

# Save Lafayette Files Another Suit to Stop Deer Hill Development

By Cathy Tyson

Calling the city's approval of the Homes at Deer Hill "quite unfair," the grassroots group Save Lafayette is trying again to stop the development.

On March 11, Save Lafayette served a Petition for Peremptory Writ of Mandate to the City. The president of the group, Michael Griffith, says he firmly believes that voters should have a say in development, and in his opinion, the city's actions are in violation of health and safety laws.

The Writ alleges that the action of the city council to deny a "city-wide ballot in regard to The Homes at Deer Hill was arbitrary and an abuse of discretion, and contrary to the Council's duties under Elections Code #9241 and California Constitution."

Representatives from Save Lafayette gathered over 2,000 signatures on a petition to vote on the controversial project. According to Griffiths, petition signers wanted a

chance to vote on whether the "development's purported benefits outweighed the significant impacts of traffic congestion, air quality and violation of the City's Hillside and Open Space ordinances."

Those petitions were presented to the city council in late December, but City Attorney Mala Subramanian found the effort to be legally unsound and rejected the argument and the petition because it would create an inconsistency between the city's zoning ordinance and the General Plan. The story was reported in the Dec. 30, issue of the Lamorinda Weekly "Citizen Group Legal Challenge to Deer Hill Project Invalid." (<http://lamorindaweekly.com/archive/issue0922/Citizen-Group-Legal-Challenge-to-Deer-Hill-Project-Found-In>)

Subramanian said she agrees with City Manager Steven Falk's comment, "The City disagrees and will vigorously defend its position."

# Acalanes Reaches for the Stars at Career Day

By Cathy Tyson



From left: Nicole O'Connor, Maddie Guzaitais and Rebecca Kauffman



Manuel Trejo and Max Thrasher

Photos C. Tyson

For the past seven years, all of Acalanes' approximately 1,200 students have had the chance to follow their dreams, however briefly, with a pair of unique presentations they selected from real live people with actual jobs in their chosen fields.

"Please share your stories today about how you got to where you are," advised Acalanes High School Principal Allison Silvestri to the many presenters gathered in the College and Career Center for Career Day before heading out to enlighten students. "You are giving kids the opportunity to check out career pathways – the possibilities for our students are endless."

The entire student body took a break from their regular classes to rotate through their choice of two presentations occurring in classrooms all over campus. Students were asked via a survey to select their top four choices, and most everyone got into their top two requested sessions. Seniors got first dibs.

An amazing collection of over 50 authorities from a wide range of professions shared with students on Career Day how to get into their line of work and what their job entails. The group included experts in graphic arts, sciences, engineering, technology, commercial real estate, astro-biology, pharmacology, psychology, the military, fashion design, and even a pro-

fessional rock climber and a scuba dive master (surprisingly presented by Silvestri).

Under the direction of College and Career Center Advisor Joan Karr, along with the help of a Google survey by volunteer Barry McQuain, the day was hectic but rewarding. "There were a lot of moving parts – but it was surprisingly successful," says Karr, adding, "It wouldn't be possible without our very supportive staff."

Not only did Karr have to round up the presenters, she then had to assign them classrooms that would accommodate the number of students that signed up for that particular topic.

The most popular session was with a Senior Investigator with the FBI, who asked to remain nameless; so many students signed up, his talk occurred at the Performing Arts Center auditorium. For security purposes, they were asked to leave their backpacks in the lobby. He described his job as, "'Foreign counter intelligence' which is really a fancy way of saying 'spy stuff.'"

His casual chat, accompanied by a PowerPoint presentation, spelled out what it takes to get into the FBI, skills required, how competitive it is and qualifications. Out of 100,000 applicants each year, the FBI accepts only 1,000.

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