it is the opposite and you are not feeling challenged enough. In either case, another college with a different level of academic challenge

may be a better fit.

■ **Social fit.** Maybe the people you have met are just not the crowd you want to be with. Too much partying? Too few people you can relate to? Whatever the case may be, a new college affords a new social climate ... one that may be more suited to you.

■ **Size of school.** Did a large school seem ideal after growing up in a small town only to find that too large is too much of an adjustment? Or maybe small seemed right but you already feel like you have outgrown the scene? Changing the size of the school can really help make a student feel more comfortable.

■ **Location, location, location.** Borrowing from the real estate world, this adage applies here as well. Is the climate bringing you down? Snow or rain seemed fine until you went through several months of it and now see how it has impacted your mood. Are you feeling too far from home? All of these feelings may be telling you it is time to change the location of your college.

■ **Effects of the transfer process.** If the answers to the other issues point toward transferring, it is time to look at the cost-benefit analysis of doing so.

First, learn about your options. Do your research about the colleges you want to transfer to and understand the

requirements. For example, it may not be possible to transfer to a different college as a sophomore. Most UC campuses accept junior transfers only.

In addition, you will need to figure out how credits will transfer. You may or may not be able to jump right into your major and graduate in four years. I suggest asking your intended school if they will do a transcript review to give you a better sense of how the credits you have earned will transfer. It is also important to compare tuition and understand how the transfer would affect financial aid and merit money options.

Finally, since it may be more selective to enter as a transfer, be aware of the transfer admission rate at your intended school and make sure you are likely to gain acceptance.

As with many things in life, if at first you do not succeed try, try again. Transferring is not a sign of failure to launch; just the process of self-reflection and option-analysis may be worthwhile in and of itself. And, remember it is not the destination but the journey.

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