

Students Participate in Living History Experience on Angel Island

Submitted by Lucy Dendinger



Los Perales fourth-graders dress as U.S. Army soldiers from 1864.

Photo Provided

Los Perales fourth grade teacher Millie Tang recently took her class to Angel Island State Park for a 24-hour Environmental Living Program – a program that took the students (and parent chaperones) back in time by fully immersing them in role-playing and reenactments.

Tang's overriding philosophy is to have children learn by hands-on experiences. "When students have the opportunity to be in a 'classroom without walls,' they develop a keen curiosity and retain significantly more than just listening to me talk in front of them."

The students were 'enlisted' into the U.S. Army of 1864 and set up post at the historic Camp Reynolds on Angel Island. They were assigned ranks and units. They learned to read a compass, signal with flags, work in an infirmary, bake bread, churn butter, and make a meal of beef stew and salad – all accomplished without iPhones and electricity.

The students spent weeks preparing for the experience. They studied in class about the California Gold Rush and the purpose of the army occupation of Angel Island. The soldiers were

stationed there to protect the California coastline, keeping watch for a possible invasion by the Confederate Army, who might try to steal the gold found during the Gold Rush. They learned that the gold rush had far reaching implications beyond personal wealth. Gold was what financed the Union.

The 24-hour adventure began early in the morning with a ferry ride to Angel Island, the students outfitted in jeans with red duct tape stripes down the side, navy sweatshirts, canvas haversacks, and Union kepi hats. Once they reach the Island, they were met by Major Andrews, a park ranger and experienced Civil War re-enactor. All students fell into ranks and units and addressed superiors with 'yes, sir' and 'no, sir'. They carried their sleeping bags and gear on their backs as they hike over the hill to the barracks, marching in line and shouting in cadence. When they reached the barracks they found a place on the raised wooden platforms and prepared their bedrolls for inspection.

For the next 24 hours they worked and learned. As they embrace their historical roles, they keep a diligent eye on the coastline. If a soldier saw an approaching enemy ship, they

yelled out to their fellow soldiers, 'Hit the deck! Enemy ship!' and all 26 students dove to the ground in the middle of whatever task they are doing. In actuality, the enemy ships were the Blue and Gold Fleet of ferries that pass the Island many times throughout the day.

After a hearty meal that the students prepared, they put on an extra jacket for a five-mile night hike to the top of Mt. Livermore, the highest peak on the island. Of course, in 1864, the bridges and lights of the City did not exist, so the children discussed the future and what might be in view someday.

Throughout the night, the soldiers took shifts for 'night watch' where they patrolled the perimeter of the barracks with model rifles. In the morning, after breakfast and chores, and before heading back to civilization, Major Andrews returned to inspect the camp and then led the students outside to shoot the canon – a highlight for many of the soldiers.

In the words of one student, "Angel Island was the most fun field trip I have ever experienced. We worked very hard and gained so much knowledge from just one trip! I will never forget it."

Campo Alum Graduates Top of Class at UC Davis

Submitted by Julia Ann Easley



Nicole Sitkin during surgery grand rounds in the UC Davis Health System's Education building at the Sacramento campus.

Photo Karin Higgins/UC Davis

The University of California, Davis, has named Nicole Sitkin – a former Campolindo High School student – as this year's University Medalist. The University Medal is awarded for excellence in undergraduate studies, outstanding

community service and the promise of future scholarship and contributions to society. After earning a bachelor's degree in neurobiology, physiology and behavior in December, Sitkin is now working at the university's School of Medicine, already making contributions to medical research and helping address disparities in health care, especially for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) populations. She will be presented with the award, including a plaque and a \$2,000 honorarium, at the commencement of the College of Biological Sciences on Friday, June 14. Sitkin said she dedicates herself to whatever she does and works hard. "It's the price you pay," she said, "but you get to do something amazing with your life." You can read more about Sitkin at: <http://medalists.ucdavis.edu>.

TEEN SCENE

Celebrities and Higher Education

By Caie Kelley

It's a strange headline to imagine: Miley Cyrus attends Harvard University, or Taylor Swift Feels Pressure to Attend Elite College.

Celebrities often claim to be just like average people, minus the money, beauty and fame, but it's pretty hard to believe that they understand what we teenagers go through, especially the numerous academic and social pressures. Can someone like Beyonce or Zac Efron, People Magazine's "World's Most Beautiful People" winners in 2012, understand what it's like for the rest of us?

A huge part of being a high-schooler is the looming doom of college – where the questions "What do you think you want to do?" or "What schools have you been looking at?" never seem to end. And for many celebrities, graduating or even attending college isn't the norm.

Sure, there are the Natalie Portman or Jake Gyllenhaal types, who went to Harvard and Columbia, respectively. But most are more similar to California's former governor and famous actor Arnold Schwarzenegger, who attended a small community college in Santa Monica.

Though many celebrities choose to opt out of higher education, others who went to college before they were famous often didn't go to the nation's top universities, instead, opting for many community and state colleges.

With all the emphasis on elite education in today's society, the rich and famous frequently are living proof that the name of your college isn't everything – and that's a hard lesson to grasp when you are a teenager in high school with a whole lot of teachers and adults who say otherwise.

Sure, we all don't want to become famous actors,

and going to a good school can certainly help us along our chosen path toward success. But it's not the end of the world if we don't get into a "Top 10" school. It is possible to achieve one's goals without the "Ivy League education" on a resume; celebrity idols in pop culture are an example of that.

I don't think I'll ever find famous people to be entirely relatable to my everyday problems, but the idea that a college name is not a "make it or break it" thing is something I find real comfort in, and hopefully, you do too.

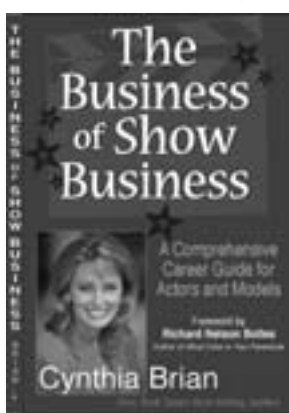


Caie Kelley is a junior in high school, a gold medal swimmer, piano teacher, and a co-host/reporter on the radio program, *Express Yourself!*TM

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