

THE PAW PRINT

Spring 2026

College of the
Canyons

Flowerfield



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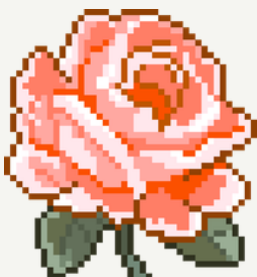
No Confidence





AVA HERNANDEZ

VP OF
COMMUNICATIONS



»» LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

Initializing Spring

DEAR READER,

A year ago today, I was worrying about my first year overseeing the Spring 2025 Paw Print, if the staff writers truly enjoyed their position in ASG, and whether students would even read it. Thankfully, since then, the Paw Print team has received so much love and feedback from both COC students and faculty (thank goodness!). I cannot believe that this is the third and final publication of the Paw Print that I will have worked on. Being the VP of Communications from 2025-2026 has been a truly one-of-a-kind experience, and I did not expect the number of opportunities to be involved on campus when I first started to attend COC. I am so incredibly proud of every staff writer, designer, and student who has taken the time during this semester to contribute in any way to this publication. I hope that at least one person can learn something interesting when reading these articles, and go out of their way to hopefully share that information with others! I am grateful for the preparation that these two years in ASG have provided me. I am transferring to UC Berkeley this Fall, and I think that I wouldn't have had that opportunity if I never joined ASG. I will deeply miss my role as the VP of Communications, but I have high hopes that the next Paw Print team will be even more successful!!! Thank you so much for your time.

>>> MEET THE TEAM

Spring Spotlight



JOSHUA DE JESUS

GRAPHIC ARTIST

Hi! I'm Joshua De Jesus, your ASG Paw Print graphic artist! I'm a current biology student here at COC. As the graphic artist, I aim to express my creativity in arranging everything in this newsletter, hope you enjoy!



CHRISLYNN QUACH

ASSISTANT TO VP OF COMMUNICATIONS

Hi! I'm Chrislynn Quach and I'm a LAAS with an emphasis in health sciences major. In my role, I assist in the creation of engaging content for our ASG social media accounts and strive to provide outreach to students here at COC! Make sure to follow us on our social platforms!



JORDAN WHEELER

STAFF WRITER

Hello, everyone! My name is Jordan Wheeler and I am wrapping up my last semester here at COC as a psychology major. I had an amazing experience writing for The Paw Print and an even better time being a member of ASG. I would like to give a big thanks to everyone reading this edition, it means a lot to know our work is being appreciated.



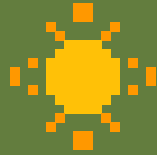
ARIEL WANG

STAFF WRITER

Hi, I'm Ariel! You might recognize me from ASG as a staff writer, as an international student from China, as an officer in FBLA, or maybe from the TLC front desk. Whether we've met before or not, I just want to say how much I've loved my two years at COC. As I get ready to transfer to UCLA as a Business Economics major, I know COC will always be a special part of my life. I hope you enjoy reading the Paw Print, and I hope your own time at COC becomes just as meaningful and memorable!

>>> DIVERSITY ON CAMPUS

The 2%



When you walk from the tennis parking lot to Halsey Hall, have you ever noticed the big red flag with bold letters "ISP" on it? During my first week at COC, I was completely lost on campus. I stopped a student and asked, "Do you know where ISP is?" The answer I got: "What is that?"

ISP stands for International Services & Programs. It's the "home base" for about 2% of COC students-international students. Yes, that's us... the small but noticeable 2%.

As an international student who is going to transfer in two months, I've realized how much my mindset has changed over these two years. So here are a few thoughts -some advice for international students trying to adapt, and some insights for those who want to understand us a little better.

-YOU ARE NOT "SPECIAL", BUT YOU ALSO ARE.

In many of our home countries, like China, most of us grow up surrounded by people who share the same ethnicity, language, and culture. At school, on the street, and in daily life, almost everyone looks similar and comes from a similar background. Because of that, seeing a foreigner can feel unusual. People might look out of curiosity, not to be rude, but simply because it's rare.

So naturally, when we come to the U.S., we start to wonder: "Will I be accepted?" "What about my accent? My appearance?"

But the reality? Diversity is everywhere here. It's so common to see people from different ethnicities and speak different languages. Most people are actually patient, inclusive, and

willing to listen. And more than that, we don't need to try hard to "fit in", we are already considered one of them.

The biggest change wasn't how others saw me, but how I saw myself. I stopped thinking of being "different" as something that separates me, and started seeing it as just one small part of who I am. This change in mindset is like an important self adaptation of moving to a whole different country and culture. Of course everyone is special, but don't consider yourself as special in terms of being excluded.



—OVER "SORRY"

Throughout these two years, I realized over-apologizing is a common habit among international students like me. Because of cultural differences and language pressure, "sorry" often becomes the word we blurt out first.

Excessive use of "I'm sorry" can slowly undermine our confidence and how others perceive us. Sometimes, people may even feel confused, like, "Why are you apologizing?"

Over time, I learned that not everything needs an apology. Making mistakes, asking questions, or speaking imperfect English is just part of the process.



—STEP OUT OF YOUR COMFORT ZONE

Everyone has their comfort zone. For many international students, one of the most comfortable things is staying with people from their home country and speaking their own language.

It's always nice to have friends from home when you move to a new country, but you shouldn't always stay in that comfort zone just to avoid speaking English.

I've seen many international students avoid speaking English or interacting with others because they feel limited by language barriers or cultural differences. But in the past one and a half years I've been here, I've seen how much my English has improved simply by talking to native speakers.

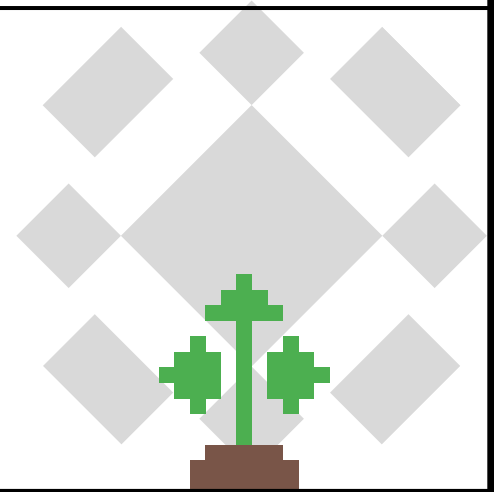
The fastest way to learn a language is to use it every day. And most people are actually very understanding of language barriers and cultural differences. In fact, many people appreciate it because diversity is what makes the community stronger.

At the end of the school year, being part of the 2% is not just about us. It's also about how we connect with campus. There are moments where we feel unsure, overthink, or struggle to express ourselves, but those interactions with others are what help us grow. At the same time, our presence brings a new perspective and culture to people around us. We are all learning from each other. And maybe that's what the 2% really means: it's a shared experience that becomes part of a bigger community.

BY ARIEL WANG // TYPED BY ARIEL WANG // TYPED BY ARIEL WANG // TYPED BY ARIEL WANG // TYPE

»»» STUDENT CLUBS & ORGS

FBLA



Honestly, "Future Business Leaders of America" (FBLA) is kind of a cringeworthy name. Every time someone asks me what FBLA stands for, I smile. But at the same time, it's the community that gave me the most special memories in my two years at College of the Canyons.

A lot of students walk away as soon as they hear the name. "It must be for business students, not me." And yeah, it does fit business majors, but a fun fact is that almost half of our members, including our president, aren't business students at all.

When I joined FBLA in my freshman year, I only expected to explore business. But what I found was different: welcoming energy, caring teammates, and people who genuinely invested in each other's growth. I found a sense of belonging and confidence. I also found out the school actually pays for us to attend business conferences every semester, which was honestly a surprise. And those conferences aren't just about business. They include events like computer science, job



TYPED BY ARIEL WANG

interviews, and public speaking. There is something for everyone. Then I kept thinking: how many students never discover this because they assume FBLA is only for future CEOs?

That's why I ran for VP of Marketing for my sophomore year. I wanted to show students that FBLA builds confidence and community.

In Spring 2026, our school's largest group of over 30 students attended the State Business Leadership Conference. It was so proud to see our students step on the stage, and many of us qualified for the National round in Las Vegas. We are going to bring the College of the Canyons chapter to the national stage!



FBLA helped me grow so much, and I feel like we also help students engage on campus. More importantly, I met so many friends on campus that I think we will become lifelong friends, and also expanded my network by meeting students from other community colleges at these conferences.

Joining FBLA was one of the best decisions I made in my two years at COC, not because of the name, but because of the people and experiences behind it.

FBLA at College of the Canyons

Who We Are

FBLA at COC is a student-led organization focused on leadership, professional development, and business excellence.

- Open to all majors
- Student-run leadership team
- Inclusive and collaborative community



What We Offer

- Competitive business events
 - State & national conferences
 - Guest speakers & workshops
- Resume and interview preparation
- Networking opportunities



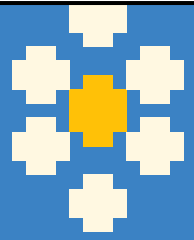
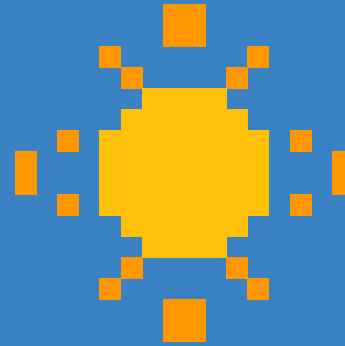
Our Impact

- Real-world experience
 - Leadership growth
- Scholarship opportunities
 - Strong professional connections



>>> RELIGION AND CULTURE

Interfaith on Campus



Us members of the Associated Student Government are pleased to announce that this semester we have added an interfaith prayer room available for the student body and staff here at College of the Canyons. Our current acting Vice President of Advocacy in ASG, Taha Saiyed, oversaw the establishment of this newest addition to our campus. I had the pleasure of interviewing Taha to garner insight into his motivations for creating the prayer room and gain additional information for those who are interested.

(Note: the following is broadly transcribed from a voice memo—you're spared from the ums, ahs, and awkward pauses.)

Q: "COULD YOU PLEASE EXPLAIN WHAT YOUR ROLE IS IN ASG AND WHAT RESPONSIBILITIES YOU HAVE?"

A: As Vice President of Advocacy in ASG, I am in charge of advocacy initiatives and represent our school at the state level with SSCCC (Student Senate for California Community Colleges). Basically, I work to make campus more accessible for all students and look to find ways to improve either the infrastructure or policy with any initiatives or proclamations put forward by ASG. I also collaborate with a lot of the other student organizations on campus to create events and bring awareness to certain topics students feel should be highlighted.

Q: "SPEAKING OF ACCESSIBILITY, THIS IS SOMETHING IN THE REALM OF CULTURE AND PERSONAL EXPRESSION YOU FELT WAS SORELY MISSING ON CAMPUS?"

A: Exactly. I am a Muslim student here on campus and as a part of our faith in Islam we are required to pray five times a day. Oftentimes, I found myself kind of compromising my religious values or my obligations because I didn't have a place to pray on campus. I decided "hey, this is probably not just an issue for myself and other Muslim students but possibly for students of many other faiths on campus," so I decided to open up an interfaith/meditation/prayer room for students to come in and use. That's basically where it came from, just to provide a safe space not only for myself but also for other students on campus to use the space to relax and meditate or fulfill any other religious obligations.

Q: "I KNOW YOU ALSO INTERACT WITH REPRESENTATIVES FROM OTHER CALIFORNIA COMMUNITY COLLEGES AND I THINK YOU DID MENTION THAT THIS IS SOMETHING THAT A HANDFUL OF OTHER SCHOOLS HAVE, CORRECT?"

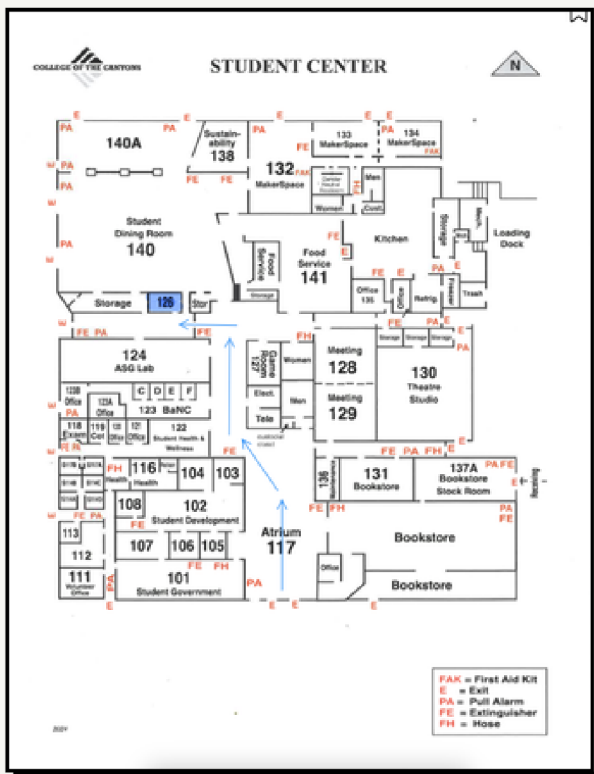
A: Yeah, so this is something that a lot of other CCCs already have in place—some form of meditation or interfaith room—and when I was doing my research to figure out how many schools already had one, it seemed to be an extremely common theme. This was encouraging to see and made me realize that this needs to be a priority number one item that we accomplish and pursue.



D BY JORDAN WHEELER // TYPED BY JORDAN WHEELER // TYPED BY JORDAN WHEELER // TYPED BY JORDAN WHEELER

Q: "COULD YOU PLEASE EXPLAIN HOW THE ROOM FUNCTIONS, WHAT UTILITIES ARE AVAILABLE, AND WHAT THE RULES ARE?"

A: The room is located in the Student Center in the hallway adjacent to the cafeteria (see map). It's across from Room 124 that used to be the old ASG Computer Lab. It's a small room, big enough for use by one or two people; however, we are doing a system of one person at a time. The process goes as follows: you check in at Campus Life with your ID number, name, and the time that you are checking into the room. You will have 15 minutes to use the room; when that time is up, if you haven't left the room, Campus Life will check in and let you know that your time is up. With this system, since there is a one person limit on the room, we want to be able to incorporate as many people, and having a time limit makes up for the fact that we can't have multiple people in there at once. We wanted the room to be a place of seclusion and, really, what it's meant for; don't want a group hanging out and lounging around if they aren't using the room purposefully. In the room, there should be a Qur'an, Bible, Torah, and other foundational religious texts/academic texts. Prayer rugs will also be available and the room will be furnished to create a relaxing atmosphere. We want to incorporate as many faiths and practices as possible, so if you have any recommendations or suggestions to improve the accessibility of the room, don't hesitate to bring it to the attention of campus life or myself.



LOCATED IN ROOM 126 OF THE STUDENT CENTER - HIGHLIGHTED BLUE. ARROWS DENOTE ROUTE TO ROOM ASSUMING YOU ENTER FROM THE ATRIUM SIDE

>>> LEADERSHIP @ COC

No Confidence

IMAGE FROM OCTOBER 8TH, 2025 BOARD OF TRUSTEES OPEN SESSION

This spring semester, the Associated Student Government established a petition calling for the resignation of three of the five elected members of the college's Board of Trustees. In this petition, Trustees Sharlene Johnson, Fred Arnold, and Darlene Trevino were each named. The petition explains that the exigence of this decision is "to formally express the Associated Student Government's loss of confidence in Sharlene Johnson, Fred Arnold, and Darlene Trevino due to ongoing concerns regarding a lack of knowledge of their roles as board members, as well as failing to promote a healthy academic environment for the students, faculty, and staff" (College of the Canyons Associated Student Government, 2026). This declaration could appear broad without context. While the petition does provide background, I aim to bring additional information to help break down why this motion was set in place.

At a higher education institution, a board of trustee acts as the governing body for the school. They are responsible for legal and fiduciary decisions that will contribute to a school's actions and reputation. One of these responsibilities includes hiring and overseeing the college's president.

In July 2024, President Dr. Dianne Van Hook was placed on administrative leave by the then Board of Trustees and would subsequently retire two weeks later after 36 years as COC chancellor. The Signal reported that "Board President Edel Alonso has stated on multiple occasions that the basis for the decision to put Van Hook on leave [could not] be publicly disclosed due to state laws surrounding personnel decisions" (Wainfeld, 2024). With little public explanation offered, David Andrus, a political science professor on campus, was positioned as Van Hook's interim replacement. Only a few months later, he would request a forensic audit of the past two decades of facility contracts executed under Van Hook's administration. As KHTS News reported, "in November 2024, legal counsel for

college reported that, over a 19-year period, millions of dollars were 'misused and misappropriated' through various contractual practices" (Aubuchon, 2026). The commonly cited estimate at the time placed the figure at approximately \$12 million. Many have suggested that the audit's findings were the underlying pretext for the board's decision to remove Van Hook. That same November, following elections for new board members, Trustees Arnold, Johnson, and Trevino were elected to the board.

Nearly a year later, these newly elected trustees sought to remove Andrus. In September 2025, following a lengthy meeting that had drawn significant opposition from different faculty, classified professionals and students, the board decided to remove Andrus. The decision sparked immediate accusations of retaliation, given Andrus' decision to call for a forensic audit. That same night, the board also voted unanimously to turn the audit over to the Los Angeles County District Attorney's Office, where it is still under review. As Katherine Quezada reported for The Signal, "Trustees Fred Arnold, Sharlene Johnson and Darlene Trevino voted in favor of the termination, Edel Alonso voted against, and Carlos Guerrero abstained" (Quezada, 2025b). According to Quezada, "approximately 17 public comments were given during the afternoon session... nearly all expressing support for Andrus" (Quezada, 2025a).

In response to this decision, ASG drafted two separate resolutions: a Resolution of Confidence in David Andrus and a Resolution of No Confidence in Trustees Sharlene Johnson, Fred Arnold, and Darlene Trevino. The former outlines support for Andrus and his qualities of open communication with students and commitment to shared governance. The latter formally declared a loss of confidence in the three trustees, citing their failure to engage with the Associated Student Government outside of scheduled board meetings and



our Spring
★'26 joint
meeting★

their actions that had contributed to division and mistrust across the college community. These resolutions were first presented at a Board of Trustees Business Meeting on October 8th, 2025 by Student Trustee Areesh Fatima, ASG President Amna Fadel, and ASG Vice President of Communications Ava Hernandez ("Board of Trustees Business Meeting" 2025, 1:47-8:30). Statements from students who had reached out to these ASG representatives

would provide me with high-quality education. Due to the current events taking place, I believe that my trust in the college has been compromised" (8:53-9:06). Another student declared, "we demand to know what happened to the funds. Transparency is a must. Our concerns are valid, and in the end, this hurts the students" (10:35-10:42). A third statement captures a broader ethos among concerned students: "if a president of a higher education institution got fired for seeking the truth, how can a college student like myself hope to fight for justice in a system that punishes honesty?" (12:43-12:51). Presented with this, the Board of Trustees was left to reflect on these resolutions.

Two weeks later, on October 22nd, the Resolution of No Confidence was presented again by ASG at the semester's joint meeting of ASG and the Board of Trustees. Many ASG members were present and additional student statements were read aloud. ("Joint Meeting with ASG," 2025). In the following months ASG representatives met individually with each of the three named trustees in an effort to find common ground. However, these meetings did not yield any meaningful progress.

At an impasse, ASG felt it necessary to draft a Petition of Resignation, which was formally presented at this semester's joint meeting. The response from the named trustees was telling. As Susan Monaghan reported for The Signal, following the announcement, "Johnson said that she was proud of the college's current board, and urged ASG members to do their 'due diligence' in speaking with all of the board's current members to get a better sense of its current ethos" (Monaghan, 2026). Since this meeting, ASG has begun circulating the petition and urging students for signatures, the outcome of which remains to be seen.

Even with the context provided here, this article cannot capture the full complexity of this ongoing situation, as Oscar Wilde wrote, "the truth is rarely pure and never simple". I

encourage readers to probe the sources cited throughout, find additional information, and only then draw their own conclusions as to how they feel regarding the situation. For those interested in learning more about the petition, or signing it, it is available on the COC ASG website.

[SIGN PETITION HERE](#)



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THANKS FOR READING!

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