



Special Graduation Issue

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The Runner

California State University, Bakersfield

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Crismat Mateo/ The Runner
Jonathan Madrigal prepares for the graduation 2014 graduation ceremony.

CSUB introduces e-tickets and considers ceremony changes

By Steven Barker
Senior Staff Writer

As both an effort to improve convenience and reduce the length of California State University, Bakersfield's graduation ceremonies, the university is contemplating changes in structural and ticketing procedures.

Two such changes will be available this June. The first - the introduction of electronic tickets - will be featured in CSUB's Graduate and Hooding Ceremony on June 10, while the second - the addition of two extra name announcers - will be implemented for the June 13 and 14 commencements.

Director of Public Affairs and Communications, Colleen Dillaway said the university's implementation of e-tickets has been in consideration for years. She added that, after the commencement season has ended, a university committee will gather to discuss the results of the newly implemented changes.

If e-tickets are proven to improve convenience and ticketing efficiency, Dillaway expects they will be implemented for all graduation ceremonies next year.

Students are split on whether e-tickets are an effective means of dispersing graduation tickets.

"I would support e-tickets if it was organized," said Kimberly Stewart, a senior English major and soon-to-be-graduate. "If there was a limit on the tickets and it required a graduating student ID and it kept

a record. That way underclassmen can't get them. That way people could select how much they really need and not barter off extra. And if there was an option that if you needed more you would be on a list."

Senior psychology major and another soon-to-be-graduate, Justus Mora disagrees.

"I feel like there's a greater chance that people won't get their tickets," Mora said. "When you have a physical ticket, it's a lot easier to just give it to the person that you're going to have attend, and it just seems more personal that way."

The addition of two new name announcers is expected to reduce to help streamline the ceremony's proceedings.

"This should speed up the reading of the names, one place that we have noticed can slow the ceremony," Dillaway said in an email.

Absent from the contemplated changes is any indication that CSUB will host its graduation ceremonies either away from campus or indoors. While numerous students have complained of the heat at the 7 a.m. start of graduation and suggested that the ceremonies be held in the Icardo Center instead of the Amphitheatre, in a memorandum issued to the campus community, Provost Soraya Coley wrote that the Amphitheatre is CSUB's only feasible option for serving graduation's large audiences.

While the Icardo Center's maximum seating capacity for the graduation ceremonies is 2,500 seats, the Amphitheatre capacity is 3,840.

CSUB's graduation ceremonies have had an average of 3,115 people in attendance over the last five years.

While CSUB has considered hosting graduation away from campus in the future, Coley

and Dillaway both said the university is committed to holding the commencement ceremonies at CSUB in the short term.

"The Administration continues to seek other options that allow for the largest attendance possible. For example, staff are exploring having one large combined undergraduate ceremony in a 'grassy area' on the campus, with first-come, first-served seating, and individual school ceremonies to follow," Coley said.

"This campus is an important part of students' journey, and when family members come to campus to see their student graduate, often the ceremony is the only time some family members visit the campus that has been such a large part of their students' lives," Dillaway added. This is an important aspect of the graduation ritual and the administration at CSUB will work to keep commencements on campus to allow that fuller experience for students and their families."

The news comes as a disappointment to students hoping to have future graduation ceremonies in different venues.

"It's too bad," said Febizza Ann Obar, a junior kinesiology major. "It's so hot in the mornings, even that early."

"I also think it's really disappointing that, for all of the time we put into getting our degree, students are forced to sit in that heat for as long as they do just to take a quick picture and receive credit for their hard work."

Dillaway also added that CSUB doesn't have the financial resources needed to divide the two commencement ceremonies into smaller events, an action that would be required if the Icardo Center were to become a viable graduation venue.

Multi-award winning journalist shares her journey to success

By Ryan Barrera
Contributing Writer

Since she could remember, she had always wanted to be on TV reporting the news. At the age of five, a young Irma Cervantes would walk around her house talking into a hairbrush, pretending it was a microphone and telling the news to the wall or to anyone who

began to question whether she would make it in journalism. She went back and forth because she thought being a journalist wasn't as possible as a popular job like teaching or becoming a nurse.

Once she entered college at California State University, Bakersfield she went back to her original dream of having a career in journalism and she continued her quest to become a reporter.

During her last quarter at CSUB, Cervantes saw an opportunity to get a job at Channel 45, which is owned by Univision Communications, when a couple of the station's representatives came to her video production class to explain what it's like to work at a news station. When they asked for questions she asked if they were hiring.

"I asked if they had any jobs. They said they had a production assistant job. So they gave me an application

and they were finishing taking questions and I was finishing filling it out while they were talking and they left. When I was done I left class and ran after them. I didn't know which way they went, but I got lucky and I found them in the parking lot in front of the

[See CERVANTES, Page 7]

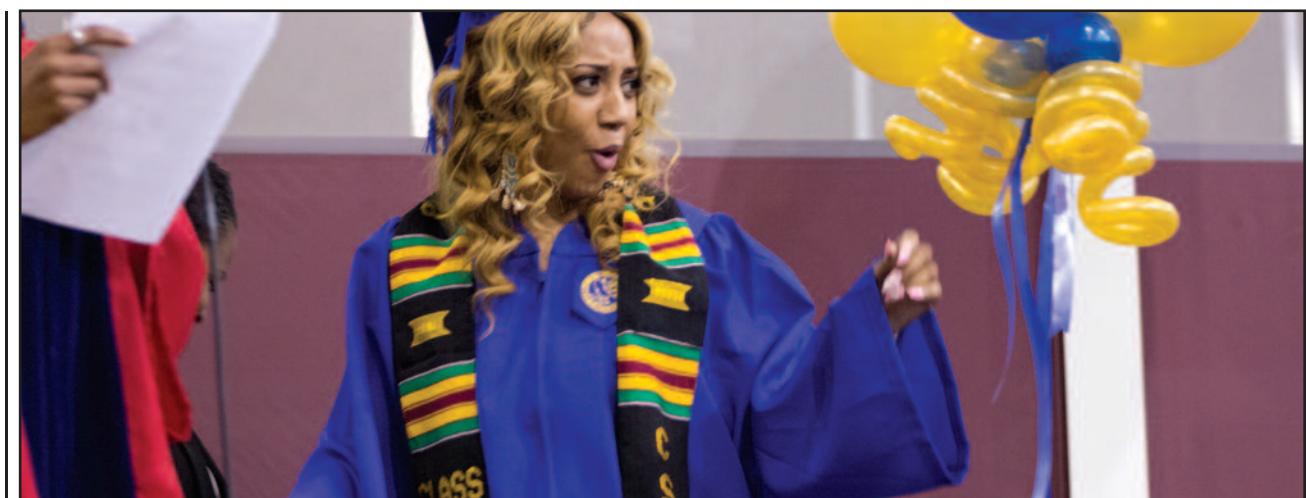
would listen.

"The news back then, was pretty much what my mom was doing or what I was going to play with or where I was going to go," Cervantes said.

Cervantes was born to Mexican immigrant parents and was raised in Delano. When she entered high school she



Photo Courtesy of Irma Cervantes



Adriana Vega/ The Runner
Senior Breane Brothers celebrates after being awarded her Kente Stole at CSUB's Black Graduates ceremony in the Student Recreation Center, May 31.

Black grads honored at ceremony

by Adriana Vega
Photographer

Every spring right before graduation many ethnic groups decide to hold a recognition ceremony, and this year was no different.

The Black Graduates Recognition Ceremony for the Class of 2014 was held on Saturday May 31 in the Student Recreation Center's Basketball courts. The ceremony is to honor those who have worked to achieve the recognition of graduating and being presented with the Kente Stole to represent their African heritage. The Kente Stole is a stole filled with colors and patterns with each color having a significant meaning.

"The ceremony is to show off your pride and who you are," said graduating senior, Renelle Gisyer.

Each student attending is identified through the African American Student union as well as the University's faculty and staff. Each student is individually recognized and presented with the Kente Stole to represent the African American pride at the commencement ceremony.

The ceremony, like most, begins with the processional. After each student was seated, the ceremony went on with Ms. Evelyn Young singing the Black National Anthem. Once the National Anthem was over, multiple



Adriana Vega/The Runner
Evelyn Young sings the Black National Anthem during the annual Black Graduates Recognition Ceremony.

speakers such as Dr. Thomas Wallace and student Linda Forrester walked to the podium to present awards for CSUB Trailblazers as well as to congratulate the graduating students on their honorable achievement.

Dr. Wallace, who gave words of encouragement to the graduating students said, "It is now time to jump off the porch and run with the big dogs."

All members of the audience and graduating seniors shouted and cheered in excitement.

June Grimes as well as other faculty and staff members were presented with recognition awards.

Students like Linda Forrester and Andre Polly were also given recognition awards for outstanding achievements. After recognitions and awards, and performances were over, the Kente Stoles were finally awarded.

Students such as Breane Brothers celebrated and cheered with joy while others embraced and congratulated each other.

Gisyer's sorority sisters Kelsey Eddings showed up with her family to show support, "I am so proud of her and I can't wait to walk across the stage with her in two weeks."

For any information on the Black Graduates Recognition Ceremony contact Outreach Counselor at the office of University Outreach, Karla Young.

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RUNNER ON THE STREET

By Juana Martinez, Staff Photographer

This week, The Runner asked, "What are you planning to do after you graduate?"



Michael Medrano
Physics
Senior

"Grad school at San Jose State"



Tyler Carcamo
Chemistry
Senior

"Prepping for jobs, med school, and working on a research journal on organic synthesis."



Daniely Mendoza
Human Biology
Senior

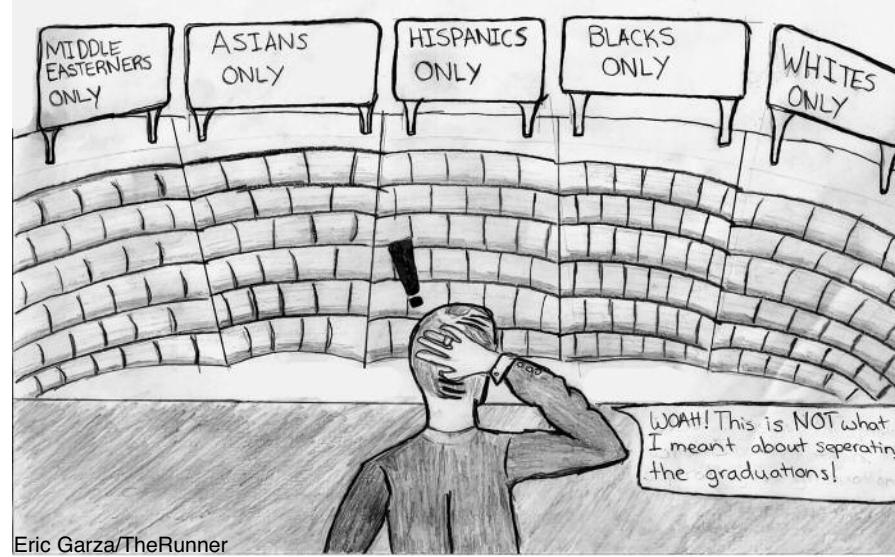
"Working up to be a physician"

Ethnic graduation fosters social segregation

By Richard Garibay
Senior Staff Writer

As graduation rolls around, many seniors are planning their celebrations. They also face an interesting question of what ceremony to attend as the school provides different ceremonies for different races. So, if you're an African American or Hispanic student, you can attend a graduation event intended for only African Americans or Hispanics.

First of all, a separate graduation ceremony for each race promotes racial separation. If we truly want to move past an era of a society that notices someone's skin color before anything else we must stop reminding everyone that there are different skin colors. A ceremony that emphasizes skin color is really just segregation, albeit voluntary, but segregation nonetheless. It groups people and creates divides between them, which is appalling as this celebration should be a communal one. To truly move away from racial division we must stop labeling people as African American, Mexican American or whatever else and



begin to think of ourselves as just Americans.

Let me make it absolutely clear that I am not advocating the idea that we should shun our cultural backgrounds, but instead realize that there are times when it is relevant and others when it is not.

Second, graduation is a time to celebrate hard work, perseverance and

achievement- not someone's race. This is an event for students of CSUB, not African Americans, Hispanics or Caucasians. Race has absolutely nothing to do with someone graduating. Graduating college was due solely to the efforts of the student's character not the color of their skin. It seems wrong then to give them different treatment for their racial background. To give someone spe-

cial recognition for their race is just as bad as condemning them for it. This is the root of racial tension, people acknowledging that people are different and should be treated differently based on their skin color.

There are those who would inevitably say that these ceremonies recognize the hardships that students from these backgrounds faced. By this logic we should gather up all of the students who live below the poverty line or find every student that suffered through things like depression and anxiety and give them all a special ceremony. Wouldn't this recognize all the obstacles they overcame? The fact that you received a diploma is reward enough. You understand the hardships that you faced, and everyone faces some, so there is no need to flaunt it in front of people.

I feel that the only reason to hold and utilize these graduations is the unlimited tickets given to the participants.

With that said, I don't think the ceremony should be held in high regard as an event that promotes diversity just because of extra seating.

Graduation is a time for pride, not apathy

By Anthony Jauregui
Senior Staff Writer

If you're graduating this spring, you should care.

As an apathetic person, I don't

care about much in society. But, if there's one thing I give a damn about, it's graduating college, and it's something you should care about, too.

Graduates have gone through

Hell in their years of college, so it's easy to understand why they would want to hop on their high horse and gallop out of here without so much as a hand shake from the seldom-seen president of the school.

But graduating college is an amazing prospect and dream many people cannot say they've had the opportunity to experience.

No matter what the case is, whether they didn't allow you to overload your units or you got your financial aid check deposited in the wrong account; these are petty reasons for not being ecstatic that you've accomplished what others do not have the opportunity to do. You shouldn't focus on negative experiences you've had with the school when determining your decision to attend graduation.

Instead, celebrate your graduation like it's your 21st birth-

day. It only comes once in most people's lifetime so ignoring it would be like ignoring your first legal drink.

Finishing school is something all of us want, and ending it without a bang is an anti-climactic end to a lengthy journey. Paul Rendes, a 22-year-old senior history major said, "I think people should be excited about graduation. It's a pretty big milestone."

Not only is it milestone in your life, it's one that not too many people can experience.

"You should realize how big of an event this is, because not that many people get to do it, and why not be excited for yourself?" said Elvira Garcia, a 22-year-old senior sociology major.

There is no debate that graduating college is something that takes perseverance from students, but not being excited or not caring about graduation is

absurd. This is the day that you flip off who ever said you couldn't do it and move on with your life. And if you think that you don't need to shake the president's hand or stand in a long line to purchase your cap and gown to say you graduated college I understand.

But remember, this is the last time you can be a pretentious college kid and it's okay to be on your high horse. At graduation, you'll be on your high horse with a cap gown and think, "Man, I conquered this."

Graduation should be something to look forward to. You may think the school screwed you over or you think the ceremony is just an event for people to fete their pretentious egos or even think ceremonies are for the "conformists", but people like Steve Jobs, Bill Gates and Mark Zuckerberg didn't graduate college, and look at them now.

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Art professor conducts protest against CSUB hotel



Layne Ogle/The Runner

Dr. Rebecca Weller teaches the volunteer students how to properly clean a hotel room as a way to show people what changes are happening at CSUB on Friday, May 30.

By Layne Ogle
Photographer

California State University, Bakersfield has been spending a lot of money recently on bettering the campus with the new student housing and the new music building. However, some individuals may feel like some of these investments are unnecessary.

A recent project that is beginning development is the CSUB hotel. This hotel will be located on the South side of Hardt Field and will be open to the public as well as those who travel to CSUB for events.

Graduating senior art major, Tanya Ratkowsky, seized this opportunity for her final performance to help share her reaction as well as awareness of what is going on around here in Bakersfield.

"They're building the art department which makes sense because there isn't a good one now; they're building the dorms because there are so many new students coming in; but the hotel being built came out of left field," said Ratkowsky.

Ratkowsky wanted to raise awareness about the hotel being built.

Her performance is not meant to be a protest to the hotel, but mostly as an outlet for others to realize what is going on around them so that they may have their own opinion about these

events.

Ratkowsky staged her performance at the location where the hotel will be built and had several student volunteers as well as Dr. Rebecca Weller, a CSUB art lecturer on Friday, May 30.

Graduating senior liberal studies major, Elizabeth Duran, volunteered as a student in the performance.

She felt that it was important to be involved in this performance because it allows others to form their own opinions.

"I think that it really makes us think about what's going on around us and we need to have our own opinion about it," said Duran.

Her piece was her first public performance. She set up a "classroom" in the field while Dr. Weller taught the class how to be good housekeepers.

"I did this as my reaction to the hotel being built and I chose a classroom setting because this is still a school so I compared that with learning how to run a hotel," said Ratkowsky.

"It is good for the campus and for the students or are they just hoping to bring money to the campus," said Ratkowsky.

More people need to look at the events and changes happening over the campus and learn to formulate opinions and to do something about it.

ASI recap of accomplished goals and look toward future

By Stephanie Cox
Senior Staff Writer

This year, the Associated Students Inc. has funded events from clubs like Theta Sigma Chi, Psychology club, Delta Zeta Tau and Japan and Beyond. They also acknowledging campus issues observed by students and attending committee's to keep students informed on decisions.

Throughout the year, ASI has funded clubs like Delta Zeta Tau for the La Gran Posada, Campus Gamers for Gamer Education Day, Jazz club for free admission to students for the Jazz Festival and M.E.C.H.A for it's Cinco De Mayo festival and Noche De Gala.

President of ASI, Hilda Nieblas said, Noche De Gala was one of her favorite events. Mike Kwon, Housing Director and Savannah Andrews, Vice President of Programming both agreed the Noche De Gala was also one of their favorite events.

As well as funding events, ASI also promotes lots of other

events as well by attending them. The Dance Marathon, which was a favorite of Nieblas, Kwon and Andrews, was an event that ASI attended to help raise money for the Lauren Small Children's Medical Center.

Students on campus often ask, "what does ASI do." ASI provides funding for social events, support projects around campus and talk to students.

In ASI weekly board meetings, there is time set aside for campus issues. Some issues brought up this year have been the handi-cap buttons on the doors not working, constant complaints on food expenses, construction complaints and students feeling unwelcomed when transferring from other schools.

This year, the ASI board has accomplished many projects including raising library study hours and implementing funding for new hydrations stations.

ASI has aimed to make our campus more social and up to date.

ASI ambition has not changed in it's plans for next year. Future ASI President, Derek Stotler said, more student life is a goal for

next year.

"We want to reach out to students to let them know about our events. Rowdy TV will be our bi-monthly video for our students highlighting past accomplishments and what is to come," said Stotler.

The Rowdy TV YouTube channel will be available next year to students.

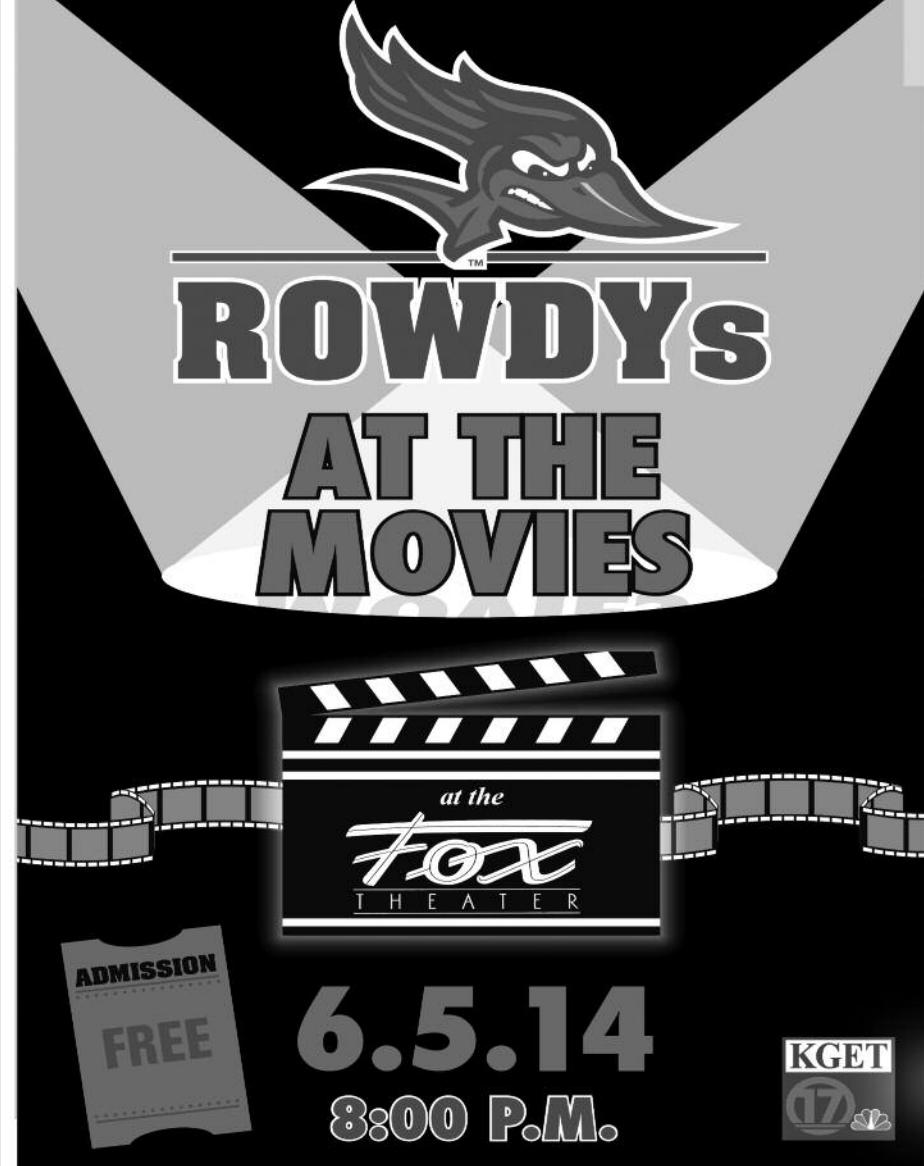
Stotler discussed many other goals for next year including creating an inner club council where clubs can collaborate on events.

A senior project in which funding from outside contributors will go toward a set percent for a grand project to be decided by students.

Club funding is a major goal for ASI next year, just as it has been this year.

"We want to make sure our clubs have proper funding. We're setting aside more funds for clubs but it's a three step process," said Stotler. "We want bigger events."

Student Affairs Report



WAIT FOR IT:

Chicano Commencement
Celebration
Icardo Center
June 11th
6:00pm

Karaoke Night
Rowdy's Place
June 12th
7:00pm

Job Search
Workshop
CECE (Runner Cafe)
June 18th
Noon



2014 Spring Commencement
CONGRATULATIONS TO ALL THE 2014 GRADUATES!!
Tuesday, June 10th 6:00pm- Icardo Center (Graduate Hooding)
Friday, June 13th 7:00am- Amphitheater (A&H, BPA and NSME)
Saturday, June 14th 7:00am Amphitheater (SSE)

Wed 6/4
Last Week
of School
3 Days Left
until Finals !!

Thur 6/5
Late Night Study
Student Union
7:00pm
Rowdy's Award Show
Fox Theater
8:00pm

Fri 6/6
Year End
Gaming Party
Rowdy's Place
Noon

Sat 6/7
Jazz Ensemble
Spring Concert
Dore Theater
8:00pm

Sun 6/8
Extended Library
Hours
Open
Till 1:00am

Mon 6/9
Campus Clean Up
Noon
Extended Library
Hours
Open Till 1:00am

Tue 6/10
Reading Day
Student Union
All Day
Extended Library
Hours
Open Till 1:00am

Congratulations to the Class of 2014



CSU Bakersfield

Grad Shoutouts

Congratulations Class of 2014!

Congratulations!
We are so proud of all of you and your accomplishments.
Thanks for all your hard work as Library Student Assistants.
We are fortunate to have you as a part of our Stiern Library family.
Good luck!!



Paul Rendes



Shira Stamps



Mastura Martinez



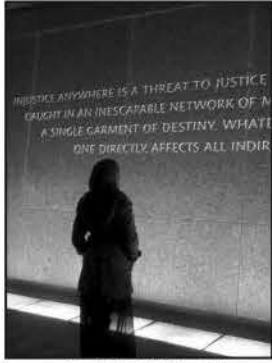
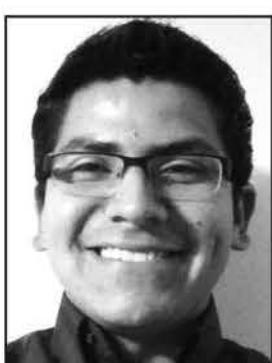
Jessica Carillo



Jovanni Garcia

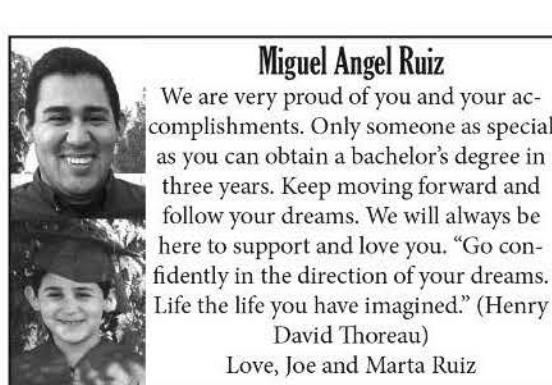


Dominica Martinez

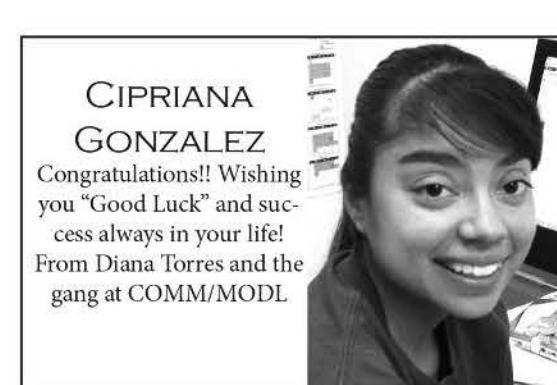
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Religious StudiesVeronica Arellano
Modern Languages &
LiteraturesGarrett Geissel
EnglishFernando Herrera, Jr.
PhilosophyBrandon Landers
Outstanding Visual Arts
Project
"Barricade"Tyler Ledwell
ArtBenito Medrano
Outstanding Humanities
Paper
"Closed Grace: The Catholic Rejection
of Same-Sex Marriage"Richard Roux
outstanding Graduate Thesis
"Bootleggers, Booze, and Busts: Prohi-
bition in Kern County, 1919-1933"Kristin Self
HistoryAshton Smith
Outstanding Performing Arts
Project
Senior RecitalMiguel Torres Cruz
TheatreEric Wastaferro
MusicWanda Winkler
Communications

Thank you to my professors
and fellow students! It has
been great fun.
Wanda Winkler
Communications

Congratulations
graduating PRSSA members! We wish
you all the best as you enter your jour-
ney into your career!
You made it!

Tiffany Wong
Outstanding Graduate
Paper
"If Memory Fails Us: The Impres-
sions of W.G. Sebald's The Rings
of Saturn"

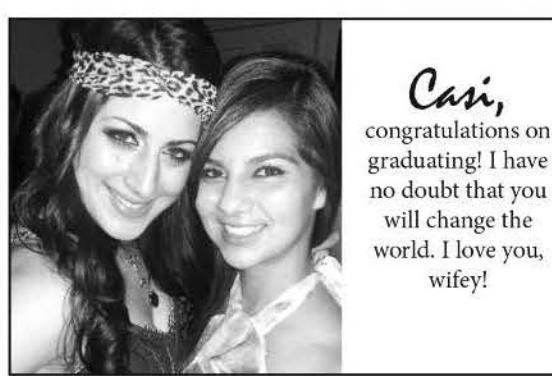
We are very proud of you and your ac-
complishments. Only someone as special
as you can obtain a bachelor's degree in
three years. Keep moving forward and
follow your dreams. We will always be
here to support and love you. "Go con-
fidently in the direction of your dreams.
Life the life you have imagined." (Henry
David Thoreau)
Love, Joe and Marta Ruiz

CIPRIANA
GONZALEZ
Congratulations!! Wishing
you "Good Luck" and suc-
cess always in your life!
From Diana Torres and the
gang at COMM/MODL

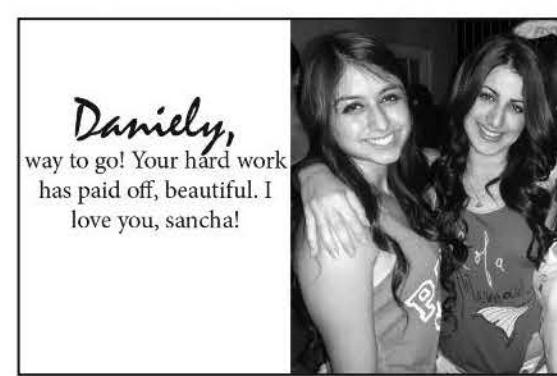
The Graduate Student
Center staff would like
to send this shoutout to
their favorite graduate
student who is graduating
this June with a Master of
Arts degree in Education-
al Counseling. Congrats
Anayeli Gomez-Navarro for
this incredible accomplish-
ment!



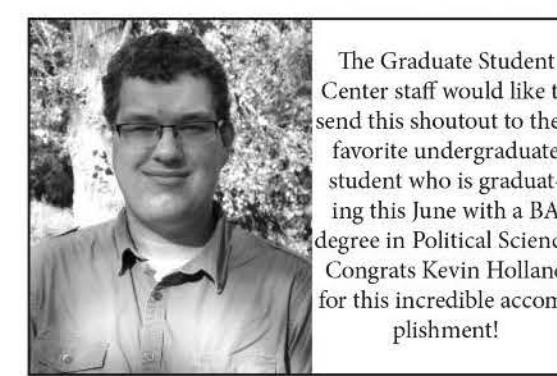
Congrats graduating
Runner staff members!
Caché Cantrell
Mark Felix
Stephen Gaede
Meagan Leon
Daysi Meza
Fernando Miranda
Andrew Rivera
Margarita Rodriguez
Gerardo Saenz
Anisha Velez-Gambe



Cari,
congratulations on
graduating! I have
no doubt that you
will change the
world. I love you,
wifey!



Daniely,
way to go! Your hard work
has paid off, beautiful! I
love you, sancha!



The Graduate Student
Center staff would like to
send this shoutout to their
favorite undergraduate
student who is graduat-
ing this June with a BA
degree in Political Science.
Congrats Kevin Holland
for this incredible accom-
plishment!



Annie,
We are so proud
of how much
you have accom-
plished and
excited to see
how far you will
go. Congratula-
tions!
Love, Dad &
Lisa

New mother continues college education

By Athena Skapinakis
Advertising Manager

On April 11 at 10:25 a.m., Tiffany Evans gave birth to her son Mark Eduardo Lopez. He was seven pounds, nine ounces and 20-and-a-half inches.

Evans, 22, is a senior business administration major with a focus in human resources. She is in her senior year expected to graduate in the fall, and nothing is going to hold her back from that goal.

However, being a new mother has proved to be difficult. Evans is doing the best she can and looks forward to graduating next fall.

"I'm slowly getting into the way things were," said Evans.

She found out she was pregnant last summer. She and her husband had been trying for a baby, and once she visited a doctor, their hopes were confirmed.

"I wasn't planning to leave school," Evans said. She fully intended on maintaining her student schedule and sticking through it until graduation.

She did take maternity leave from her job as a manager at Fresh and Easy.

"My husband pushed me to [go back to school]," Evans said.

Her husband, Alvaro Lopez, encouraged her to continue her education. He doesn't want her to work the rest of the year and only wants her to focus on school.

"He's my back bone," Evans said.

The pair has been married for nearly two years. Lopez said that although his wife considered putting school on hold for the baby, he helped her realize the need to focus on graduating.

"[It's] great to see her staying on track with school because many people drop out," said Lopez.

Lopez said he believes that any woman can continue school and also take care of children if she really wants too.

"It's hard, but it's not impossible, especially with a strong support system," Lopez said.

To help her with responsibilities at home, Lopez cooks to ensure Tiffany gets to rest and have some spare time to herself.

Lopez praises her for her mastery of multitasking, saying that she always makes sure their son's needs are met before anyone else's.

"It's hard because there is no couple time anymore, and it's all about the baby," said Lopez who works in the oilfields. "I work 12 hours a day, and I'm barely at home during the day so Tiffany is with the baby all the time."



"I don't want to be anymore behind. I want to keep going and finish [school]."

-Tiffany Evans



Crismat Mateo/The Runner

Top Left: Tiffany Evans, a California State University, Bakersfield student, watches her son, as she gets ready to go to class on Wednesday, May 28.

Top Right: Tiffany Evans' son lays on his swing as his mother takes care of him before she heads out to school.

Middle: Mark, Tiffany Evans' son, has not hindered his mother's education this quarter at California State University, Bakersfield.

Bottom: Tiffany Evans and her son share a moment at their home.

His steady Monday through Friday schedule allows him and Evans to spend some time together in the evenings. The two also make sure to have date nights while Mark is taken care of by Evans's mom and dad.

"That's an essential part to a relationship as well. When you have a kid, you have to make time for your husband," said Evans.

She believes that it is all about balance.

While Evans is at school and Lopez works, her mother usually watches the baby.

She said that in the beginning her mother wanted her to finish school before having a baby, but once Mark was born "all that stuff went out the window." Evans explained that her mother enjoys bonding with the baby very much.

Often sleep deprived, Evans gets in naps whenever she can. She usually only gets about four hours of sleep every day, saying that it's "on and off" while most of her time goes toward taking care of the baby. She often studies and does homework while the baby sleeps.

Evans notes some differences between being a student and being a student who is also a mother. The extra time like taking care of the baby, breastfeeding, waking up in the middle of the night, changing diapers and bathing keeps her busy.

Evans said that her professors were also very understanding and encouraging when she notified them she would be taking time off. She only missed about three to four class sessions before diving right back into her regular 15-unit routine. Professor See has been particularly supportive.

Another professor was able to accommodate Tiffany by allowing her to test later.

"As a student you already think it's hard enough," Evans said.

She still keeps up with all of her classes and does her best to maintain focus.

This quarter she made sure to space her classes about two hours apart each so that she was able to return home with her baby.

During the summer, Evans said she would be looking forward to spending quality time with her son.

"I don't want to be anymore behind. I want to keep going and finish [school]," said Evans.

Evans is hoping to find work in human resources. She hasn't decided on the exact direction of where she wants to go, but feels her professor Tom See will guide her.

Tiffany said that she thinks anything is possible, including becoming a new parent while attending school.

"Just keep going and don't give up," said Evans.

"Above all else, the professors made my experience a truly memorable one."

Education Programs

- Education (Special Emphasis)
- Educational Leadership
- Mild/Moderate Education Specialist Preliminary
- Multiple Subject (Elementary)
- Preliminary Administrative Services
- Single Subject (Secondary)
- Special Education

Bachelors*

- Business Administration
- Health Administration
- Liberal Studies
- Organizational Management
- Public Administration

*These programs follow an accelerated term schedule

Masters

- Master of Business Administration for Experienced Professionals
- Master of Health Administration
- Leadership and Management

Doctoral

- Doctor of Organizational Leadership (Ed.D.)



Courtney Capra

Bachelor's,
Business Administration 2013
Marketing Coordinator
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**Achieve
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First-generation graduates to walk this spring

Erica Hawkins

John Madrigal



Bre Williams/The Runner
Erica Hawkins a 23-year-old graduate with a double major in criminal justice and religious studies posed in her cap and gown outside Walter Stern Library on May 28.

By Bre Williams
Staff Writer

For some graduates who walk across the stage it is their shining moment.

For Erica Hawkins, her shining moment will be shared with her mother, who will be watching her first child to graduate college walk across that stage and collect a hard-earned degree.

Erica a first generation graduate in the Hawkins family and is also the youngest of six children. She is graduating at age 23 with a double major in criminal justice and religious studies.

Hawkins' father, who passed away a few months before she was born, attended college for a short while and her mother did not graduate from high school, which makes Hawkins' graduation all the more meaningful.

Hawkins said that her mother not graduating high school made her want to go to college and succeed to make her mom proud.

Her mother never told her she had to go to college, but Hawkins said she knew that her mother wanted her to continue her education after high school.

Being a first generation college student was trying at times because no one in the family had experience with college, so it took a lot more self-motivation and determination on her part.

At one point in her college career, Hawkins was working several jobs, taking 22 units, and running track.

Even with that busy schedule and having to

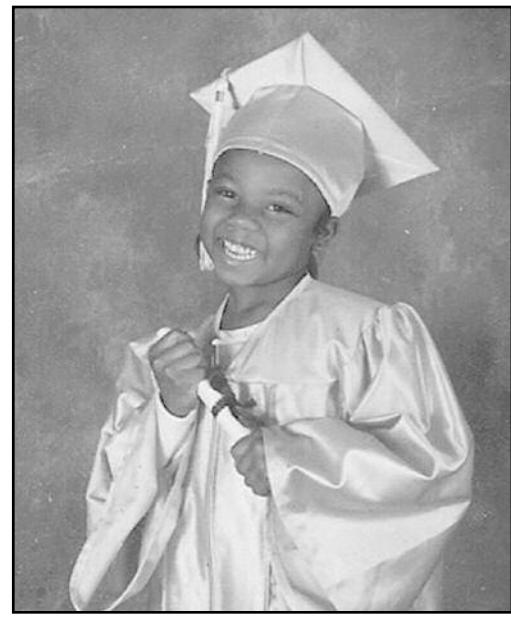


Photo courtesy of Erica Hawkins
A five-year-old Erica Hawkins flashed a grin when she graduated kindergarten from Atlantic Head Start Elementary School in Long Beach, California.

motivate herself she maintained a 3.0 GPA her entire college career and will get to wear an honors chord on graduation day.

Along with her mother, Hawkins is excited to have Dr. Hall and Dr. Campagna-Pinto watch her walk across the stage. These professors helped influence her greatly throughout her academic career.

Dr. Campagna-Pinto made her love religious studies so much that it convinced her to take on a double major.

She also is happy to make her grandfather proud even though he lives in Texas and will not see her graduate. After graduation, Erica plans to move to Texas and have a career as a social worker.

She wants to be a social worker because she has three siblings that were adopted and she saw how much their social workers helped them through life.

Hawkins said she wants to be motivation for children and be a shoulder they can lean on when they need it.

She plans to continue her education at the University of Houston Texas and obtain her masters in social work.

Hawkins is determined to succeed in all she does and graduating college was just the first step in her continuing academic journey. It was a journey that required perseverance and dedication.

Graduation day, Erica will be all smiles and she said her mother will probably cry because she is so proud to watch her youngest walk across the stage.

because she is so proud to watch her youngest walk across the stage.



Marisel Maldonado/The Runner
CSUB senior Jonathan R. Madrigal, 23, will be a first-generation college graduate with a major in psychology and a minor in criminal justice.

By Christopher Short
Staff Writer

Jonathan Madrigal personifies dedication.

"Sí se puede," said Madrigal, a psychology major at California State University, Bakersfield.

Madrigal is a first-generation graduate in his family.

"Being a first-generation college graduate is a tremendous honor for not only myself, but my family as well," said Oscar Sandoval, 21, a fellow psychology major and colleague. Both Sandoval and Madrigal share a common bond in this admirable achievement.

Commencing his undergraduate degree in Fall 2009, Madrigal has been striving toward completion ever since. His hard work and commitment is transparently inspiring.

"From my perspective, Jonathan has shown to work diligently throughout his undergrad and always works hard to strive for good grades and accolades," said Jesus Perez, 29, a business and administration major and fellow colleague at CSUB.

However, Madrigal's college experience hasn't been all puppies, flowers and rainbows.

"I started off as an engineering major, then I switched to physics for about a quarter, then I decided to try nursing," said Madrigal. "I wasn't happy with these majors not because they weren't difficult, but because I wasn't passionate about it as others in the field were. So I decided to go undeclared and I took psychology 100 with Professor Rude. I instantly found my passion."

For Madrigal, psychology is a field where he can come alongside people and lend a helping

hand.

"I want to help individuals, most specifically kids and marriages," said Madrigal. "My parents were both immigrants from Mexico and were always at work. They would leave before I woke up to go to school and would get home almost at the time I had to go to sleep. I just want to make a difference and show people that someone who isn't family cares about them."

Madrigal's collegiate journey has had its rough roads to till.

How did he persevere? The support from his mother.

"My mom always told me to keep on going and not to give up," said Madrigal. "She has truly inspired me and I remember everyday when she would come home from working at Grimmway Farms. She would tell me to work hard and that education was the best thing she gave me."

With graduation on the horizon, Madrigal's family, especially his mother,

is excited.

"I did this all for my mom," said Madrigal. "So I could one day tell her that she doesn't have to worry about bills anymore and she could just relax like she deserves."

Over the course of his five years at CSUB, Madrigal has found long-lasting friendships.

"My favorite part of college was the people I met and the lasting friendships that I made," said Madrigal. "I have met people that have had a huge impact on my life."

Madrigal is currently looking into Masters of Social Work programs and pursuing a career in social work.

"I ultimately desire to become a licensed therapist in marriage, family, and/or therapy," said Madrigal.



Marisel Maldonado/The Runner
Jonathan R. Madrigal, a member of the Delta Zeta Tau fraternity, says his mother was his strongest supporter.

My mom always told me to keep on going and not to give up.

Jonathan Madrigal

Local journalist becomes Public Affairs Coordinator for CSUB

[CERVANTES, Page 1] Doré. I gave them the application and they called me about two weeks later and I went in for an interview," Cervantes said.

After graduating CSUB with a bachelor's degree in communications in 1999, Cervantes immediately started working as a production assistant at Channel 45 Univision Communications.

Though the media production assistant job wasn't ideal for her, it was her entrance into the world of journalism and an outlet for her to learn and obtain some experience.

She met many new people including Michael Thorpe, currently a photography teacher for the Kern County Superintendent of Schools, who was working as a producer and director at KUVI 45/KABE 39.

"Irma was a little diminutive, but she was eager, obviously knew the language well and showed a willingness to learn and get her hands dirty doing the day to day grunt work of making TV commercials," said Thorpe. "She didn't flinch from any of the requirements of the job, from wrapping cables and carrying gear to learning to use the big broadcast cameras and editing on tape or computer."

In May of 2002, a position for a news reporter and photographer opened up. Knowing she wanted to report the news, the station offered Cervantes the new position and she accepted.

From fires to political debates, Cervantes has reported and photographed it all. During her 14-year run at Univision Communications, Cervantes has earned many awards for her work. The two that stand out the most include Edward R. Murrow awards and Emmy's. She won two Emmy's in June 2012, for her work as a reporter in a newscast and the other for her series on the United Farm Workers.

The two Edward R. Murrow's are considered the most prestigious honor in journalism. Earning the Murrow's was no easy task; they are even more difficult to obtain than the Emmys, because the regions are bigger. Cervantes competed with other news stations from Arizona, Nevada, Oregon, Hawaii and even Guam, just to name a few. She earned the Murrow awards for best use of video and sound in two feature stories on La Rosa Paletas and a child pianist prodigy.

The other was awarded for best video sports reporting for story on the League of Dreams, a sports league for children with special needs.

Despite her successful journalism career, she's

humble about the impact of her work.

"I think it shows that I always strive to do really good work. That's really the message I want to send, not, 'Look I'm an award winner', but, 'Look, I work hard and I do good work when I do it,'" Cervantes said.

In Feb. 2013, Cervantes said goodbye to the job she coveted to become the public affairs coordinator for CSUB.

Some might ask why she left a job where she was doing what she loved and was so successful. Her answer is that she felt she did her dream job and did it well long enough and it was time for her to move on and experience other things and grow from them.

She also felt her dream job had some caveats. After almost being shot at and attacked by a pit-bull, Cervantes wanted something more stable and safe.

Colleen Dillaway, CSUB's Director of Public Affairs and Communications, is not only Cervantes' boss but hired her as well, for her impressive résumé and successful journalism career and how it impacted the community.

"She is an incredibly hardworking person and I'm proud of her accomplishments, not for herself, but for what they represent to her family. She

was one of the first in her family to go to college. Not only did she go, she earned her degree and then turned around and earned a Master's in Public Administration in 2013. Irma's an important part of the Communications team. I can't imagine it without her," Dillaway said.

Now, in her new position, Cervantes works in University Advancement and connects with the community at CSUB and in Bakersfield.

Despite having a lucrative career in journalism she didn't really leave that life behind entirely, she still gets to do the things she loves, like writing and photography.

Being the public affairs coordinator, Cervantes manages CSUB's social media presence and she still gets to shoot and edit video and take photos for university events.

She also writes for the CSUB blog, telling the stories of past CSUB graduates.

Cervantes is happy in her new position at CSUB and is looking forward to leadership roles in the future after obtaining her master's in public administration.

"I really see myself being even more involved in the community and growing in my career," Cervantes said.

Bakersfield is a wrestling hotbed

By Nate Sanchez
Sports Columnist

Mat Men

A term used to describe the athletes who have chosen wrestling as their craft.

The Wrestler

You probe the consistency of the mat with your feet. It's cushioned like a firm foam mattress, but there will be no rest for you here. Not today. From behind your headgear, you hear instructions from your coach and shouts from the crowd in the stands. Their shouts are all positive, though not all are meant for your ears.

The whistle blows and the match begins.

Two minutes of grappling leads to an open opportunity and you take it. As your opponent makes a move to take you down, a quick sweep of the leg reverses his attack. You wrap your arm around one leg, the other hooks around his neck. The cheering grows louder and the instructions come more often.

You cling to your prey like a lion to a gazelle. After a few seconds, another whistle blows. Your hand is raised by the referee and the crowds roar as you stand victorious over your defeated opponent. The savannah is yours, and you proved it today. You walk back to the bench to high fives and congratulations from your teammates.

But you know they're more than that. They're your best friends. They're your comrades; your brothers.

That's what wrestling is in Bakersfield. It's not just a sport. It's a brotherhood; a fraternity. Its reach stretches beyond the big, colored mats in gyms across the state into the heart of many a local athlete. Its legacy, though not as pronounced and paraded as football's pageantry, is still powerfully palpable.

The Local Kids

Bakersfield is a concentrated source of wrestling talent. Out of the 29 wrestlers on CSUB's wrestling team, all but one are from California. Redshirt 141-pounder Dalton Kelley is the

only exception to the Californian theme. The senior is a native of Colorado. The eight aforementioned wrestlers are locals, hailing from high schools here in town. To narrow the scope even further, seven of those eight are from the same high school.

In another instance of football overshadowing the local rich wrestling culture, Bakersfield High School's wrestling program is as storied as its football program, if not more so. The

go through all the things Coach Varner's done for me," Nickell said. "He taught all of us to be more than wrestlers. He taught us to be overall good men."

Varner's wrestling legacy is somewhat of a dynasty here in Bakersfield. He was the second Varner to win a Central Section championship at 141 pounds. His uncle, Steve, has been coaching for almost two decades and was the first in the Varner line to win a state championship at 141 pounds.

Jake, a 212-pound wrestler out of BHS won two state championships and qualified four times in his high school career.

In college, Varner repeated as a NCAA champion at 197 pounds in his final two years and went undefeated with a record of 31-0. In 2012 Jake was able to perform and succeed on a stage for all the world to see: the Olympics.

In 2012 at the age of 26, Jake won a gold medal in the men's heavyweight freestyle as an

ing the summer months.

For most of the local wrestlers at CSUB, the choice was simple: wrestle for the Roadrunners or solely be a student somewhere else. The passion for wrestling runs deep in this town and it runs through the veins of these wrestlers. Any chance to continue their careers is taken.

For Hammond, it was not an easy choice. The six-foot-one-inch redshirt sophomore was recruited by every school in the Ivy League, Boise State

together a lot."

CSUB's head coach Mike Mendoza, a former wrestler himself, became a part of the Bakersfield when he wrestled for the Roadrunner from 1995 to 1999. In 2003, he returned to his alma mater to coach.

"A big part of this job is getting to know guys," Mendoza said. "That way they know who they're wrestling for. When they're local they know a little bit more."

The connection goes farther than just high schools to CSUB.

"A lot of our alumni from this program are coaching here in town," Mendoza said. "Andy Varner was a teammate of mine. It's helpful having a bond with the community."

"I'd known Coach Mendoza since he became an assistant coach around the time I was in seventh grade," Hammond said. "We've gone to the same church since then."

After the last whistle blows

Not every wrestler will be a Jake Varner. For most wrestlers, the Bakersfield connection has given them the opportunity not only to grow as wrestlers and perfect their craft, but also to better themselves through higher education.

"When you go to college, there's a point where you become more independent," Mendoza said. "It's our job to teach these guys the small things about being responsible with their time and their money. We also teach them that there are no shortcuts."

By season's end, the Roadrunners had three first-team All-Conference honors for Academics. Kelley, who's maintained a 4.00 GPA in his masters' studies, Rueben Franklin and Nickell were named to the PAC-12's Academic All-Conference team.

"I'd like to work toward a Ph.D in engineering sciences," Nickell said. "It's a goal of mine to become an engineer or a professor. I feel like wrestling's opened up this avenue of opportunity, and I've learned from coach that if you put work in, you'll get results."



Photo illustration by Brandon Mann/The Runner

man behind this is Coach Andy Varner.

"He's a hall of fame coach," Bryce Hammond said. "He's among the best in the country because he was good at having us peak at the right time. He knew how to design practices so we could do that."

Hammond isn't the only one in line to sing Varner's praises. Ian Nickell, another alumnus of the BHS wrestling program, adds to Hammond's compliments.

"I don't have enough time to

He did it in 1966. Steve, along with his three cousins Bobby Varner, Roger Varner and Vernon Varner dominated the local wrestling scene in the '50s and '60s at BHS, North High and South High.

The Golden Boy

The most recent jewels in the Varner wrestling crown are the accolades of Steve's son, Jake. He's only lost 10 times in his entire career as a wrestler, which spans from his high school to college and beyond.

American Olympian. Four straight victories got Varner to the gold medal match, where he beat Valeriy Oleksadrovych Andriitsev 1-0, 1-0.

Most recently, Jake earned the opportunity to represent the United States again in the FILA World Championships in September.

The Roadrunners

The student-athletes don't come from nowhere, and they don't sprout from the tacky blue floor of the Icardo Center dur-

University, Ohio State, as well as Oklahoma State and the entirety of the Pac-12 sans Oregon State University.

The decision to come to CSUB was one that didn't come easy for Hammond, as choosing a college is not an easy task with so many options.

"We would wrestle here every summer," said junior Adam Fierro, another BHS alum. "It wasn't a big surprise when they [CSUB] recruited me because they knew me and we worked

A student-athlete moves on from competing

By Stephany Bravo
Staff Writer

From choosing which university to attend to finally reaching his last quarter at California State University, Bakersfield, psychology major Justus Mora shares the difficulties that came along with being a student athlete and the lifetime benefits of getting out of his comfort zone in his college years.

Stephany Bravo: What are you planning to do when you're all done this spring quarter?

Justus Mora: My plan is to take a gap year between the end of this year 2014 to the fall of 2016 and hopefully enter onto a grad program.

I don't know which one but a grad program is definitely in mind.

I thought about San Francisco State University, they have a really good sexuality base program, one of eight in the country.

I am from Sparks, Nevada so I have also thought about University of Reno Nevada, and I have a really good friend that is at University of Utah who says they have a really good marriage and family therapy program.

Those are my top three choices for grad school.

SB: How has your involvement as a student-athlete in track changed your life?

JM: I have made some incredible friends my four years on the track team.

Before I came to college I wanted to join a fraternity

because it's what college kids usually do, but I am so happy I never joined a fraternity because my track team is my fraternity, they are my family.

I couldn't have found a greater group of people to hang out with every single day.

If I were to ever come back for a night or two, I know I can call up some of the guys and they'd let me in their doors with no problem.

I am so grateful I have such a great support system.

That's what also got me through my college years.

SB: Tell me about your association with the Alpha Chi Honor Society and Psi Chi, the international honor society for psychology.

JM: Most people think they're both a fraternity because it sounds like they are but they are not.

It's a group of people found in the Alpha Chi name who are dedicated to scholarships, community service, and hold exceptional G.P.A.'s.

I did well in my sport and also in the classroom so I was worthy of being a part of this group of people that is all about promoting good.

SB: What others achievements have you earned throughout your four years at CSU Bakersfield?

JM: Besides the Alpha Chi Honor Society and Psi Chi Honor Society, I have also been in The Helen Louise Hawk Honors Program all four years at CSUB.

They designate certain courses

for you to take taught by exceptional staff and it's designed for a four year program helping people graduate within a four year period.

SB: Who is the most influential person in your life?

JM: That is so difficult because it's a toss-up between my mom, my sister, and my dad. My dad is the person who got me into athletics.

My mom has been such a nurturing soul, anytime I had any type of problem at all she would be the first one trying to help me out.

She has always had my back. My sister and I are three years apart and I won't call her my best friend but she's my person, I believe it's Grey's Anatomy that I'm quoting but she's my person. There's no other way to explain it. She's that one individual who will always be there by my side. She's the person I want to impress the most because she's my baby sister.

SB: How different do you think your life would be if you weren't a student athlete?

JM: I've pondered on a couple of different occasions with my teammates. It's just so unfoundable to think what it is like to be a regular student. I wouldn't know what I would do with my time. The difference between me four weeks ago when we were still in season and me now I have so much time I don't know what to do with it, it's ridiculous. I'd have to join a couple of clubs just to pass the time [if I wasn't a student-athlete].



Juana Martinez/The Runner
Graduating track runner Justus Mora shows off his speed as he runs towards finally earning his diploma and graduating from CSUB as a psychology major.