

# Unity Chronicles

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## Dave Eggers and Lost Boy visit Unity High

By Carolina Cordero

On Tuesday, May 6, author Dave Eggers and Sudanese civil war refugee Samuel Garang visited Nicole Pfaff's senior English class. After learning that the class had been reading his book, *What is the What*, Eggers volunteered to visit Unity and brought along Lost Boy Samuel Garang who shared a similar story to that of the book's main character.

What is the *What* tells the story of Valentino Achak Deng, a Sudanese civil war survivor. At a young age Deng watched his village, Marial Bai, become destroyed by Murahelen raiders and his family and many others separated. What is the *What* retells Deng's journey with many other Lost Boys as they search for safety after fleeing their homes.

Just like Deng, visitor Samuel Garang was raised in Southern Sudan and lived by the traditional values of the Dinka. After having his home raided by Murahelen soldiers and having to move on several occasions, he decided to leave his parents and siblings to

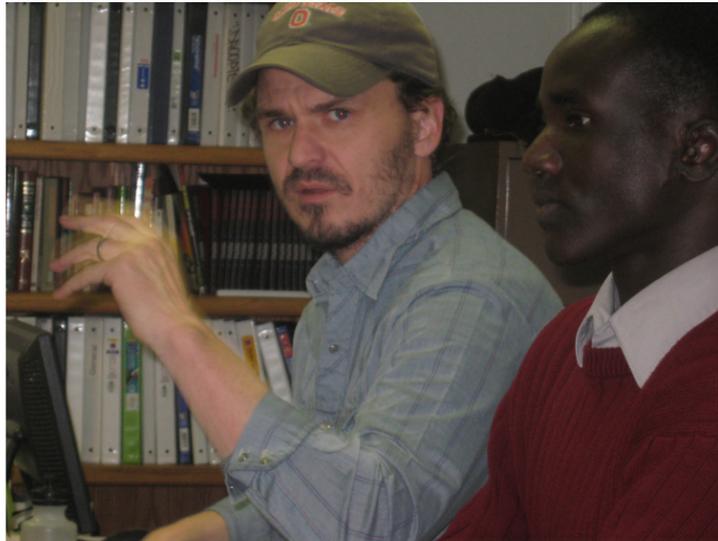


PHOTO BY NICOLE PFAFF

Author Dave Eggers and Lost Boy Samuel Garang answer questions from seniors in Nicole Pfaff's English class

journey out on his own at about age eight or nine. He decided to go to Kenya to seek refuge. The other Lost Boys and he walked hundreds of miles and faced hunger and the possibility of being eaten alive by wild animals. While many of these

boys were barely teenagers before setting out, they all had to make the tough decision of staying with their families and getting killed or leaving them behind to search for refuge in another country.

"I want to go back to Sudan.

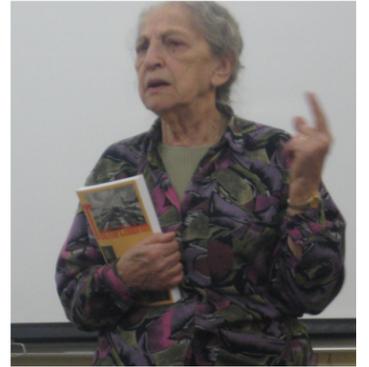
After everything settles down I will go back. Even though I won't have all of the commodities that I have here, I am going to have a sense of belonging, which I don't have here," said Garang.

Sudan is still not at peace, so it may be awhile before Garang heads back home.

"I always knew that the book was based on a true story, but actually listening to it from someone it happened to made it all the more real," said senior Alejandra Ruiz.

This is just what Ms. Pfaff wanted her class to feel. Before she became a teacher at Unity, she worked for McSweeney's publishing house, where she met Dave Eggers. As soon as he heard she had become a high school teacher, he offered to speak to her students. That was why her senior English class started reading the book.

"I hoped that the author coming in and hearing a similar story from someone would make the book come alive for them. It would help them understand the book better," said Ms. Pfaff.



Aspan Sorell

## Holocaust survivor speaks

By Andrea Perez

Dora Aspan Sorell, a Holocaust survivor, spoke before a crowd of thirty to forty Unity students in early May.

Aspan Sorell's visit to Unity was organized by English teacher Nicole Pfaff for the students in her graphic novel class who had just read the book *Maus*.

"*Maus* is about a man who is told about his parents' struggles in the time of the Holocaust," said senior Ed Hale.

Sophomores from Chinela Key-Newton's world history class who learned about events during the time of the Holocaust also attended the talk.

"Students had the opportunity to hear stories they had been reading about through someone who actually went through these things. This will help them understand the reality of what has been read," said Ms. Pfaff.

Aspan Sorell was living with her parents and seven brothers and sisters in Hungary when World War II began. She, her parents, and two of her brothers were forced to leave their home and taken to the ghetto before being separated and sent to different concentration camps. Her brothers and father died in the camps. Aspan Sorell was separated from her mother when the young girl was taken to Auschwitz, which was also known as the "death camp." Her mother later died in a gas chamber.

"My reaction when hearing Dora's story was that it must have been hard to be separated from her family and to have gone through all that torture," said sophomore Ileana Gomez.

Aspan Sorell also talked about her experiences in a working concentration camp shortly before the war ended. Ultimately, she reunited with her brothers and continued her life with her husband Zoltan Aspan Sorell, who had also been imprisoned during the war. She wrote a book called *Tell the Children--Letters to Miriam*, which relates her life story to her granddaughter through letters.

"There are two elements in survival," said Aspan Sorell. "Endurance and chance. I felt very lucky and strong because I made it by chance and strategies of survival."

## Students and teachers explore the Gulf Coast

By Beatrice Rivera

Over spring break six Unity students and four teachers traveled to New Orleans, Louisiana and Mobile, Alabama. Social studies teacher Daniel Zarazua and journalism teacher Lillian Hsu organized this trip so that students could experience firsthand what they had learned in their government class about the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina and so that they could apply their reporting skills in a new environment.

Students spent their first day in New Orleans filming interviews with local residents. Sophomore Antonio Murphy and seniors Phillesha Brown and Beatrice Rivera interviewed 21-year-old "2 Pac." The young man explained how his family lived on the porch for three days after Hurricane Katrina hit. The water rose higher than his porch, and if it had gone up any higher, they could have drowned. 2 Pac said that his family was separated and shipped off to different states by the government. He also discussed problems with gangs, drugs, and violence in the streets of New Orleans and revealed that he had been shot eight times.

Seniors Juan Cerna, Edwin Santay, and Susana Tinoco interviewed Latino day laborers who immigrated to New Orleans to do post Katrina clean-up work.

"We interviewed the Latino day laborers to compare how immigrants here are different from the ones over there and to compare how they are treated by the community," said Edwin, who had been inspired by San Francisco filmmaker Miguel Solari's pioneering documentary on New Orleans' immigrants.

Eva San Martin, an outreach worker for the Hispanic Aposto-



PHOTO BY LILLIAN HSU

Edwin Santay, Antonio Murphy, Susana Tinoco, Juan Cerna, Beatrice Rivera, and Phillesha Brown interview Katrina volunteers in New Orleans, Louisiana.

late, showed the students and staff around the ninth ward, one of the most devastated neighborhoods in New Orleans. Students and staff agreed that it was disturbing to see all the houses washed away because of the broken levees.

"It was devastating; there was nothing out there but land," said Antonio.

When they were not busy filming, the students had the opportunity to explore the French Quarter and sample unusual foods they had never tasted before, such as fried corn and pickles, frog legs, and octopus.

Antonio said, "The frog legs were the best. It tasted like chicken."

After New Orleans, Mr. Zarazua and math teacher David Carter drove the students and staff to

Mobile, Alabama for the second part of their trip. Unity students stayed with the families of students from Mary G. Montgomery High School (MGM), an exchange that was organized by Mr. Zarazua, in cooperation with Gloria Wilson, an art teacher at MGM. The students and their hosts each spent the weekend doing something different. Some went to the swap meet, others to the movies, and some went mud riding.

"Mud riding is like a side-show but with dirt, mud, and a big truck," said Susana.

Unity students spent a day shadowing students at MGM, a predominantly white school, which was a very different environment from their mostly Latino school. During the day, students also participated in a printmaking

lesson co-taught by Ms. Wilson and Unity art teacher Jamie Treacy. They also had the chance to view a joint exhibit of MGM students' and Unity students' paintings, which Mr. Treacy had sent ahead to Mobile.

At the end of the trip, Unity and MGM students took part in a roundtable discussion about life for teenagers in the South and in Oakland.

"It was important to see the different perspectives of people in other parts of our country, seeing how we are all facing the same obstacles like drugs and violence," said Phillesha.

Mr. Zarazua agreed that the experience had been worthwhile.

"These are the types of trips that change people's lives."

## Seniors reminisce about life at Unity

By Brittany Douglas and Daisy Barraza

Fellow seniors of Unity High School, it's hard to believe that the school year is coming to an end, and in a few short months, we will begin a new journey as college freshmen. (Bring on the dorm parties!) While many of us will be scattered all around California, there is one thing that we will always share...the funny memories that happened throughout the last four years! Don't worry, underclassmen because you don't have

But one shocker that we are all glad is over and hope will never come back is the class of 2006's senior prank. For those of you who weren't here, be glad, but just so you won't be left out, here's a run through of the events: smelly feces on classroom doors, plus angry teachers and students, equaled one big mess.

"They really overdid it. That was just nasty. It was funny, but it was nasty," said senior Shatika



Chemistry teacher Rowan Driscoll dressed as Mr. Incredible for Halloween 2006.

teacher shake it like a Polaroid picture. Mr. Treacy busted out serious moves on us, and we're still jealous that we can't move like him. He definitely took dancing to new heights and showed all of us how to get the party started.

Although our last year at Unity may be coming to a close, we will always be remembered on this

campus. We are the largest class in Unity history, and we are the ones that made you laugh with our jokes and kept you talking about us all year long. We may be moving on, but our spirits will always be remembered as the biggest, best, and funniest senior class Unity High School has ever seen.



Douglas and Barraza

to be a mighty senior to laugh at these stories.

For starters there was Halloween 2006 when chemistry teacher Rowan Driscoll dressed up as "Mr. Incredible." Imagine having your teacher called to the office in the middle of class, and when he comes back in, he's wearing the same red tights, eye mask, and boots as a cartoon superhero. Our first reaction was, "OMG Driscoll, take that off." But after you digested seeing him in his costume and got over the fact that your teacher was in tights, it turned into one of the funniest moments of the year. Students are still waiting for another Halloween shocker.

Sloan who was a sophomore at the time of the prank.

We couldn't agree more. It was funny until you realized that you had to sit in a classroom with the aroma seeping through the cracks of the doors and windows. Whether you think it was funny or just downright nasty, it will definitely be a moment you will never forget.

One memory that the whole school can reflect on is watching teachers like Jamie Treacy get down during the Cinco De Mayo celebration at lunch. One minute you're just standing around eating, talking with friends, and listening to music, then the next minute you're watching your art

## Senior imparts words of wisdom to freshmen

By Zakiyah Murray

High school. What seems to be four lingering years goes by in no time, and you're now walking



Murray

across the stage, IF you stayed focused and actually graduated. It's very easy to fall behind but extremely difficult to catch up. Your high school years can make you or break you; your success in high school determines the type of future you have. The purpose of going to high school is to further your education, get your diploma,

and go to college. Getting your high school diploma is the ticket to going far in life. According to the U.S. Department of Labor, people who work full-time with a high school diploma are 37.5% less likely to be unemployed than those without a diploma. Even if you don't go to college, you can get some decent jobs with a high school diploma. If you don't get the diploma, however, you have a very low chance of doing anything with your life.

The most important grades in high school are tenth and eleventh. Those are the two grades that colleges look at most closely. Tenth and eleventh grades make up your A-G requirements (what qualifies you to attend any California State University). The types of schools you get accepted to (community college, California State Univer-

sity, or University of California) depend on how well you do during those two years.

You might have slipped freshman year or gotten off track. If you have low grades, go to summer school and make them up. It's not fun spending your summer in school; however, it's really not fun being held back a grade. Also, if teachers see you're not serious about your schoolwork, they're not going to take you seriously. Teachers aren't here to baby-sit you while your parents are at work. Teachers are here to give knowledge and assist you in your academic endeavors.

If you mess up or make a mistake, it'll be you who suffers the consequences, not your family or friends. At the end of the day, you decide what type of person you'll be--someone who contrib-

utes to society or takes away from it, someone who's a part of the solution or a part of the problem. High school, as well as life, is what you make it. Sometimes certain situations occur--drama between cliques, misunderstandings between friends, etc. Steer clear of negativity, and stay out of trouble. Only you can truly control your life and your future.

To sum up, stay on track and don't slack off. Trust me; it will pay off in the end. Occasionally, you might have to give up the weekend or party time to hit the books, but you're making your future much brighter. Handle your business, come to school ON TIME, and concentrate in class. If you come on time to class and do your work now, you're more likely to arrive at work on time and do your job in the future.

## Freshmen offer advice to newcomers

Compiled by Alma Ramirez



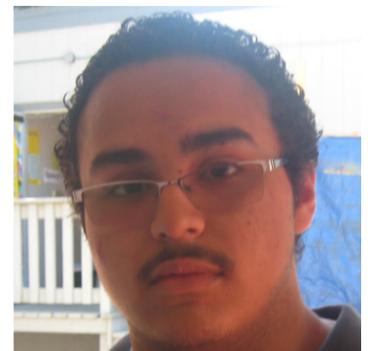
"Make sure you know where your classes are at. Don't slack off just because you know it's your freshman year."

Manuel Campa



"Stay on track because if you mess something up, you will have to make it up in the future years."

Alma Lizardo



"Some advice for newcoming freshmen is do good in school. Keep your backpack clean and organized, and write with neat handwriting."

Rodolfo Cornejo



"Geometry is going to be hard; there will be a lot of work. Put a lot of effort into the school year. Give it your best."

Diana Rodriguez and Diana Perez

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# SPORTS



Junior tournament champions Douglas Garcia (left) and Luis Romero (right) play against freshman Jonathan Chavarria.

Senior Eric Romero shoots at the goal while playing against tournament runners-up, freshmen Joel Saldana (left) and Alejandro Uribe (right).

## Juniors take victory in first Unity soccer tournament

By Daniel Barajas

In late April and early May, Philip Harr's ninth grade advisory organized a soccer tournament for Unity's soccer loving students.

"The kids wanted to go on a trip, so we needed money. Selling food seemed like a good option, but we wanted to do something different that would still raise money," said Mr. Harr.

According to Mr. Harr, the most difficult aspect of organizing this tournament was figuring out the structure.

"It took me up to 3 or 4 am. I wanted to give people enough games to make it worth what they paid," he said.

Mr. Harr's wife, an aerospace engineer, devised the brackets of who was going to play against whom. In this tournament there were three groups of three teams, and each week the two best teams

in each group advanced to the next round until it came down to two finalists. The rules for the tournament were the same as in a regular soccer game, except that the time for each game was shorter.

On April 23, the first round was held at Concordia Park right after school was over. Teachers wanted to support the students, so they decided to participate. They took the first field to play against the freshmen, resulting in a teacher victory of 5-1.

Many students played without caring about injuries because they wanted to be the best.

"Man, in the first game someone slid on my ankle, and it turned purple right away. But I kept playing like nothing happened because I didn't want to get out of the game," said sophomore Alejandro Gonzales.

On May 14, the final was played between the freshmen and the juniors, and the juniors took the victory 18 to 6. The game seemed very tight in the first half, but in the second half, juniors Douglas Garcia, Cesar Lopez, Luis Romero, and Eduardo Zaragoza managed to step their game up and score most of their goals. The prize for winning the tournament was five dollars for each person on the team.

Since each team of four had to pay a twenty dollar entry fee, Mr. Harr's advisory managed to raise a large sum of money.

"We were actually surprised at how much money we made because we never thought people were going to pay five dollars to play," said freshman Raquel Martinez, who helped to recruit students for the tournament.

## Unity basketball players follow in the footsteps of NBA idols

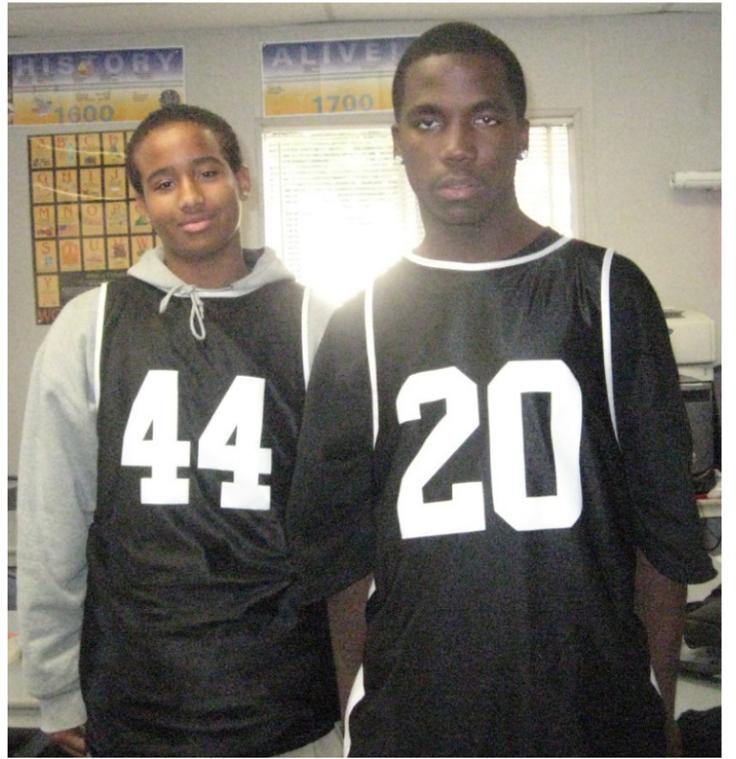


PHOTO BY BRITTANY DOUGLAS

Sophomores Marcus Bell and Antonio Murphy plan to become professional NBA stars.

By Brittany Douglas

There are twelve seconds left in the game, and Warriors power forward Antawn Jamison just sent the ball flying up the court to point guard Gilbert Arenas. With nine seconds left Gilbert charges his way through traffic and shoots a game-winning three pointer, leaving the Oakland Coliseum on its feet begging for more. It was games like this that left Unity sophomore Marcus Bell in awe of basketball players and wanting to dominate on the court just like they do. Unity basketball players look up to the professionals and admire the work they do on the court.

"My favorite team is the Houston Rockets. They are a good team, and they win," said Marcus.

Freshman Philloria Brown's love for basketball goes back to when she was six years old watching games on the television with her uncles.

"I have always loved basketball since I was young. I remember taking all the clothes out of the hamper and using it as a court and having my teddy bear as a ball... When I was young I remember it being Bulls mania all the time," said Philloria in reference to the pandemonium that the Bulls caused, especially during their 1997- 1998 season.

Even though Philloria started out a Bulls fan, in recent years, she has become a Miami Heat fan.

Just like Philloria, sophomore Antonio Murphy first became a fan of the NBA when he was young.

"I first started liking basketball back in elementary school," said Antonio.

He did not start off having a favorite team but now finds himself cheering for the Sacramento Kings.

"As of right now my favorite team is the Kings. They are a raw team that wins, and they have the good players like Ron Artest and

Mikki Moore," said Antonio.

When asked who the best player of all time was other than Michael Jordan, Marcus said, "I like LeBron because he's young and averages like 30 points per game."

"I think Tracy McGrady is one of the best," said Antonio. "He's not that young, but he has skills on the court. He usually plays for thirty plus minutes and gets around twenty points per game."

Admiring the style of players such as Michael Jordan, Tracy McGrady, and LeBron James has helped Marcus and Antonio win on the court just as they do.

"I don't really watch what other players do. I look up to Michael Jordan and try to incorporate some of his moves, but mainly I try to do my own thing. The good thing about watching other players is that you can see what moves work and don't work. Most of the time you just have to remember that you not in the NBA," said Antonio, whose playing style is reminiscent of Golden State Warriors shooting guard Monta Ellis.

Marcus also incorporates some moves from the pros into his own game.

"When LeBron does his threes, he freezes, pivots, and shoots...I play around on the side but try to do my own thing too," said Marcus when asked which move he tries to recreate the most.

Marcus admitted to watching LeBron James and Allen Iverson on the court but always tries to add his own flare and originality.

"In the future I see Antonio and Marcus both in the NBA because they are great players. I think they can go far," said Philloria.

Basketball coach Rowan Driscoll said it will take a lot of hard work for these young players to make it to the NBA. It entails hours and hours of practice, but with more growth, Unity players might one day become the basketball idols of the next generation.

## Women's soccer plays hard but meets defeat



PHOTO BY DAVID CASTILLO

The Unity women's soccer team faced a challenging season.

By Alejandro Gomez

The Unity women's soccer team had an exciting season as one of only three teams in the inaugural year of the Oakland Charter Schools women's soccer league. In this spring season, the Butterflies lost all of their games except for one, which was a close tie.

Some Unity soccer players felt that they kept losing because they only practiced once a week.

Freshman forward Ana Castellanos said, "We don't have enough practice. Also, we don't communicate in the field. Some of the teammates try, but some don't."

Junior goalie and midfielder Melissa Morales agreed that the

team needs to have more practices so that the players can get better and win more games. She believes that the whole team is very important.

"We need to communicate more, run, get more stamina, and play ball," said Melissa.

"Sometimes I feel bad because we never win," said Ana, but despite their losses, she said she had a fun experience at the games.

Melissa also plans to return to the team next year.

"Yeah, I want to return again because of the exercise. It's fun, you meet new people, and it is an extracurricular activity," she said.

Unity played in the semifinals

against Kipp Charter School on May 13. The game started with Unity scoring a goal made by Betsabe Mejia.

"They [were] playing hard, but the other team [was] just playing dirty," said Unity soccer coach Megan O'Conner. "They [kept] losing because of the referees. They [kept] making bad calls. They just called two penalties that made Kipp win the game."

Unity lost 1-2 against Kipp, which meant they did not continue to the finals against Lighthouse Community Charter School.

"I am very proud of the girls," said Coach O'Conner. "They played their hardest, and at least they had fun."

## *Tatiana Alexander*

"I really enjoy studying biology and life cycles and how much energy it takes for the whole process."

Science has always been Tatiana Alexander's passion. Since her junior year she has been an active member of Techbridge, a program in which young women explore technology and science in the real world. She also took John Baker's strenuous physics class, which she considers one of the biggest challenges she encountered in high school.

Next fall, Tatiana will attend San Francisco State University where she will study cell and microbiology with a focus on stem cell research. In the future, she plans to apply to medical school and become a cardiologist.

During her time at Unity, Tatiana broke her tendons twice, once when playing at a Unity basketball game as one of only four female players on the team.

"She is a strong student and a hard worker who is very determined and resourceful," said Rowan Driscoll, Tatiana's basketball coach and advisor.

Tatiana has used her struggles as inspiration to produce poems and stories, often inspired by events that have happened in her life. She uses her writing as an outlet to relieve stress.

"I write when I am at my lowest point and get inspiration from my emotions."

-Martin Rochin



## *Daniel Barajas*

"What's funny is that he thinks that his jokes are funny, but he's not. Basically people are laughing at him, not with him," said senior advisor Rowan Driscoll about Daniel Barajas's sense of humor.

In contrast, Daniel feels that his jokes and pranks are hilarious.

"The funniest prank that I have done was when I tipped over Eric Martinez and Susana Tinoco out of the canoe and then they fell into the water," he said.

Among the Unity seniors, Daniel has developed a reputation for his outrageous schemes and for always trying to pull something out.

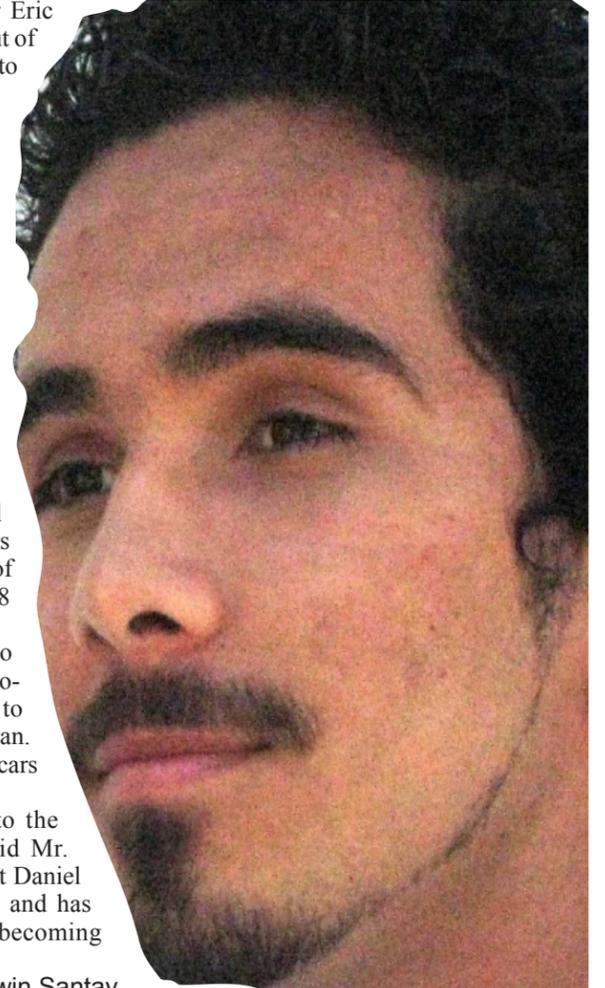
"Other pranks that I used to do was hiding backpacks."

But Daniel is not only a prankster. At Unity, he has found success on the soccer field and in the classroom. Daniel is proud of all of the championships that he won with the Unity Butterflies and with his other soccer team, Real Atletico. Throughout his years in high school, he passed all of his classes and earned a 3.38 cumulative GPA.

In the fall Daniel plans to attend the technical school Wyo-Tech, where he will learn how to become an automotive technician. He plans to work with luxury cars and imported cars.

"Despite the evidence to the contrary, he is growing," said Mr. Driscoll because he knows that Daniel has become more responsible and has taken the next step towards becoming an adult.

-Edwin Santay



## *Maria Barajas*

Making her way into the classroom singing and screaming, Maria Barajas frequently gets in trouble with advisor Rowan Driscoll for being loud and disrupting the class. Maria says she is loud so that other people can hear her.

"I was even loud when I came out of my mom's womb," she said.

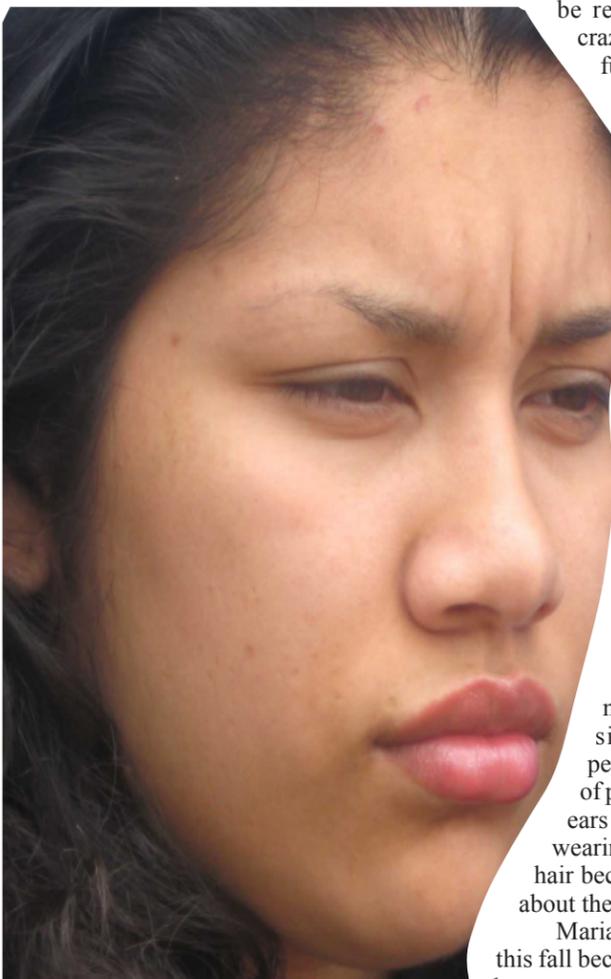
Without a doubt Maria will be remembered as a loud and crazy senior who loves to make funny faces. But she will also be remembered for her many accomplishments. For three years, Maria was a devoted member of Techbridge. Through Techbridge, she applied for the Smith College Science and Engineering summer program and received a full scholarship to attend. Her other major accomplishment was helping her mom take care of her autistic brother and, she adds, not getting pregnant.

"It's less loud than it used to be," said Mr. Driscoll. "Now she uses her loudness for good and not to be disruptive."

What most people may not know is that Maria considers herself a very shy person. When she is in front of people she doesn't know, her ears turn red. Maria also hates wearing make-up and dying her hair because she cares a great deal about the environment.

Maria will attend San Jose State this fall because it is close to home and has a strong engineering program.

-Daniel Barajas



## *Daisy Barraza*

Ha Ha Ha Ha Ha! From the picnic benches all the way across the school comes a distinct laugh that can come from one person and one person only, Daisy Barraza, the girl with the unforgettable contagious laugh.

"I will miss her sense of humor, always making people laugh and always putting a smile on my face like when I eat Mc Donalds," said Juan Contreras, one of Daisy's closest friends.

Loud and funny, Daisy hardly ever takes comments or jokes personally because, she says, she looks at the bright side of everything.

Besides the fun and jokes, Daisy is a hard-working determined girl who is always achieving. Having a 2.9 average in almost all her classes has made her more confident in ways only she can understand. She has been very active throughout her time at Unity, as a member of the women's soccer team and as part of the prom committee.

Daisy was raised by her loving parents who have supported her through the thick and the thin, along with her grandparents Valtazar Cortez and Raquel Ortiz. When Daisy was younger, she recalls, her grandparents would take her to math classes to help her improve her skills.

"My inspiration is my grandma because she had to drop out of school to help her family out. Not knowing how to read or write, she still made it through life," said Daisy.

In the fall Daisy plans to attend Fresno State University. She will take on the study of forensic science to become a crime scene investigator.

-Kevin Lopez



## Patricia Barraza

In the first year of high school, two sisters walked together onto the Unity campus. People stared and asked them, "Are you guys, twins?"

They both answered at the same time, "No!" and walked by.

For as long as they can remember, Patricia and Daisy Barraza have always been confused as twins because they are both tall and have long, curly hair. Whenever this happens, they just look at each other and start to laugh.

Patty was born on April 4, 1990 in Los Angeles, California but moved to Oakland at the age of two. Growing up, Patty was a very shy girl except around her family. She used to love the songs of Mexican singer, Gloria Trevi, and she and Daisy would often sing "El Pelo Suelto" together.

Now Patty is eighteen and about to graduate. She has grown into a responsible young woman with a 3.0 cumulative GPA and was accepted into six California State Universities.

"Patty is motivated and consistent," said Patty's advisor Erin Craig. "One thing I'm going to remember was when I split you guys up and took her to my advisory, she was really mad at first."

Patty and Daisy have been really close ever since they were small, but everything is going to change in the fall since Patty is going to San José State University and Daisy to Fresno State.

"Of course I'm going to miss Daisy. Me and her always talk about everything and tell each other secrets. It's going to be a big step, but we'll see what happens," said Patty.

-Daisy Barraza



## Roman Barry

"I'm never the same person. For a couple of months, I had blonde hair, then just got rid of it. It's important for people to experiment with their lives."

During the last four years, Roman Barry has continually experimented with his life, trying to find his true passions. He has experimented with his personal appearance, from his afro in ninth grade to his blonde hair in senior year; with different sports, including soccer, basketball, and football; and with music.

Roman loves listening to music and making music. Since his freshman year, he has created music by experimenting with a variety of computer programs through the DJ Project, an after school music and entrepreneurial program run by social studies teacher Daniel Zarazua and principal David Castillo. Earlier this year, he also learned to play the guitar from math teacher David Carter.

"[His music] draws on so many styles from around the world because he does his research. He incorporates west African, techno, hip-hop, and some elements of rock into the beats, vocals, and instruments of the song," said Mr. Zarazua.

Some of the music Roman has made has been played in Detroit, Michigan; Paris, France; Taipei, Taiwan; and Tokyo, Japan.

Roman will continue experimenting in the fall when he attends San Jose State University, where he plans to major in Japanese. Roman looks forward to networking, partying, and studying abroad in college.

"I think it's important to know what's going on in the rest of the world. The sun may rise in Japan but it sinks here."

-Martin Rochin



## Edgar Bautista

"Before I used to be a little wannabe gangster...not going to school, getting low grades, jumping people, and putting my family second. Then everything started changing when one of my closest friends was shot and died in front of me," said Edgar Bautista.

After this tragedy, Edgar turned his life around. He started to attend school regularly, kept up with his homework, and paid attention in class. Most importantly, he began to spend more time with his mom because before then, he didn't see his mom very often.

"He is more confident, he has a sense of direction to himself and his community. He is also more proactive and goes to teachers to see what he is missing," said Edgar's advisor, Rowan Driscoll.

Close friend Luis Herrera has also seen the new side of Edgar.

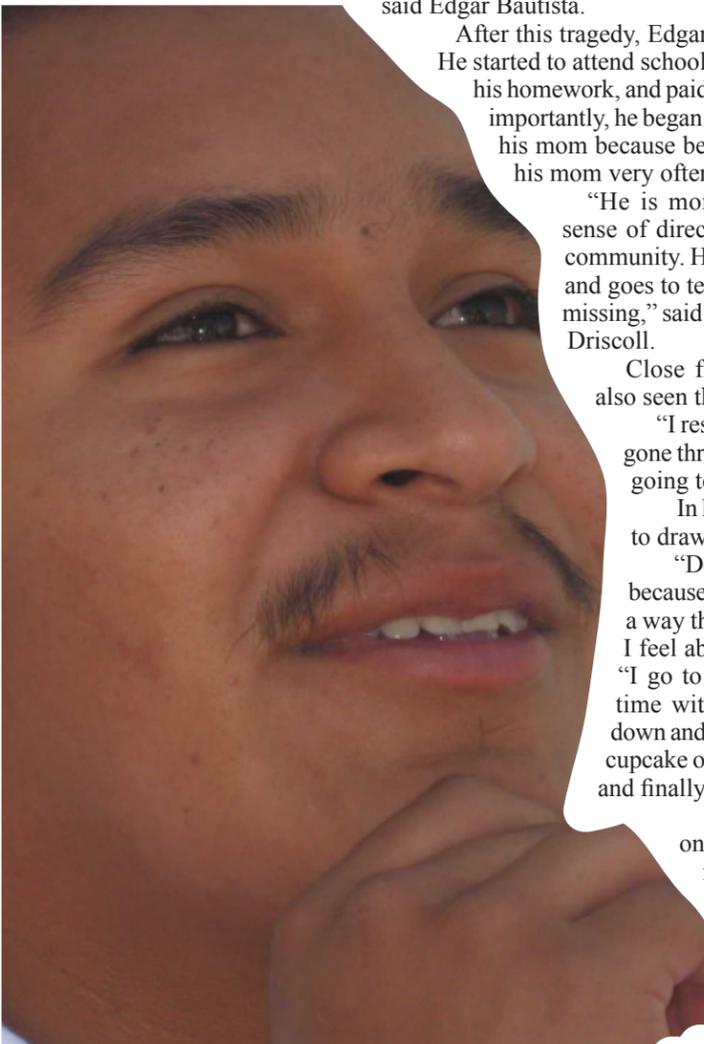
"I respect him because he has gone through a lot, and now he is going to college," said Luis.

In his free time, Edgar likes to draw.

"Doing art is my inspiration because it's a way I can relax and a way that I can express the way I feel about things," said Edgar. "I go to my house, chill, spend time with my mom...Then I sit down and do my homework, then I cupcake on the phone with my girl, and finally do some graffiti."

In the fall, Edgar plans on going to Laney College for two years. After that he plans to transfer to CSU Monterey because he likes being close to the sea.

-Alejandro Gomez



## Gregory Brinkley

"The first time I met him, he slapped me...Greg is special, there's nobody like Greg. There is nobody that crazy," said Roman Barry, Gregory Brinkley's best friend.

Greg might have a reputation as the goofiest senior at Unity, but he does it to cover up his intelligent side. He is a drummer, an artist, and a skateboarder—in short, a much more multidimensional person than most of us at Unity know.

Greg said that his favorite teacher at Unity is social studies teacher Daniel Zarazua because he can connect with Mr. Z on a personal level.

"I've always been impressed with Greg...he is very open-minded and tries out a lot of other things. He's one of the smartest kids at this school," said Mr. Zarazua.

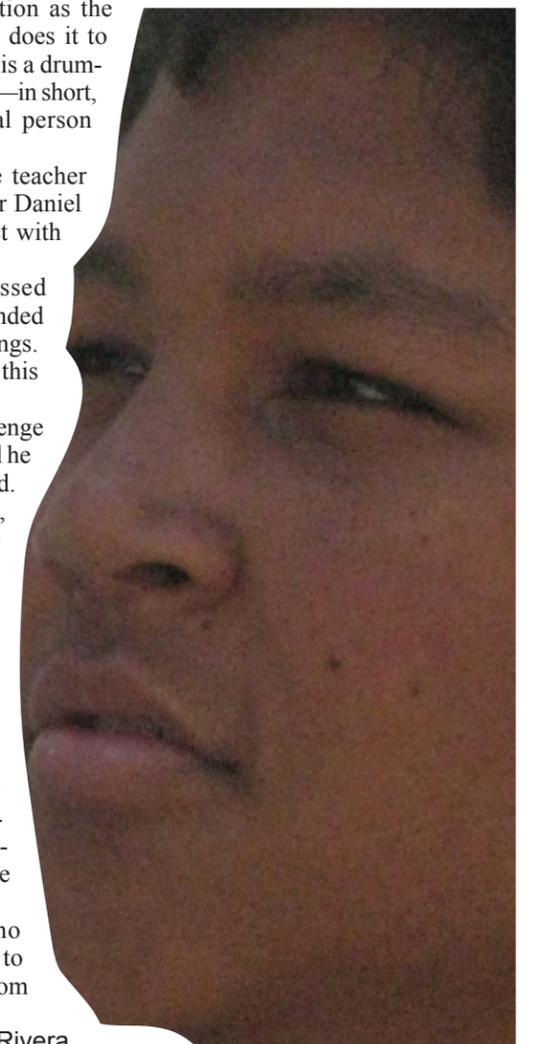
Greg said his biggest challenge was not learning how to read until he was seven. Now that has changed. Greg likes to read a whole lot, and all the books he has had to read for school like 1984, he had already read.

"My favorite book is 1 fish 2 fish by Dr. Seuss...that book is deep," said Greg.

Greg plans to go to community college and transfer to UC Berkeley, where he will major in Native American history. He likes Native Americans' philosophy on life, especially their peaceful ways and how smart they were at surviving in the wilderness.

"Do or do not, there is no try!" is the motto Greg wants to leave us with; he got that one from Star Wars.

-Beatrice Rivera



## Phillesha Brown

During ninth grade orientation, science teacher and Class of 2008 advisor Rowan Driscoll just could not pronounce Phillasha Brown's name right.

"I wanted to say, my name is not Phe-lle-ssa; it's Phillasha!"

Throughout the past four years, though, Phillasha has earned her name at Unity. She was one of the first women to play on Unity's previously all boys basketball team. She became an active member of Techbridge, Black Student Union, Student Council, and Art Club. She was also the only student at Unity who attended both the college trip to the South and the Gulf Coast trip to New Orleans and Mobile.

"Phillesha likes to give people a hard time, but she is absolutely a hard working student, whether it's BSU, organizing basketball equipment, or getting together a food sale," said Mr. Driscoll.

Phillesha also has a reputation as a very encouraging person.

"I will always be known as Mama Phillasha because people always want advice from me, and they expect Phillasha to know the answer when she has no clue," said Phillasha.

Phillesha will attend San Jose State University in the fall, where she plans to major in business. Her dream is to start her own daycare center one day.

Her three sisters are proud and supportive of her attending college. Phillasha's older sister, in particular, has been a big influence in her life.

"My older sister is my role model because she completed college and has a career going. She never let obstacles bring her down."

-Yareli Ortiz



## Vanessa Castellanos

Knowing that her parents had to endure a tough and dangerous journey to immigrate to the United States from Michoacan, Mexico has shaped who Vanessa Castellanos is today: a determined student with some of the best grades in the whole school, a 3.96 GPA.

"She's really hard working. Her work is first, and she's always trying to plan things for school," said close friend Maria Barajas.

At the same time, Vanessa has a goofy side. She has even been known to dance out in the middle of the street or on top of tables.

"I study when I have to, but when I go out with friends, I love to have fun, said Vanessa. "It relieves the stress that school puts on me sometimes."

A student at Unity since her freshman year, Vanessa said that what she will miss the most about Unity are the teachers.

"They are always there for you to help you with your problems, even when you don't want them to," she said.

Because Vanessa is considered one of the smartest seniors in the school, it surprises many when she tells them of her college plans. Vanessa was accepted into UC Davis, UC Santa Barbara, and UC Merced, but they didn't have the type of environment that was the right fit for her. That's why she plans to take a year off and then apply to UC Santa Cruz next fall.

"It's right next to the sea. There are a lot of trees and nature, and my best friend is going there."

-Carolina Cordero



## Juan Cerna

"I am sponsored by LRG and Jordan, but sometimes the shoes don't get here," said Juan Cerna.

Juan is known at school for his shoe fetish, but there is more to him than what meets the eye. Juan loves to dance, he's a mechanic, and he's one of the strongest players on his indoor soccer team, Barcelona. Juan was also lucky enough to be one of the six students to participate in the Gulf Coast trip this spring.

Juan is known by the Unity staff as a turn-around student. He started off heading the wrong way but changed his path completely.

"When my sister passed I thought I wasn't going to do it anymore, but instead I used her as an inspiration," said Juan about his little sister who was killed in a hit and run accident.

Since her death Juan has motivated himself to do well in school. He thanks English teacher Lillian Hsu for helping him by always checking up on him and his work.

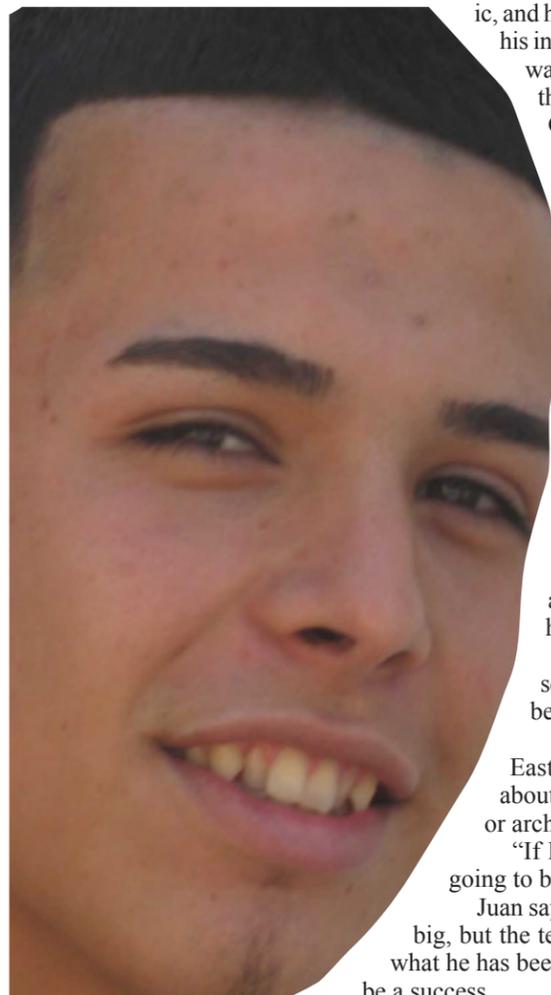
"Juan works really hard...he sometimes turns in his work a week before it's due," said Ms. Hsu.

Juan will be attending CSU East Bay this fall. He is undecided about whether he will study business or architecture.

"If I don't think I will make it...I am going to be an Oakland police officer."

Juan says he doesn't want to be someone big, but the teachers believe if he keeps doing what he has been doing, there is no doubt he will be a success.

-Beatrice Rivera



## Juan Contreras

"In the future I see myself in Italy taking pictures of nude models," said Juan Contreras.

Juan Contreras is known as the funny guy in his pool of friends, always making everyone smile even if he's in a bad mood.

"He's friendly and a good person to talk to," said Patty Barraza. "He's good at making people laugh...like when he doesn't have good comebacks."

On the other hand, Juan does have a serious side. He has gone through a lot of trials and tribulations to get to where he is today. Watching his brother go to jail made a huge difference in Juan's life.

"What has shaped me into who I am today is watching everyone else mess up and not wanting to fall into the same cycle," said Juan.

Erin Craig, Juan's advisor, said, "Juan is most improved in this advisory."

She said she will always remember that he started out whining about everything. However, Juan's habits improved as the years went by, and he changed into a responsible student.

Juan will attend San Jose State University in the fall. He will major in journalism and minor in photography. He has been doing photography since the seventh grade, and it is something he is very passionate about. He anticipates that in ten years he will be very successful and settling down with a family.

Juan wants to leave his fellow seniors with this message, "Live life to the fullest, and eat all you can!"

-Beatrice Rivera



## Carolina Cordero

Carolina Cordero estimates that over the past four years, she has read over 500 books.



"Carolina is the biggest bookworm I know," said English teacher Lillian Hsu. "I would give her a book one day and get it back the next day...I thought she had given up on it, but she had actually finished it."

Carolina says that when she picks up a book, she will look at the cover, turn it around, and if the description looks good, she'll read it. Her favorite authors include J.K. Rowling and horror writers V.C. Andrews and R.L. Stine.

"I read to escape into another world. I'm not myself anymore. I become the character, and I go through the problems for them. I love reading books that have adventure, sorrow and happiness, as long as it takes me away into a fantasy world," said Carolina.

At Unity, Carolina believes that the teachers helped her to reach where she is now, encouraging her to attend school and graduate.

"I am going to miss the one-on-one contact I have with my teachers. You get to know them so well," she said.

Even though she was accepted to Sonoma State University, Carolina will first attend a community college and then transfer to UCLA, where she plans to major in psychology.

"I want to be able to put a mirror in front of me and be my own psychologist. Hey, I have problems too, and it will definitely be cheaper," said Carolina.

-Alma Ramirez

## Taylor Davis

When asked what people will remember most about her, Taylor Davis said it's her crazy hair.

"People are always talking about it. They'll also remember my personality because I'm fun to be around."

Taylor has always stood out in the crowd.

"I don't do what everyone else does. I have my own mind and style."

Taylor plans to use her creative mind at San Jose State University where she plans to study psychology. She realizes the benefits of going to college and anticipates furthering her education.

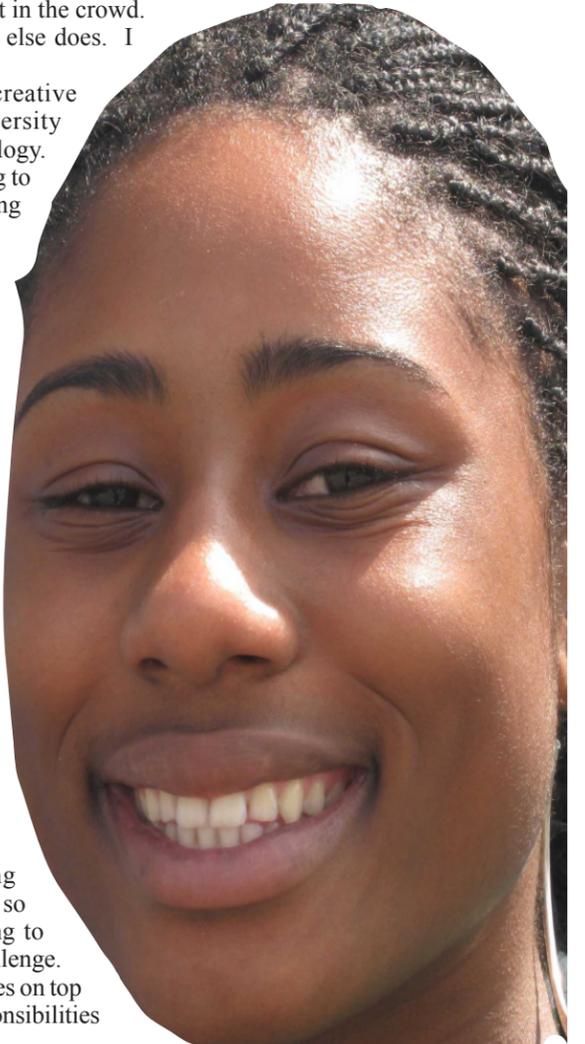
"I won't be able to survive without a college education. A lot of people are going back to school to get their Master's degree, so that's what I plan to do as well."

Wilneka Eason is Taylor's closest friend at Unity.

"I'm really going to miss Taylor because she's fun to be around, and she can always make me laugh. Since we'll be at different schools, we won't see each other as often, but we're still gonna kick it."

The rigorous curriculum at Unity has challenged Taylor to adapt to a heavy workload. Taylor has also been involved in several extracurricular activities including Black Student Union and Techbridge.

"It hasn't been easy being a student here because there is so much work! Working and trying to study at home has also been a challenge. Balancing extracurricular activities on top of that is tough, but juggling responsibilities is a part of life."



-Zakiyah Murray

## Tania de la Cruz

Being "the loudest person and always laughing" is how Tania de la Cruz wants people at Unity High to remember her.

"She laughs out of nowhere and makes it obvious that she is there by being loud when we're with a group of friends," said Sara Martinez.

Tania's loudness, though, may cover a more serious side.

"People don't really know that I have been through a lot of struggles with family like not talking to my dad for over a year, but I was able to come back on top and be strong again."

Some of her accomplishments throughout high school have been completing her work so she will be able to graduate on time and taking Mr. Baker's Physics class in eleventh grade.

Tania feels she has received teacher support and support from her mom to help her reach her goals.

"Driscoll has always been pushing me to do my work; my mom always told me to never make the same mistakes she did and finish school and complete my accomplishments. She has guided me through a lot."

After graduating high school, Tania plans to attend Merritt College, and after two years, she hopes to transfer to a four year university. She is looking forward to the new environment and a new school. Tania wants to become a nurse or a medical assistant.

"I want to go to college to have a career that pays good money, so I can help my mom out...I want to be somebody in life."

-Andrea Perez



## Brittany Douglas

"I'm weird, I'll act crazy, and while everyone is doing the expected, I am doing the unexpected!"

From singing Hannah Montana songs during journalism class to wearing Justin Ryles's kidnapped clothing, Brittany Douglas's joking personality always brings a smile to people's faces.

Brittany injects her exuberant personality into everything she does, including newspaper, prom committee, and yearbook. Brittany especially takes pride in her work as editor-in-chief of yearbook. Creating countless layout pages has paid off because working on yearbook has made her better at taking orders, giving orders, and snapping innovative pictures that capture the moment.

She said, "My legacy will live on in yearbook."

One memory that Brittany will never forget is the Los Angeles college trip.

"Brittany's crazy loud but funny. On the L.A. trip...my phone rang in a police siren, which scared us. We both jumped, but Brittany did a back flip, which was really hilarious. Ah...crazy Brittany," said Kiyah Murray.

Brittany's extroverted personality has led her to CSU Northridge, where she plans to major in public relations. She says that she doesn't want to stay nearby because she wants to have new experiences and meet new people.

"I am going to miss my good friends and some teachers from Unity, but I'm ready for a new beginning."



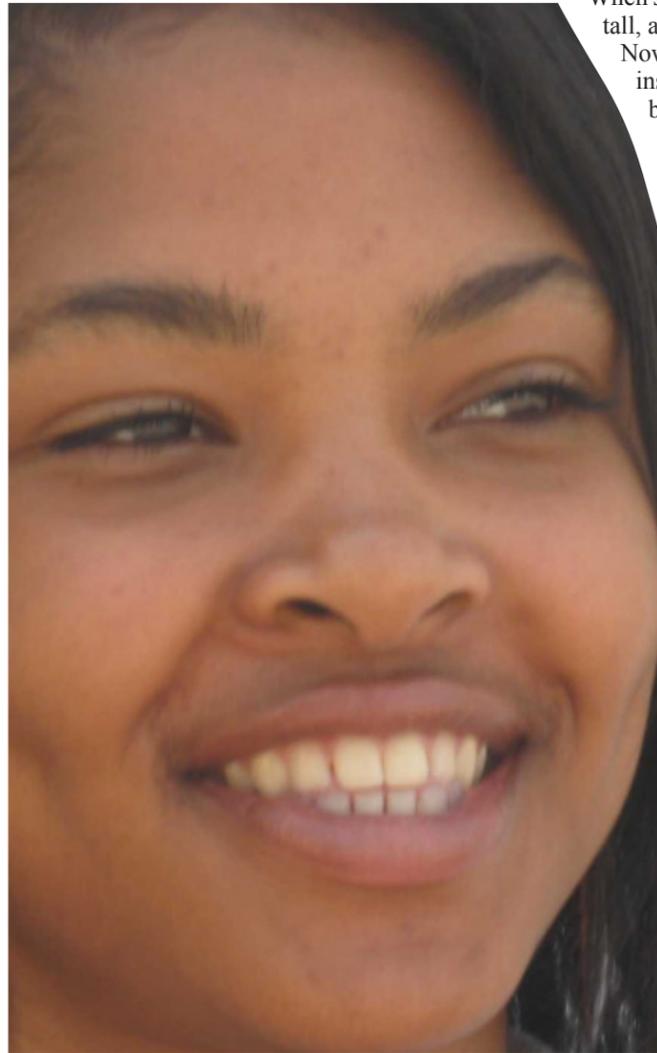
-Yareli Ortiz

# SENIOR

## Wilneka Eason

Wilneka Eason struts fiercely down a narrow runway dressed in haute couture. Lights and cameras flash nonstop at every angle, attempting to capture her beauty. This isn't a dream of hers; it's reality.

"Throughout my life I've been tall for my age and always felt awkward. It wasn't until I got older and began modeling that I heard of a woman named Kimora Lee Simmons.



When she was my age, she was tall, and her peers teased her. Now that I look at her, she inspires me to be tall and beautiful."

Since coming to Unity, Wilneka has found another passion, academics.

"These last four years, my academics have definitely improved. I used to not care for school, but now I love learning and I'm excited about going to college."

Wilneka's strength comes from the support of her family and friends.

"My hero is my dad because he's always been there for me. My mom was never there, so he's taken care of me my entire life."

Wilneka plans to attend Chabot Community College in the fall. She plans to study forensics and continue modeling.

-Zakiyah Murray

## Cesar Fernandez

"Keep on trucking," Cesar Fernandez always says. This signature quote reflects Cesar's persistent personality.

Cesar is really excited because he is graduating. He feels that all of the teachers at Unity had an impact on him, but the one teacher who affected him the most was math teacher and advisor Erin Craig.

"Ms. Craig put a big impact on me because she would always give me academic support during school and after school, and she taught me how to be disciplined and how to be organized," Cesar said.

Ms. Craig has been impressed with her advisee's improvement from a 1.1 GPA to a 2.95 GPA.

"He started to communicate more and started to work harder. He stayed after school, and he asked a lot of questions. He figured out how to use the tools and accepted the support that was given to him. He came out of his shell, and now he is not so quiet," said Ms. Craig.

After high school, Cesar is planning to attend Chabot Community College. He wants to major in sports management.

"I love sports. I have the passion...My favorite sport is football, but I like to play all sports," said Cesar, a former scorekeeper for the Unity High basketball team.

"I'm very excited to experience the college atmosphere because it's a new chapter of my life," said Cesar. "In ten years I see myself being financially stable and still living in Oakland but somewhere nicer like Piedmont."

-Leopoldo Zubiri



## Mori Franklin

"Being in foster care is the main challenge I have gone through in my life, and also it is the main thing that has shaped who I am because it is like a challenge that I have had to overcome every day of my life," said Mori Franklin.



"Her aunt and uncle adopted her since she was like ten days old," said friend Brittany Douglas. "She knows her real parents, but she is not really close to them. This seems to make her more motivated in school, so she can prove to everyone that she can do anything she wants to do in her life, like going to college."

The fact that Mori has not received much attention or help from the people around her caused her to become interested in nursing. In particular, Mori would like to get involved in programs for less fortunate children.

In the fall, Mori will attend Merritt Community College because of the reputation of its nursing major.

"I want to be a nurse so I can help others, help people like me," said Mori. "Help them and inspire them to make it all the way, and not only stop because they are foster children like I am."

-Alma Ramirez

## Claudia Garcia

"Si se puede! Si se puede!" are the words that explode from Claudia Garcia's mouth at the marches she helps to organize.

Throughout high school, Claudia has been involved in a grassroots organization called Huastec that helps empower youth to become community leaders. With this organization,

Claudia has planned events like the Xicana Moratorium, which takes place the last Sunday of August in San Francisco's Dolores Park. At this event, families enjoy different booths and performers but at the same time receive information about what is going on in their communities.

"She is a person that speaks her mind, and she's not afraid to. She tells it how it is," said April Herrera, Claudia's best friend since 2003.

In the fall Claudia plans to attend San Francisco State University and take on the study of social work. She hopes to become a social worker, reside in Oakland, and give back to the community, especially the youth.

-Kevin Lopez



# SENIOR

## Alejandro Gomez

Throughout high school Alejandro Gomez has always been known as Peques by his friends and teachers. Alejandro's mother gave him this nickname when he was born because of the fact that he was little.

"I don't mind people calling me that. I have gotten used to it. It's part of my daily routine."



Alejandro is an enormous soccer fan.

"Cruz Azul is my favorite soccer team because they are from the part of Mexico my family is from, Mexico City."

Alejandro also has a reputation as a joke cracker; during class he will often make fun of his friends that don't do their homework.

"The jokes that I say, I don't say it in the wrong way. I just say it because that's the way that I get along with my friends."

Sophomore Ileana Gomez, Alejandro's sister, said, "Most people think that Peques is just a person that cracks jokes, but he is a responsible young man."

Alejandro's accomplishments include maintaining a 3.25 GPA and graduating from the Berkeley Haas School of Business' Young Entrepreneurs program.

In the fall, he will attend UC Santa Cruz where he will study International Business.

-Edwin Santay

## Rebecca Gonzalez

"She is my sister from another mister," said Rebecca Gonzalez's best friend Ofelia Navarro.

Rebecca and Ofelia have been best friends since tenth grade. They have always shown respect for each other, and they have always been there for each other.

"She is the only person that knows my deepest darkest secrets," said Ofelia.

For financial reasons, Rebecca plans to attend Laney College in the fall. After two years, she plans to transfer to a University of California and study either psychology or social work.

Rebecca says that her mom is her "superhero." Her mom is very proud of her daughter going to college.

"It's like if she was the one graduating!" Rebecca said. "By the tenth or eleventh grade, most of my relatives my age became either pregnant or dropped out, but I didn't."

In addition to maintaining her grades throughout high school, Rebecca also played on a soccer team called Crece and volunteered at the local YMCA.

Rebecca sees herself in ten years having a successful career and being independent.

"I hope that I will be stable on the economic spectrum. Only God knows," she said.

-Alejandro Gomez



## Emmanuel Gutierrez

It's the first day of ninth grade year, and the students see a young man with long hair wearing a long coat stroll onto campus. At the time, Patty Barraza thought to herself that he looked like a character from Harry Potter since his hair was covering his face, but she later learned that his name was Emmanuel Gutierrez.

Emmanuel moved to the United States in 2000.

"I found it hard to adapt to school since I really didn't talk that much English, but as school passed, I started to learn more."

In high school, this young man with a sense of fashion started to show off his boldness. He came to school with his pointy shoes, his unbuttoned shirt, and his Mohawk. The students also started to notice him talking to more people.

Emmanuel will attend Sonoma State in the fall because of its strong business program and small class sizes.

-Daisy Barraza



## Ed Hale

Whenever someone sneezes Ed Hale almost always holds up his hand and says "Bless you," pretending to be a priest sprinkling holy water. This is just one of the many unusual ways that Ed show his sense of humor.

"Ed has a funny side, but when you talk to him, he has a deep side of him," said social studies teacher Daniel Zarazua. "He has an old soul, meaning that he understands how the world works. People sometimes underestimate him because of the way he acts. He is one of the sharpest thinkers in the school."

Two of Ed's most influential teachers at Unity have been Erin Craig and Rowan Driscoll.

"Ms. Craig was the best math teacher I ever had.... Driscoll has been a big influence on me because he is funny but serious, and I look up to that because I can be funny and serious when I have to."

Ed is going to Merritt College and then plans to transfer to a big college where he can study engineering or history.

"In ten years I see myself on the beach chilling and giving back to my community. If I have like a six figure job, I would make my own charity that helps poor people. I don't trust no other charities because sometimes they don't give the people the money."

-Leopoldo Zubiri



# SENIOR

# 20



## 60 Seniors, 185 Co

Cal Poly Pomona (1) Cal Poly San Luis Obispo (5) Cal State Channel Islands (1) Cal State Chico (8) Cal State Monterey Bay (2) Cal State Northridge (17) Cal State Sacramento (14) Cal State San Marcos (1) Cal State Stanislaus (1) Parsons the New School for Design (1) Santa Clara University (1) San Diego State University (1) UC Berkeley (1) UC Davis (1) UC Irvine (1) UC Merced (10) UC Riverside (1) UC San Diego (1) UC Santa Barb

### Luis Herrera

Luis Herrera feels sad because his last four years have passed in a matter of seconds for him. He is going to miss the jokes, the pranks, his friends, and the support that Unity gives.

"I will always remember the time when I put parmesan cheese in Baby G's backpack, and he had to throw it away," said Luis.

Nowadays, though, Luis has more serious things to worry about, more responsibilities, and he has to think more maturely. He can't act like a little kid anymore.

"I think that I stand out because of the fact that I am soon to become a father," he said. "My little girl has made me change and look at life in a whole different way; I don't want to set a bad example for her."

Some of Luis's biggest challenges were trying to leave alcohol behind and his parents divorcing. Luis doesn't want his daughter to go through the struggles that he had to go through. He wants to give her the best life possible and let her know how much he really loves her.

"I will work and study twice as hard to succeed and give my daughter all the things that I didn't have," said Luis. "I don't want to live the life that my parents live without an education. That is why I want to go to college."

Luis plans to go to Chabot College and then transfer to UC Santa Cruz. He intends to study forensic science and sees himself in the future working in a forensics lab in Los Angeles County.

-Daniel Barajas

### April Herrera

"I didn't see myself going because people like me don't go to college," said April Herrera.

At the beginning of high school, April was unsure about going to college and furthering her education. She often found school to be boring and would have preferred to be out working, but instead of giving up, she hung in there. With the support of her loved ones, April is not only graduating but will be the first in her family to attend college when she goes to Merritt College this fall.

April not only received support from her family but from classmates as well, especially close friend Lucero Valdez.

"Lucero was really trying to go to college, and seeing her, it motivated me."

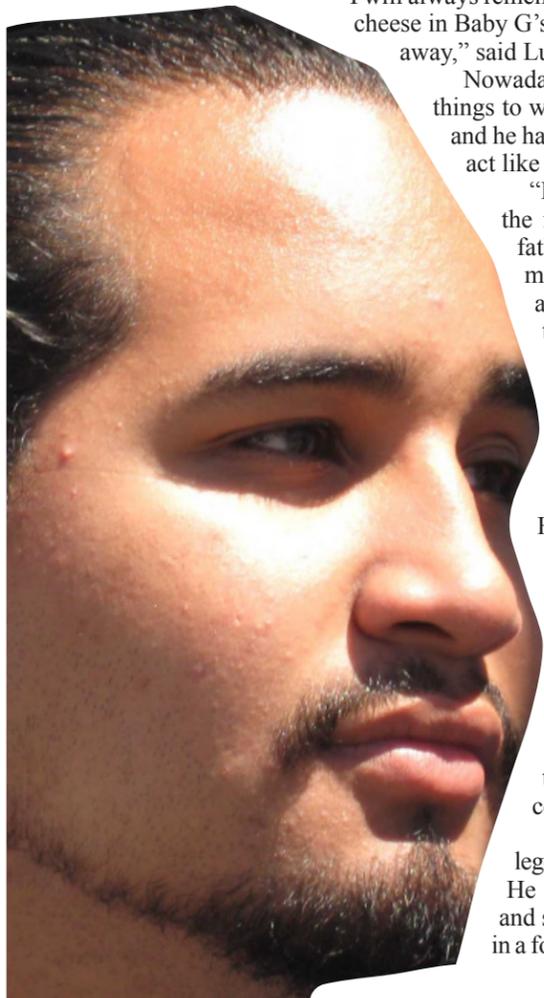
April is now using the inspiration she received from Lucero to motivate the people that look up to her.

"I don't know if my little sister looks up to me, but my parents say she does," said April about her seven-year-old sister.

April knows that going to school won't be easy and will take dedication, but she knows it will lead to a better life.

"I don't want to struggle. Even though I think it's boring, it's going to be worth it."

-Brittany Douglas



# SENIOR

# 08



## College Acceptances

East Bay (20) Cal State Fresno (9) Cal State Los Angeles (8) Cal State Long Beach (2) Cal State Stanislaus (4) Dominican University of California (1) Humboldt State University (8) Notre Dame de Namur (4) San Francisco State University (18) San Jose State University (23) Sonoma State University (10) UC Santa Barbara (2) UC Santa Cruz (6) University of Miami (1) University of San Francisco (1) Whittier College (1)

### Kevin Lopez

### Celia Magallon

Kevin Lopez has been an artist for as long as he can remember. "I do all types of styles, from basic simple art to wild crazy art," he said. "It's a way to express myself without having to say how I feel."

Since ninth grade, Kevin has participated in an art program called Visual Element.

"Visual Element is an organization where youth go to improve their skills, not by people there telling them what to do but by providing the resources and the support they need to better their skills," said Kevin.

Even though Kevin's first love was graffiti art, he has since developed skills in a variety of techniques.

"He did really well with woodblock printmaking. He is quiet, and he focuses well on his projects," said Unity art teacher, Jamie Treacy.

Kevin plans to go to Alameda College and study Automotive Technology.

"It comes in handy because everybody drives cars and you can fix your own cars instead of paying another person doing the work that you can do for free," Kevin said. "I see art more as a hobby than a career. I can do art in my spare time and make more money while doing automotive technology."

-Alejandro Gomez

When Celia Magallon walks across the stage this June, she won't just be doing it for herself; she'll be walking for every member of her family.

"I'm the first person in my family to graduate from high school, so this is a big deal."

Over the past four years, Celia has received tremendous support from her advisor Daniel Zarazua.

"Mr. Zarazua is the teacher who's helped me the most. Since ninth grade he's stayed on me about my work. He's helped a lot and never let me give up."

Mr. Zarazua returns the compliments.

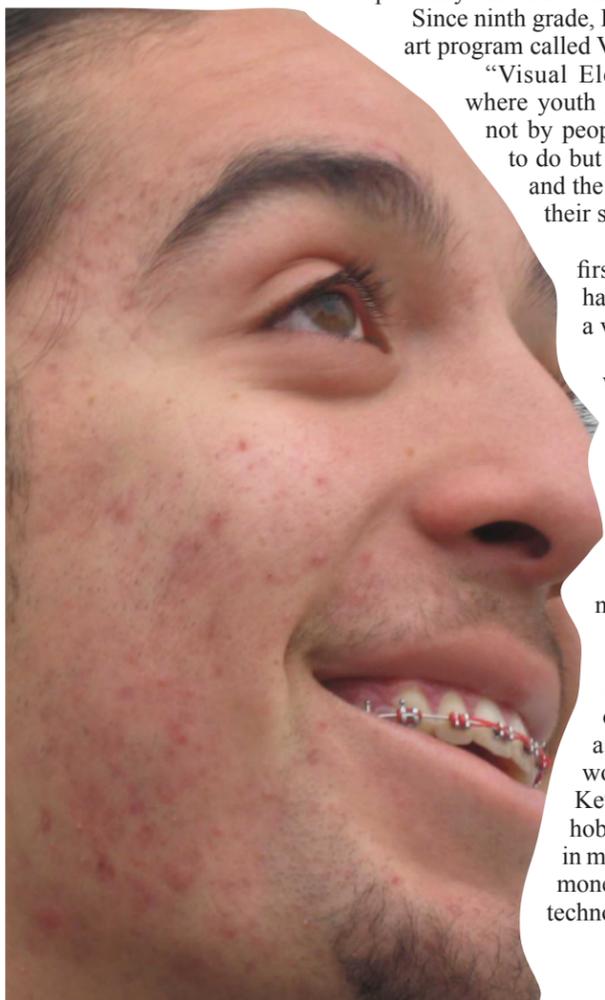
"Celia has a pleasant personality. She's always positive and has a bright attitude."

The support of Celia's classmates has also helped her push herself academically.

"Mariana Torres has been my closest friend at Unity. Sometimes I don't feel like doing my work and I get tired, but she doesn't let me quit."

Celia plans to attend Laney Community College and study Cosmetology.

-Zakiyah Murray



# SENIOR

## Eric Martinez

Always watching his mom have the desire to go back to school inspired Eric Martinez to go to college.

"My mom has always supported me to go to college because she wants me to take that opportunity that she wishes she could have," said Eric.

He has decided to attend UC Santa Cruz and study Electrical Engineering.

Camello, as Eric's friends call him, will be remembered by his friends for an incident in middle school.

"I remember when Eric started crying because we told him that the police was going to take us after he got caught watching inappropriate things on the computer," said friend Alejandro Gomez.

"We still play around with friends and joke around but not childish things like we used to," said Eric.

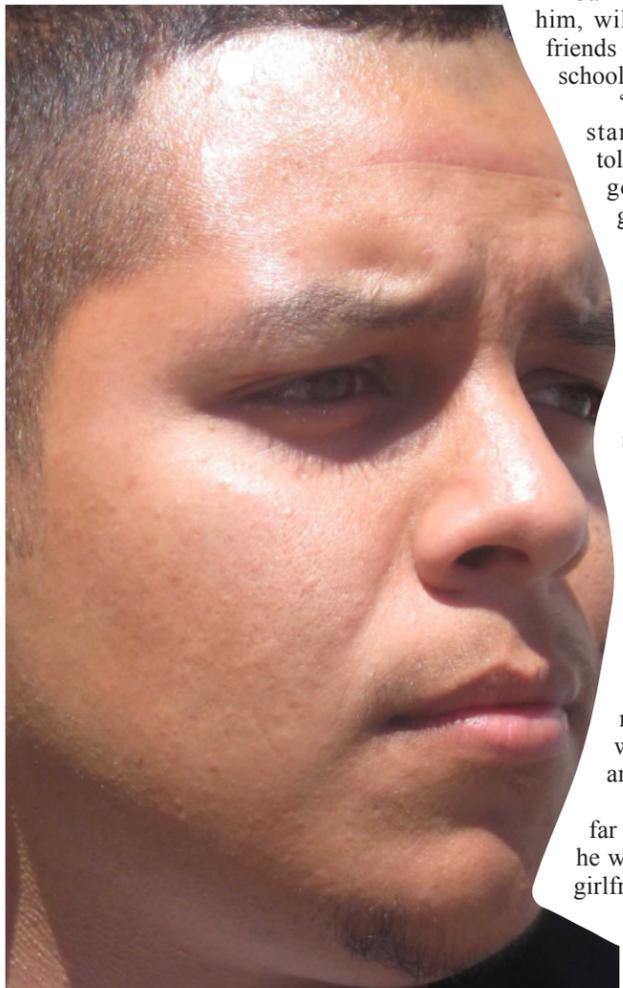
Eric's greatest accomplishment was getting accepted to three UCs and five CSUs.

"Getting through high school and putting drugs behind me have been my biggest struggles. I knew that drugs were nothing good, and they weren't going to take me anywhere," said Eric.

Eric doesn't want to go far away for college because he wants to be able to visit his girlfriend frequently.

"In ten years I see myself married with the girl I love, which is Betsy, and with a family."

-Daniel Barajas



## Jessica Martinez

Jessica Martinez, better known as "Jes-kah" by her close friends, has a reputation as one of the funniest people in this school. According to her friend Alejandra Ruiz, "You could be having the worst day of your life, and she can make you laugh in the blink of an eye."

With her wacky facial expressions and her extroverted personality, her friends see her as one true burst of life.

After being at Unity for her freshman and sophomore year, Jessica followed her brother to U Prep for her junior year but returned to Unity as a senior. Coming back to Unity wasn't easy.

"I wasn't used to the school anymore, but seeing my old friends made it easier. I'm glad I came back," she said.

One of the things she will miss most about Unity is leaving all her friends behind.

"It's not like we're never going to see each other anymore. It's just that as soon as we graduate, it's going to be different. I won't see them everyday anymore."

Jessica plans on attending Chabot Community College and then transferring to a college in Vallejo. She wants to major in computer engineering.

"In ten years I see myself out of college with a good steady job. I like computers, so I'll do good in my job."

-Carolina Cordero



## Sara Martinez

She is loud, funny, and has a familiar, high pitched voice that everyone at Unity seems to recognize. Her name is Sara Martinez.

Before coming to Unity, Sara attended East Oakland Community School, where she had bad experiences with teachers and peers.

"I would skip school and get into fights," she recalls.

Sara transferred to Unity in the middle of her sophomore year. Now, as a senior, Sara feels that she has accomplished a lot. She has been involved with the girls' soccer team and the prom committee. Unity has also helped Sara succeed academically.

"Now I'm doing all my work... they push you to do your best here."

Sara will always remember when she, her friends, and teachers went to a Raider's game and she got up to dance while everyone watched. This surprised the teachers who had always thought she was quiet and shy.

With the end of her senior year approaching, it will be hard for Sara to adjust. "It's going to be sad. I'm not going to see all my friends and have all the teachers' support."

Sara has not decided yet where to go next, but it's between Chabot College or SFSU, where she plans to study marketing. But for now, Sara is keeping up with her grades and staying on top of her work, while still having fun.

"I just wanna live life to the fullest."

-Jessica Patino



## Juan Moreno

Juan Moreno feels like he has made huge accomplishments since the beginning of the year when he transferred to Unity from Merritt Middle College.

"Getting into five different colleges felt really cool. I've worked all year, and I'm prepared for college."

Senior advisor Rowan Driscoll recognizes Juan's perseverance.

"I feel Juan has made improvements.

He's figuring out how to be successful. Juan wants to do well, and it shows, coming into a school that has big expectations for its students."

With dreams of becoming an FBI agent, Juan plans to attend San Jose State University in the fall.

"I heard SJSU is a pretty good school, and a lot of seniors from Unity are going there. Plus, Ms. Ramos recommended it to me," said Juan.

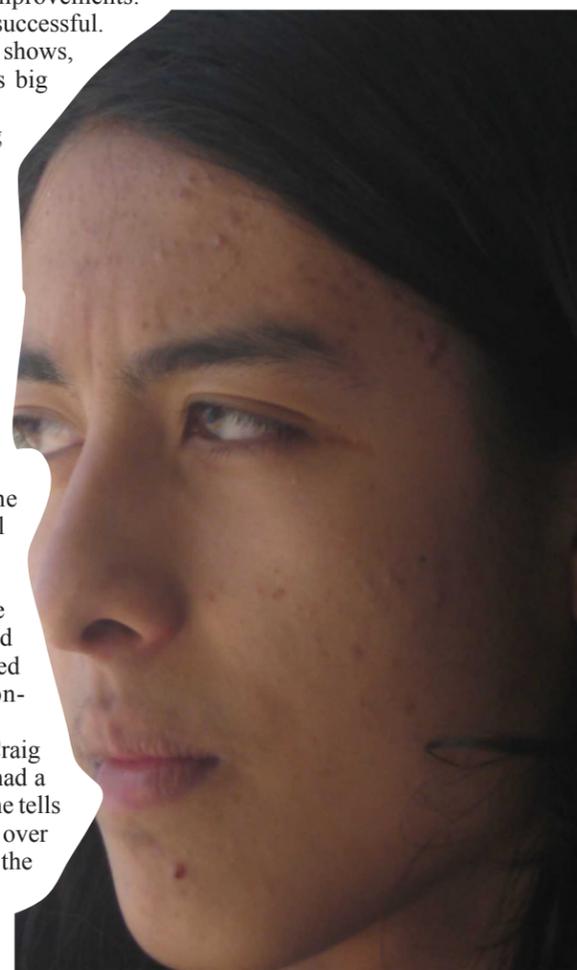
High school is extremely different than college, which is why Juan anticipates starting his life as a mature adult.

"In college, I'll have the freedom to do what I want. I'll have more flexibility. I can't wait."

Juan is thankful for the teachers at Unity who've pushed him to do his work and helped him understand difficult concepts.

"I was lucky to have Ms. Craig for Algebra 2. I never really had a decent math teacher before. She tells you about the subject and goes over it. She doesn't just give you the work; she actually shows you how to do it."

-Zakiyah Murray



## Zakiyah Murray

Students are filtering to class on a regular day, laughing and talking, since it's mid November 2006, but there's one student who is looking around awkwardly not talking to anyone.

"I felt out of place," said Zakiyah Murray about her first day at Unity. "But my parents felt it was best that I went to Unity because I needed to do better in school."

Before coming to Unity, grades, education, and college did not seem very important to Kiyah. After attending Skyline High School, the idea of attending a small charter school did not excite her. But since coming to Unity, Kiyah has stayed on top of her work.

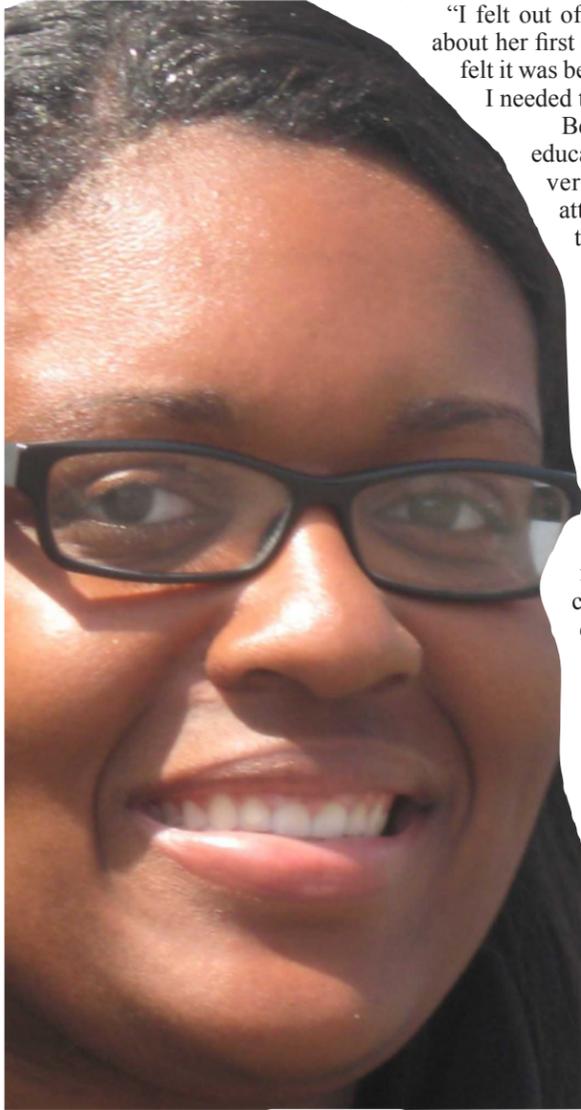
"Being at Unity has made me see how important education is and going to college to have the career I've always been interested in."

Kiyah may seem quiet, but she surprised everyone in Lillian Hsu's English 12 class during the juvenile justice debates by memorizing her entire speech and speaking in a loud, dramatic tone to get her point across.

"She can be quiet and serious around a lot of people, but once she warms up, she has a funny side and she likes to sing for fun," said Brittany Douglas who is one of Kiyah's closest friends.

Kiyah will be attending CSU Northridge in the fall. Her plan is to major in Sociology because she wants to pursue a career as either a police officer or a social worker.

-Andrea Perez



## Ofelia Navarro

With her pen and her journal, Ofelia Navarro, also known as Bubbles, jumps into a different world where she lets her imagination run wild.

"Ever since the fifth grade, I have fallen in love with writing. I like writing because this is the way that I express myself."

Ofelia is also an enormous fan of Chivas, a Mexican soccer team.

"Whenever there is a game that Chivas plays, I never miss it. I like soccer. It's my favorite sport. Without it my life would be different."

Ofelia says that being involved in these activities has kept her healthy and in shape.

"One of the things that I will miss the most when I graduate is my best friend Rebecca."

Ofelia said that Rebecca has been there for her whenever she needed her and that now they are two inseparable people who always tell each other the truth.

"She is no longer a friend; she is family."

In the fall Ofelia plans to attend Laney College and then transfer to Sonoma or San Jose State. In college Ofelia plans to study psychology.

"I want to study psychology because I had a lot of drama when I was a child, and a psychologist helped me out and made me realize how my life really was. I want to give the same help to others."

-Edwin Santay



## Mabel Orellana

It's 3:30 in the afternoon, and nine-year-old Mabel Orellana is once again standing over the stove making noodles. Lonely because her five older sisters are all living in El Salvador, she is left in the house to keep herself company until her mother gets off work.

"I have always been really responsible because when I was young, I learned that there were some things that I needed to do for myself. So I have worked hard and made good opportunities come my way," said Mabel.

Even though most things have not come easy for Mabel, the one thing that comes effortlessly is dance. She is talented at every style of dance, but her favorites are Salsa and Merengue. Having never taken a dance class, Mabel has natural rhythm that enables her to rock her hips.

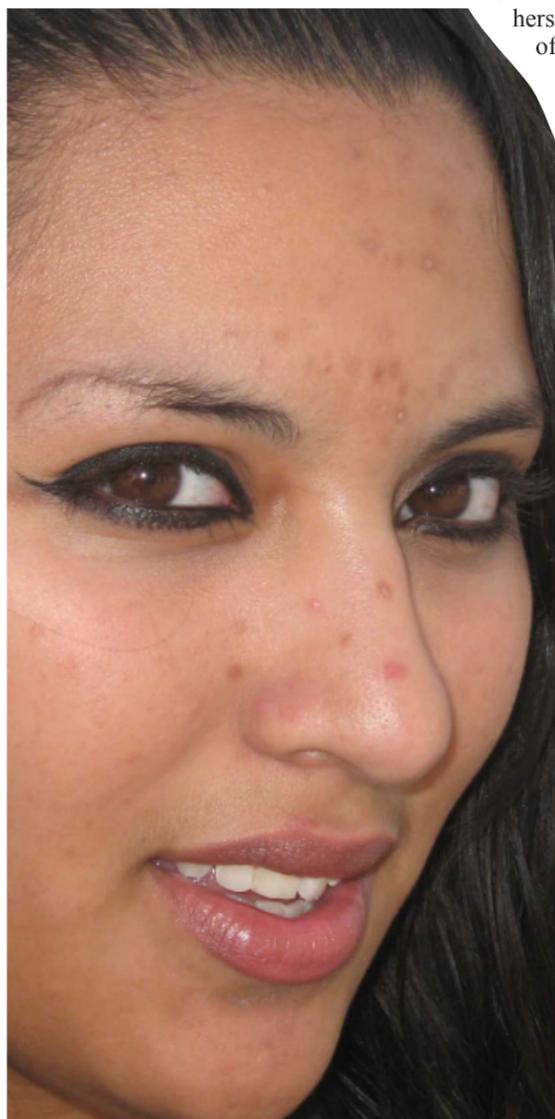
"When I see her dancing, I can tell she shuts everything out and feels the rhythm of the music like a true dancer," said good friend Andrea Perez.

Mabel also has a passion for helping people, which encouraged her to major in psychology so that she can help the people in her community.

In the fall Mabel will be attending Berkeley City College.

"I'm going to college for myself, to make something of me. Because it does not matter what school I go to, as long as I'm out there doing something with my life."

-Brittany Douglas



## Yareli Ortiz

"I will be remembered as the girl who broke the uniform code by spadzazzling it."

Yareli Ortiz is known for being fashionable and for customizing her uniform with matching accessories. Since her junior year, she has taken Fashion 101, Figure Drawing, and a film class at the Academy of Art University in San Francisco. Her passion for fashion began early.

"When I was five...I would go into my sock drawer, get my mom's needle, and make dresses for Barbie out of the socks."

Yareli's love for art is almost as strong as her love for fashion. She has been painting ever since she was four years old and played a leading role in designing the first mural at Unity. Her artwork has also been displayed in the Pro-Arts and Rock, Paper, Scissors galleries in Oakland.

This multi-talented senior has also been playing the acoustic guitar and electric guitar since her freshman year. She has played in three progressive and indie rock bands: Fighting the Villain, Razzero, and The Starlets.

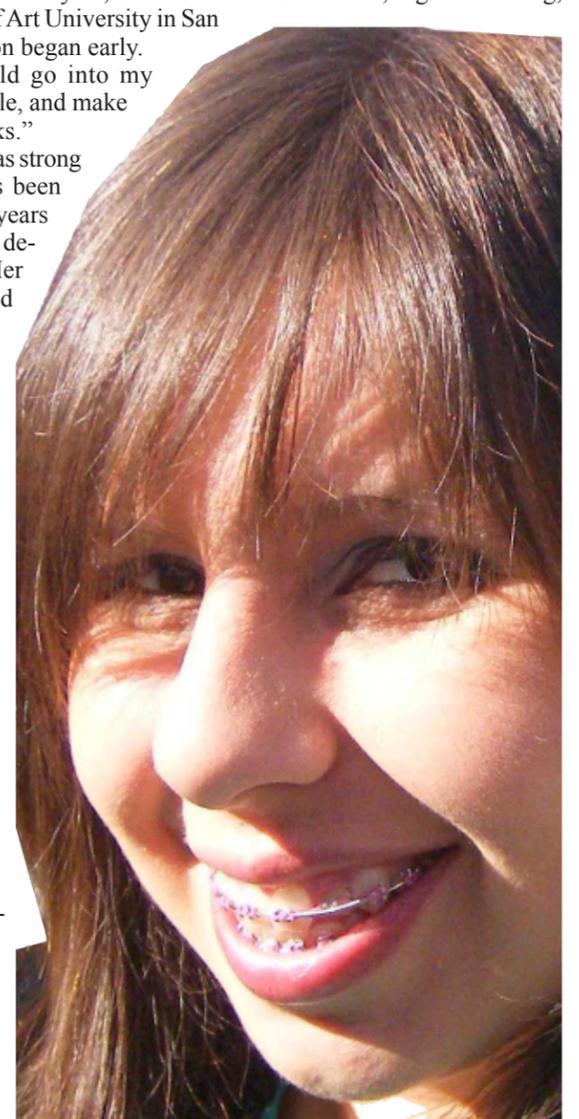
At first Yareli did not want to come to Unity. She was attending Alameda High School and did not want to leave her friends.

However, her personality quickly won her many new friends at Unity.

"She's eccentric, weird but in a cool way. She stands out, and she never follows the crowd," said senior Alfredo Moran.

Yareli will be attending University of Notre Dame de Namur in Belmont, California, and plans to major in graphic arts. She aspires to become a fashion designer or to write for a fashion magazine.

-Martin Rochin



## Jessica Patino

Growing up in a family that felt unstable to her only made her stronger. Jessica Patino was eight years old when her father left her family.

"Because of this, most of the time, my siblings and I lived with my grandparents, and it felt like I didn't have a real family anymore," said Jessica.

Despite her family struggles, Jessica feels like she has accomplished a lot during her years at Unity. She started off on a bumpy road with her grades but has improved and pushed herself to do better and better.

"My only goal is to graduate and prove that I can make it. Just because you don't have a stable family doesn't mean you have fewer opportunities than others," she said.

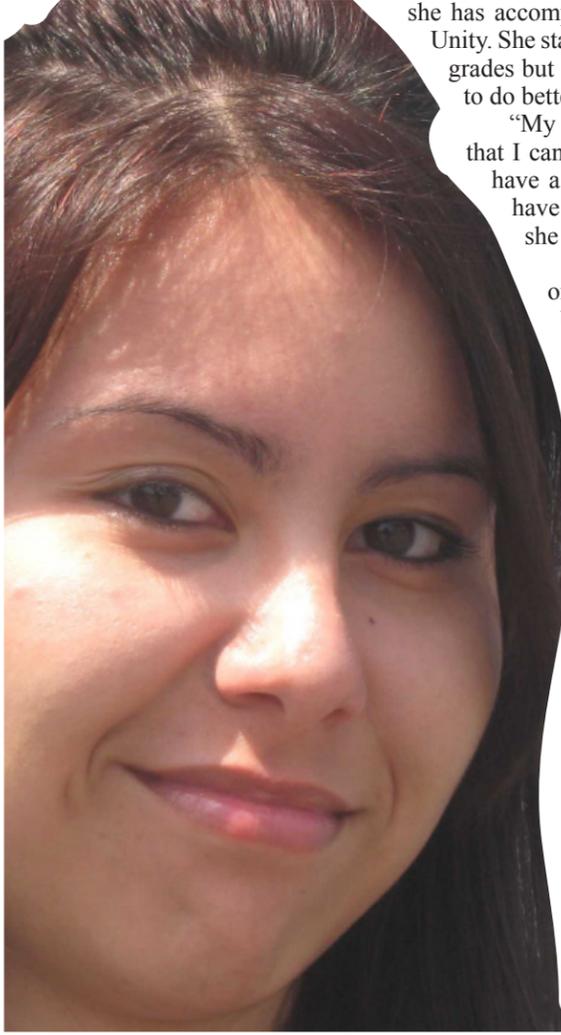
After high school Jessica plans on attending San Francisco State University, where she wants to major in Psychology. For a future career, she would like to become a clinical psychologist. With this job, Jessica feels she will be able to reach out and help people who have dealt with similar problems and other unstable lifestyles.

"I want to be a psychologist because I can relate to different problems people have," Jessica said. "I want to help them feel better about themselves and help them see why they should succeed in life."

Jessica's family has also recognized her high school success.

Crystal Patino, Jessica's older sister, said, "I feel proud because she will be able to make it and that she has been able to motivate herself."

-Andrea Perez



## Andrea Perez

"It still feels like it barely happened."

It has been almost three years since Andrea Perez's family experienced a tragic death; her only uncle from her mother's side passed away in January 2005. This event made a strong impact on Andrea.

"I've become more realistic and serious in how I see the world," she said.

To make her uncle proud, Andrea has tried her best to keep her grades up, but school has not always been easy. She has had a hard time opening herself up to people.

"I'm used to being judged, and it doesn't bother me. But I prefer to get by through doing what I have to do, by not being very outspoken," she explained.

However, she is learning to be more vocal in class and wants to be heard.

"I'm very excited to see her graduate and start the next phase of her life," said government teacher Daniel Zarazua.

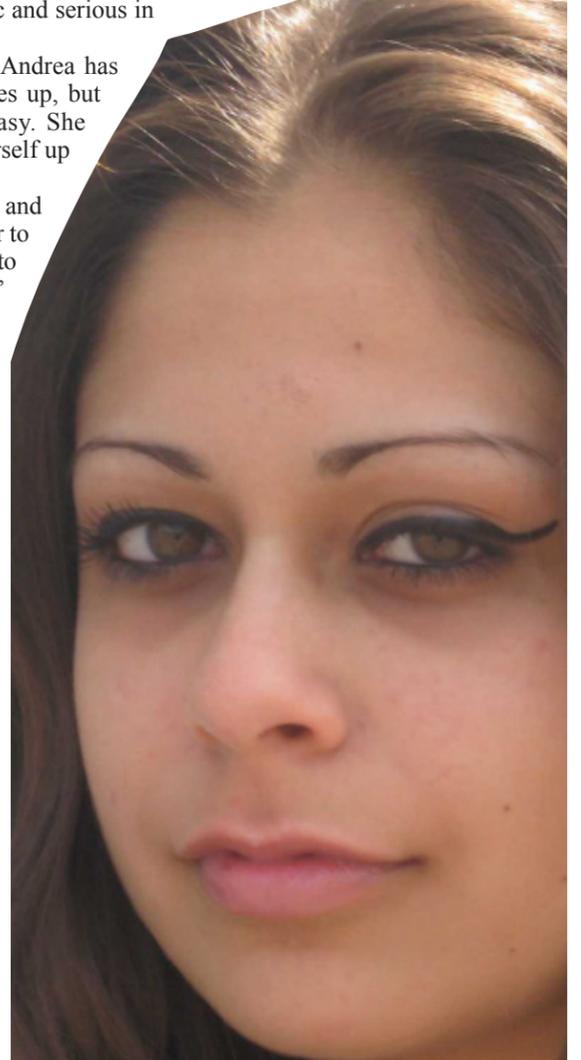
In the future, Andrea sees herself pursuing the career of an elementary school teacher. In fact, she has already had a taste of what this career is like. Every Wednesday, Andrea goes to Dolores Huerta Learning Academy to help tutor second grade students.

"I want to be able to make a difference in a lot of kids' lives and motivate them."

Andrea will attend Sonoma State University in the fall.

"Part of life is growing up and getting out of your comfort zone and expanding your life experience," said Andrea.

-Jessica Patino



## Alma Ramirez

"I'm not an animal lover! I'm an animal breeder, which is something totally and completely different," says Alma Ramirez with a smile on her face.

Every morning Alma wakes up, gets ready for school, and starts on her feeding frenzy.

First, she feeds her two colorful birds, which are a Blue Mountain Lorry and a Cockatiel. Then come her sixteen medium fishes and one huge piranha. After the fishes are her three beautiful dogs and, finally, her tiny, shiny black rooster.

Having so many animals has made Alma a responsible and caring person. She also loves to take care of her niece Kasandra and is like her second mom. She looks at Kasandra as her motivation to keep going and finish high school and go on to college. As Kasandra grows up, Alma wants to be a positive role model for her and show her that she can accomplish anything she puts her mind to.

"What I love about Alma is how much she loves books and how she always has an intelligent opinion about what she reads. She also has a good attitude and never seems to be in a bad mood," says English teacher Lillian Hsu.

Although happy to be done with high school, Alma is sad to be leaving all her teachers.

"The teachers really care for you and help you out when you have problems," she said.

Alma will also miss all the memories she has of Unity, such as the time Alfredo Moran and Roman Barry started dancing on her for no apparent reason.

-Carolina Cordero



## Beatrice Rivera

"I know if she was here, she would be proud of me since I'm going to be the first one to walk the stage and graduate from my family."

As a child, one of the hardest challenges Beatrice Rivera went through was her mother's death. She died when Beatrice was only nine years old.

"I don't know what happened. It was unsolved, but they said she died from a fall."

Beatrice lived in Oakland for sixteen years and moved to Arizona at the age of seventeen. She moved to Arizona to do better in school but ended up staying there for only one year. She was one of only two students who entered Unity High School as a senior.

Even though this year was Beatrice's first year at Unity High, she quickly became involved as a member of Techbridge, In-Depth editor of the newspaper, and the head of the prom committee.

"Beatrice is hardworking, highly involved, and a leader. She is very reliable. If she says she is going to do something, she will do it," said advisor Erin Craig.

The college Beatrice will be attending is CSU Northridge. She plans to pursue a career in forensics or law enforcement.

"The reason I want to do either forensics or law enforcement is because of the unsolved mystery of my mom's death and my friend's death. I want to help people by being a homicide detective or go into law enforcement."

-Daisy Barraza



## Claudia Robles

"The mystery of Unity" is what Edgar Bautista calls senior Claudia Robles because she is always talking Spanish and laughing out of nowhere for no apparent reason.

"I'm always happy, and I guess many people just don't understand me for being so happy about living. I guess it is sort of complicated when you don't really know me that well. I'm just happy," said Claudia.



Claudia is more than a loud and good-humored person. She has a side to her that few people at Unity know. With three younger sisters and a two-year-old brother, Claudia shoulders a lot of responsibility at home.

"I always take care of my little siblings. It's like I'm another mother to them," said Claudia about her life outside of the school gates.

In her spare time, Claudia likes to spend time with her family, holding parties and family gatherings.

Most of her aunts, uncles, cousins, and grandparents all live in Oakland.

When asked what she will miss the most about Unity, Claudia said, "I'm going to miss the teachers. You get close to them... then you begin to view them as friends more than just teachers."

In the fall Claudia will attend Laney Community College to pursue a major in nursing.

"I want to be able to help out people, especially little kids."

-Alma Ramirez

## Martin Rochin

The most talkative, most curious, and overly honest. When this superlative is uttered, people immediately know who is being talked about, Martin Rochin. Martin first attended Unity High in the ninth grade. He feels his entire four years at this school have been a big part of his life.

"I'm going to miss being in an environment where I'm constantly hearing about events or new opportunities where later on they will be more difficult to find," said Martin about leaving Unity after graduation.

"Martin is extremely inquisitive and always willing and open to communicating with school and staff. I hope in college he continues to ask the right questions to the right people," said principal David Castillo.

Martin's future plans are to attend UC Santa Barbara and focus on mathematics related majors, but he is not sure which one specifically.

For Martin, making it this far has not been an easy obstacle.

"Managing my time has been the biggest challenge for me, so it's hard to stay on top of my workload."

Despite this challenge, he has accomplished a great deal at Unity. Martin feels that participating in McCullum Youth Court and Unity Live gardening program were especially memorable experiences.

"I really enjoyed being a part of the McCullum Youth Court because I was able to express my overly honest opinions and was able to have a lot of discussions."

These experiences from high school make Martin feel that he has matured a lot more and have shaped who he is today.

-Andrea M. Perez



## Eric Romero

Depending on himself ever since he can remember, Eric Romero, also known as Slick, has struggled throughout all his life.

"Since I was born I have lived a hard life because I would sometimes go for two weeks without eating because of economic problems. Nothing has been given to me. I have always worked for it," said Eric.

Eric has faced a lot of challenges like, for example, being in gangs, spending time in juvenile hall, and using drugs, but he has managed to step up and move on.

"One of my accomplishments was not letting my situation of being in gangs, fighting, and doing illegal things interfere with my schooling because I was able to box those things out and focus on school," said Eric.

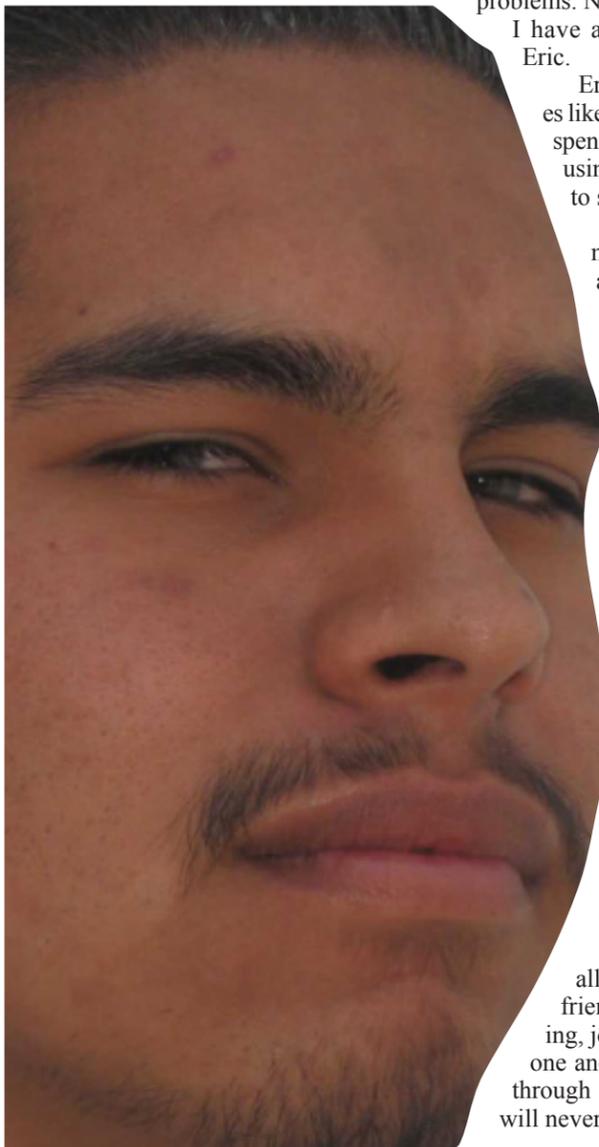
Next year, Eric will attend UC Santa Cruz to study Biochemistry. Then, he plans to go to graduate school to study Marine Biology.

"I see myself with a family and living in an ocean view house, and that inspires me to keep on going until I reach that goal. I would feel that I have made it all the way."

Eric feels excited about leaving high school because he wants to go to college and start his own life.

"I will always remember all the time that I spent with my friends from school, just laughing, joking, and playing pranks on one another. That has made me get through my high school years, and I will never forget that."

-Daniel Barajas



## Giovanna Romero

"I'm just a fool, a fool in love with you" is being murmured under someone's breath. When the passerby turns around trying to see who is singing that song, he finds out it is Giovanna Romero, singing one of her favorite songs by the oldies group The Penguins.

"Music calms me. It relaxes me whenever I want to get away from stuff," said Giovanna.

Her dad's time in jail was the hardest experience she has had to go through because she and her dad are really closely attached.

"When my dad went to jail, instead of showing that I was upset, I listened to music, and it would always calm me down and I'd be happy."

Those close to Giovanna reveal other sides to her as well.

"Giovanna is very stubborn, realistic, down to earth and is very introverted. But even if she does not express herself to people personally, she does through her writings, art and music," said Mabel Orellana.

Giovanna also expresses herself through the food she cooks.

"I used to cook with my grandma; I started cooking when I was five or seven and also cooked with my dad."

Giovanna plans to go to the culinary academy, Le Cordon Bleu of San Francisco, California, where she can expand her knowledge on making the foods she loves.

The main memory she will carry from Unity is the teachers.

"They really support you and help you whenever you need it. I hope they are like that in college, but I doubt it."

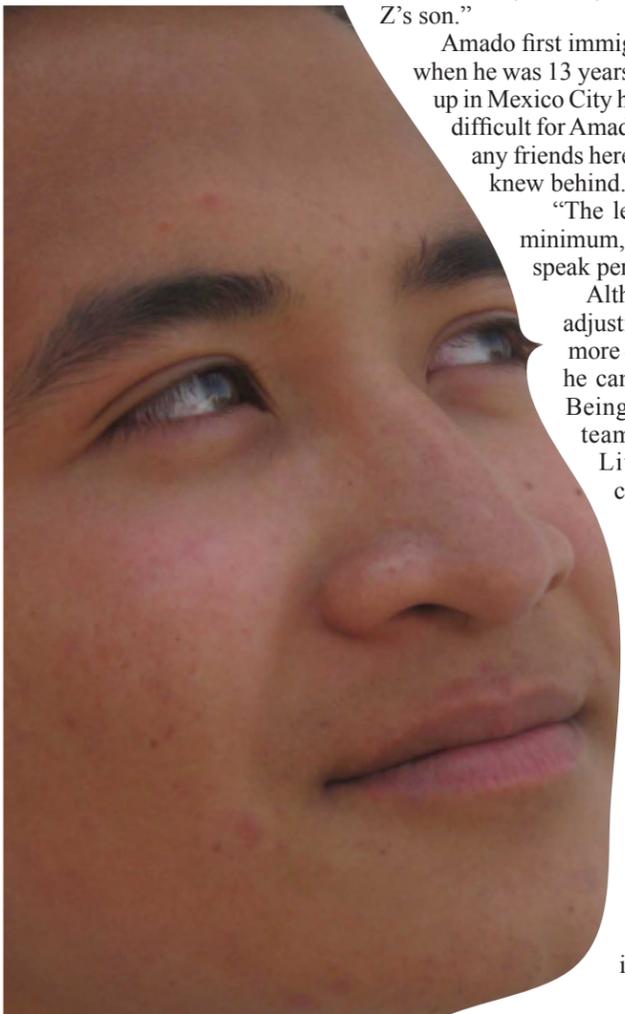
-Alma Ramirez



# SENIOR

## Amado Rosas

Digging under the hot sun searching for hidden treasure is not something that everyone would enjoy doing. For Amado Rosas, this is his dream. Throughout his years in high school, Amado has developed a passion for world history and archeology. He has been so into it, in fact, that he is often called "Mr. Z's son."



Amado first immigrated to the United States when he was 13 years old. The fact that he grew up in Mexico City his entire childhood made it difficult for Amado to adjust. He didn't have any friends here, and he left everything he knew behind.

"The level of English I had was minimum, so it was hard for me to speak perfect English," he said.

Although he had a hard time adjusting at first, he later became more confident, especially when he came to Unity High School. Being involved on the soccer team, chess team and Unity Live helped Amado gain confidence. His favorite memory was when he went on the college tour of southern California in his junior year.

"It was a significant experience because it opened up new choices for college," he said.

With his goals already set, Amado will attend UC Santa Cruz, where he will study archeology.

"I wanna be famous one day for finding things that you would never imagine."

-Jessica Patino

## Alejandra Ruiz

Passing by the school her mom saw the sign for Unity. As she walked onto campus in the middle of ninth grade, Alejandra Ruiz did not talk to anyone. Right away she saw kids in uniform and didn't like it.

Now looking back on her years at Unity, she can't see herself anywhere else. Without the help of the supportive teachers here, she wouldn't have gotten far.

"Mr. Zarazua and Ms. Hsu helped me the most. Mr. Zarazua was always there when I needed him, and Ms. Hsu is a great teacher. I love the fact that she is so enthusiastic about teaching," said Alejandra.

Happy and anxious to graduate, she is also sad to leave the comfort and safety of high school.

"Here I'm the girl with the crazy colored hair. When I leave I can start over new."

At Unity, Alejandra worked on the yearbook staff in her sophomore year and also served on the prom committee junior and senior year.

Alejandra will attend San Jose State and major in law because she likes to talk non-stop and wants to help out the immigrants in her community.

-Carolina Cordero



## Jestin Ryles

When Jestin Ryles first set foot on the Unity campus, he thought that he was going to leave this school right away.

"I didn't like the idea of having to go to such a small school," he said.

After a couple of months, though, Jestin began to love Unity because of the teachers he encountered, especially Daniel Zarazua and Lillian Hsu who had a big influence on him.

"Mr. Zarazua was always hard on us, and that got us ready for college. He opens my eyes to so much cultural diversity. Ms. Hsu taught me to become a strong writer, and she helped to expand my vocabulary," said Jestin.

One of Jestin's best friends is senior Shatika Sloan.

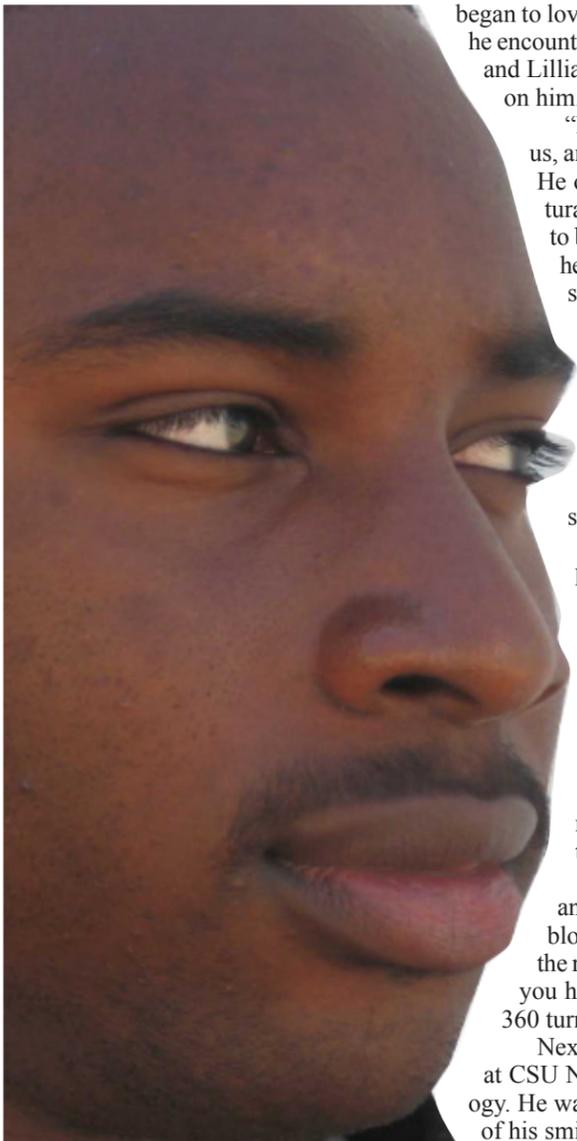
"Jestin is a great friend and a good listener who gives great advice. He's open minded to a lot of things. He's always there for me," Shatika said.

Jestin's passions include playing the guitar and reading books about law. At Unity, he was a member of the chess club and the Black Student Union. He considers himself an "action junkie" and loves to in-line skate at fast speeds. At Thrasher Skate Park in San Leandro, Jestin practices moves such as the "UFO" and the "Unity Grind."

"You have to cross your legs and balance them both on the H block. Then you have to jump off the rail and uncross your legs before you hit the ground. It's best to put a 360 turn on it to make it look cool."

Next year, Jestin will go to college at CSU Northridge and major in sociology. He wants to be remembered because of his smile.

-Leopoldo Zubiri



## Moises Sandoval

He sits in his chair with an innocent face, always paying attention to what the teacher says. Every time pieces of papers are put into his hair or something is thrown at him, he doesn't say anything. This is how Moises Sandoval always behaves at school. Well, not always.

"I don't like to bring attention to myself when class is going on," said Moises, so he lets his friends pull their pranks on him.

"I get them when they least expect it. I always tend to be quiet when I do my pranks. Whenever they feel it, it's too late to protect themselves."

Moises gets along with his friends in this way, so there are no bad intentions with his pranks.

"My friends, Edwin, Amado, Luis, Daniel, JM, Alejandro, Eric R. and Eric M, have become like brothers to me, since I don't have any male brothers."

Moises is also a super fan of Chivas, a famous team from the Mexican League.

"I was introduced to this team by my dad since I was little, and from then I have developed a passion for Chivas."

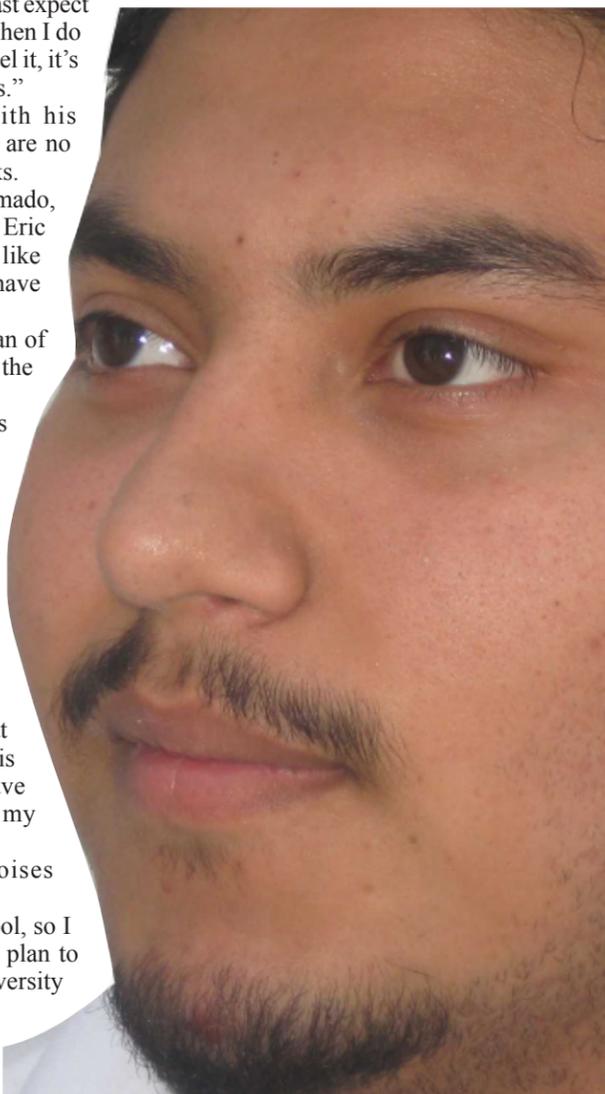
Whenever Moises is not doing pranks or watching soccer games, he grabs his pencil and his sketchbook.

"Many people might be surprised when they hear that I like to draw. But the truth is that I do like to draw. I have a mini-collection of all of my drawings."

After high school Moises plans to focus on art.

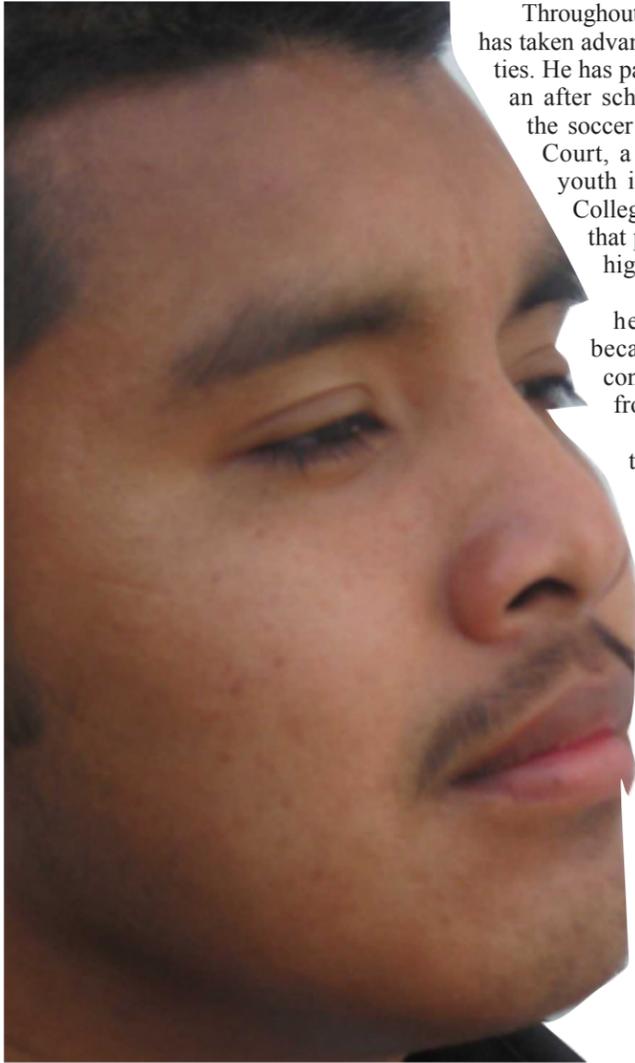
"I want to go to art school, so I can improve my art skills. I plan to attend Academy of Art University in San Francisco."

-Edwin Santay



## *Edwin Santay*

Edwin Santay has been working hard for the last four years because of his parents. "I didn't think I was going to go to college, but then I changed my mind because of my parents. Because of their financial struggle, I want to do something better for the family," said Edwin.



Throughout his years at Unity, Edwin has taken advantage of many opportunities. He has participated in Unity Live, an after school gardening program; the soccer team; McCullum Youth Court, a court run for youth by youth in Alameda county; and CollegeWorks, an organization that promotes equal access to higher education.

McCullum Youth Court helped Edwin the most because it helped him gain confidence with speaking in front of large groups.

"Unity opened my mind to taking education more seriously; it helped me build a strong path towards getting my education," said Edwin.

"He's really driven," said advisor Daniel Zarazua. "He's been working hard, and now he's getting the rewards."

Edwin plans to attend UC Merced in the fall. He will most likely major in sociology or political science and pursue a career in law enforcement to help his mother pay her bills in the future.

-Martin Rochin

## *Lucia Sieng*

When asked what superlative she would give herself, senior Lucia Sieng answered, "Sexiest person with a rolling backpack."

Today Lucia is funny, sarcastic, and outgoing, but she did not develop into this person overnight. During her first year at Unity, she was often shy and felt insecure around others, especially about her looks.

"I didn't get treated well because of my appearance. My clothes were different, not like every other girl's, tight to the skin."

Even worse Lucia became associated with a character from a horror movie.

"It was terrible! People started to say I looked like the girl from The Ring. I couldn't even look people in the eyes."

Eventually though, Lucia broke out of her shell to become a beautiful social butterfly.

"Lucia has become much more social where you actually have to tell her to be quiet," said advisor Erin Craig.

In the fall Lucia will attend Dominican University of California to study real estate or hotel management.



-Brittany Douglas

## *Shatika Sloan*

Shatika Sloan's fun, goofy personality made her a perfect fit for the drama club.

"Drama club was something I really enjoyed because we got to do so many fun things like playing games. We had to do a yoga lift and do relaxation exercises, and we lifted Billy into the air...the only work we did was practice for the play."

Even though Shatika has a fun, goofy side, she also knows how to get serious when it counts. Shatika maintained a 3.69 GPA throughout her high school years and was involved in Techbridge and Black Student Union. In the fall Shatika is going to attend CSU Northridge, where she wants to study health science, criminal justice, or some field related to law.

"I'm looking forward to the freedom in college and the flexibility with my schedule, but I also feel bad because I'm going to miss a couple of people."

One of the people Shatika will miss the most is advisor Daniel Zarazua.

"Mr. Zarazua helped me the most because he would always get involved. He would ask me if I had done my homework like everyday, and he made sure I stayed focused on what I wanted."

One of Shatika's closest friends is senior Jestin Ryles.

"She is honest when nobody else is, and she puts up with me when nobody else will. And she's hella cute when she's angry."

-Leopoldo Zubiri



## *Susana Tinoco*

Susana Tinoco is known by many seniors as the human dictionary because of her expansive vocabulary. At Unity, Susana has applied her intelligence in productive ways as an active member of Techbridge, an all-girls science club where she worked on projects such as building a solar frog that moves and a telephone from scratch.

The hard work Susana invested in Techbridge gave her an opportunity to attend a summer program at Smith College in Massachusetts, where she took classes in animal science and female health. Susana also participated in the NASA Aims summer science program, where she learned the basics of robotic engineering.

"Susana in Techbridge is a leader and doesn't have to try," said math teacher Erin Craig. "Effortlessly, she understands what's going on and assists people when they need it."

Susana received acceptance letters from San Diego State, Whitman University and Santa Clara, but she was not able to enroll due to the limited financial aid available to undocumented immigrants.

"I just hate that my attempts to do better for myself have been belittled just because I wasn't born here," she said.

However, Susana's disappointing news has not stopped her from succeeding. She plans to attend Diablo Valley College and then transfer to a four year university where she can begin to pursue a career in anesthesiology.

-Yareli Ortiz



## Mariana Torres

Although she can be quiet and shy, what many people don't know about Mariana Torres is that she likes to party a lot with her friends. She considers herself to be a very outgoing person who just likes to have fun.

"She's always the life of the party," said close friend Celia Magallon.

Although she has a wild and crazy side to her, Mariana still manages to stay on task when it comes to her work. Actually staying in AP Calculus and passing was one of Mariana's biggest accomplishments in her senior year.

"She showed hard work and dedication," said Erin Craig who taught AP Calculus.

"I thought I was never going to make it," said Mariana, "but I was able to go through with it."

What many people also don't know about Mariana is that she comes from a tough background.

"It's been hard for me because of the people who have passed away in my life."

Mariana's family is also proud of her, since she will be the first in the family to graduate high school.

"I want to make something out of myself and not be like the rest of my family," she said.

With this in mind, Mariana plans to become a nurse, so she can help little kids and disabled people.

After high school, Mariana will attend community college and then transfer to a CSU. In the future, she sees herself with a family, while still living in the Bay Area.

-Jessica Patino



## Ernesto Urzua

Ernesto Urzua, also known as "Nesto" by his close friends, is known for his love of music.

"Music has shaped me into who I am today. Without it I wouldn't feel open to different cultures and different styles. I would just be like the rest of Oakland being into the hyphy movement."

Ernesto has been working as a DJ for about four years with his father. At the age of sixteen, Ernesto DJed at parties, such as quinceneras. There isn't one genre out there that Ernesto will not sit down and listen to. He said if he would have a superlative dedicated to him, it would be "Most Diverse I-pod" at Unity since genres such as French rock, Bollywood, and techno co-exist happily in his earphones.

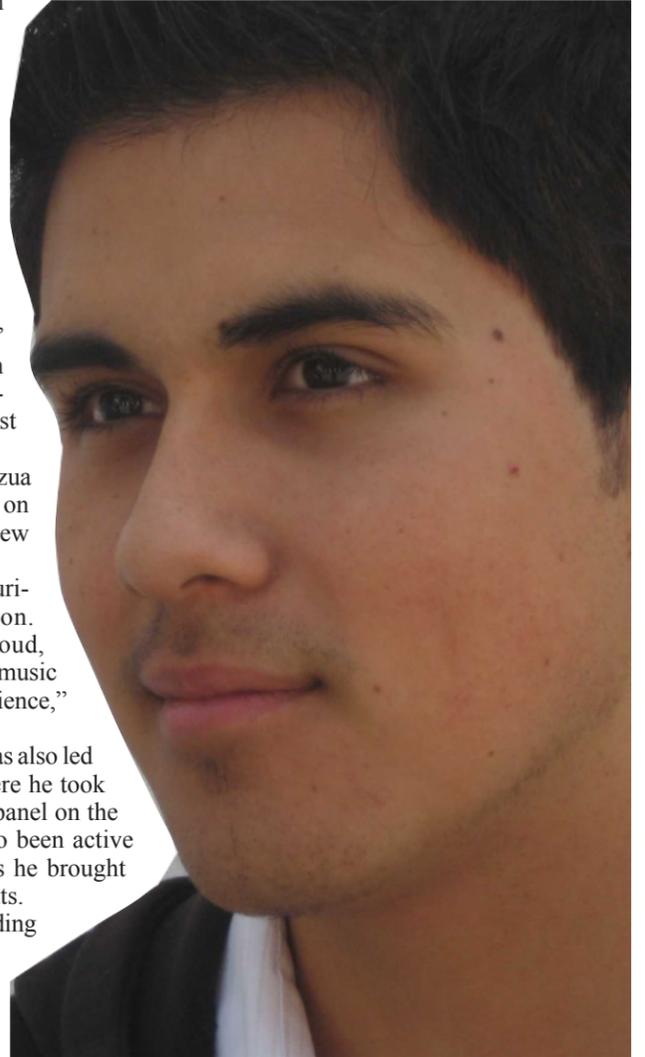
Advisor Daniel Zarazua has been a big influence on Ernesto in his search for new music.

"Ernesto is a very curious, open-minded person. He doesn't say it out loud, but it reflects through the music choices he wants to experience," said Mr. Zarazua.

Ernesto's curiosity has also led him to join art club, where he took charge of the landscape panel on the Unity mural. He has also been active on the yearbook staff, as he brought innovative idea for layouts.

Ernesto will be attending UC Merced. He has plans to study engineering because it's a way of helping people.

-Yareli Ortiz



## Lucero Valdez

Lucero Valdez can be heard loud and clear next to her best friend Vanessa Castellanos. The two women met in the ninth grade and quickly found they had much in common.

"We fight for what we believe, and we don't stop until we get it," said Lucero. "We both want to study psychology; we both have the same dreams."

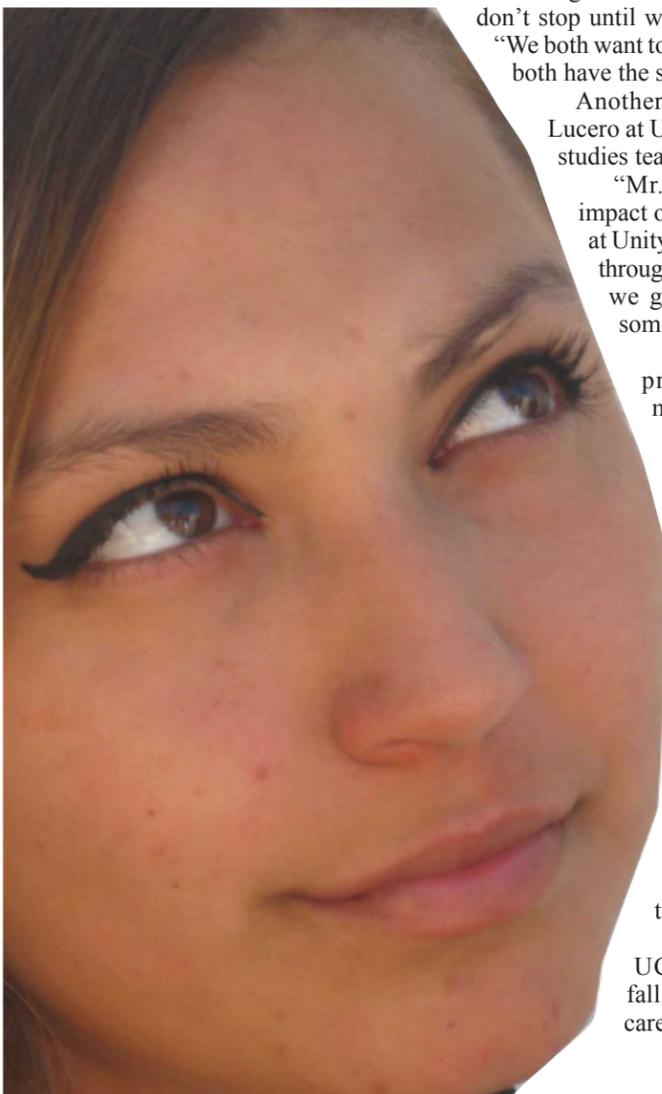
Another person important to Lucero at Unity is her hero, social studies teacher, Daniel Zarazua.

"Mr. Z made the biggest impact on me in my four years at Unity. He has helped me get through my years even though we get mad at each other sometimes," she said.

One of Lucero's proudest accomplishments was participating in the Stanford Medical Youth Science Program. She didn't get in on her first try, but she didn't give up and got in on her second try. Through this program, Lucero had the opportunity to work with cadavers and observe surgeries in the operating room, including a heart transplant, a breast implant procedure, and brain surgery to remove a tumor.

Lucero will attend UC Santa Cruz in the fall. She plans to pursue a career in psychology.

-Alejandro Gomez



## Omar Velazquez

Freshman year, when Omar Velazquez walked on to the Unity campus, Juan Contreras exclaimed, "Damn, he is tall."

Omar was born in Los Angeles but moved to Oakland at the age of seven. Omar is a very shy person at first, but, according to his friends, once you get to know him, he can't stop talking.

Omar's main source of motivation has been his older brother Camilo who told Omar to stay in school and to try not to end up like him.

"He didn't want me in the streets," said Omar. "He wanted me to do something good."

Camilo persuaded Omar to join Huaxtec, an organization that educates young people about La Raza.

In the fall, Omar is going to be attending Laney Community College, where he will study architecture. Omar believes this career is for him because "you get to travel and it's related to math."

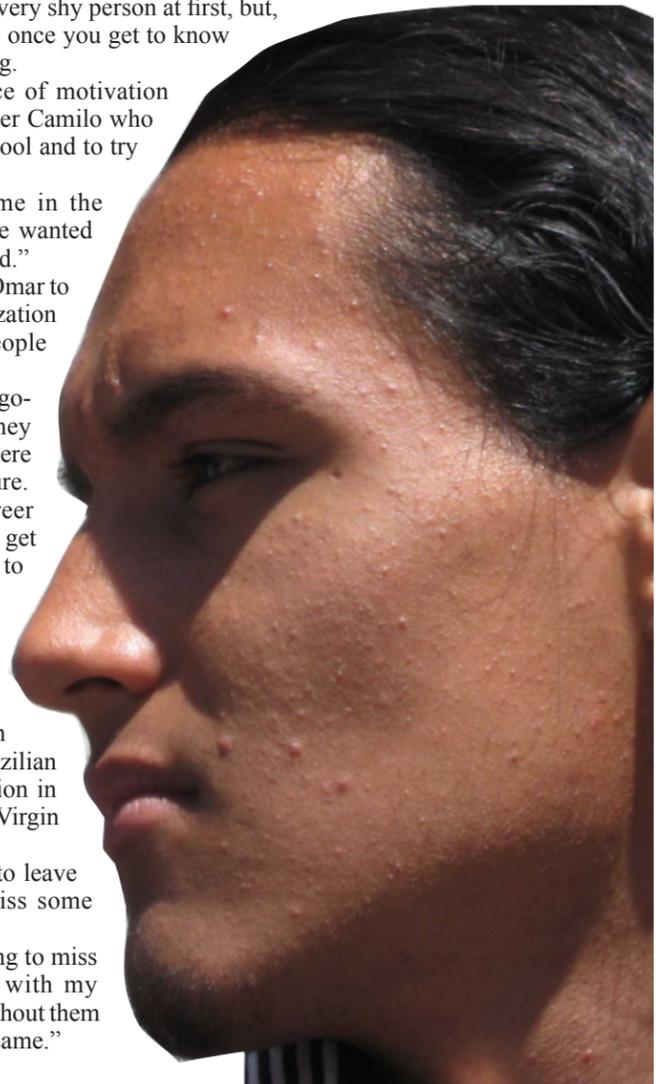
"I just want to get out of the Bay and see new things," he said.

In particular, he hopes to travel to South America to visit the Brazilian rainforests and to vacation in tropical places like the Virgin Islands.

In spite of his itch to leave Oakland, Omar will miss some aspects of Unity.

"One thing I'm going to miss about school is being with my patnas," said Omar, "Without them school wouldn't be the same."

-Daisy Barraza



# SENIOR

## Alfredo Vigil-Moran

Alfredo Vigil-Moran believes he will be remembered as the suave eccentric kid who was quiet and seemed to be very shy. He walked onto Unity High's campus for the first time wearing dressy shoes and his shirt tucked into his smooth black slacks.

Yareli Ortiz, one of Alfredo's best friends, said, "Any opportunity he gets, he tries to dress up in his...zoot suits."

Brittany Douglas agreed.

"I think he wishes he was born in that whole 60's era. That's why he dresses in the suits and listens to the music."

Alfredo's happy, talkative demeanor changed quickly around the end of his freshman year when his father passed away in an automobile accident. This tragedy alienated Alfredo from even his closest friends.

"After my dad died I was very arrogant towards my friends," said Alfredo. "Martial arts put me back on track; it helped me establish a code."

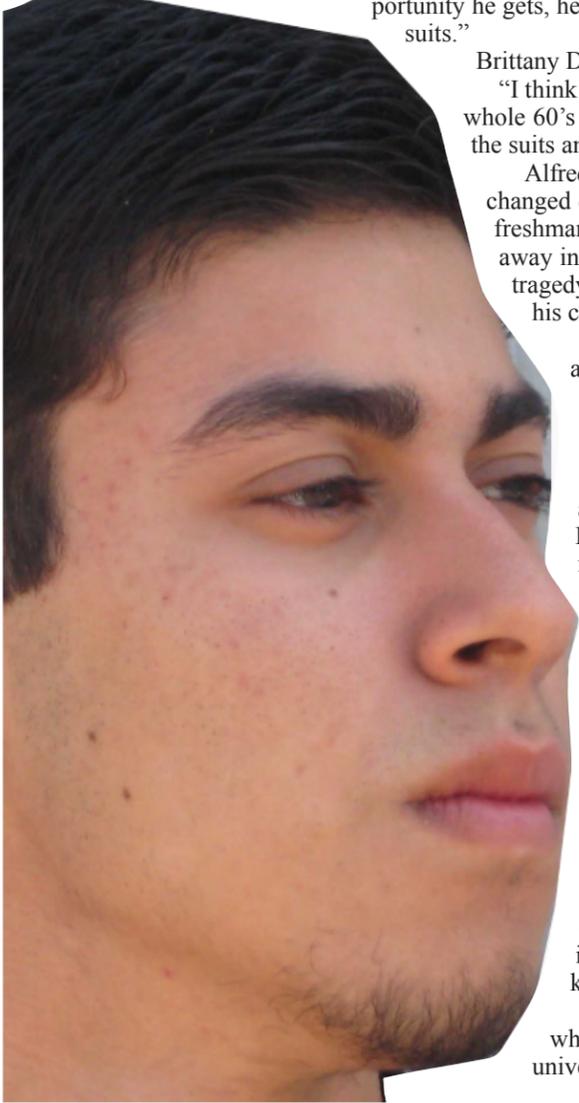
Participating in martial arts channeled Alfredo's anger. He has practiced a number of martial arts including Muay Thai, Jiu-Jitsu, Shaolin, and Kung-Fu. He has followed in the footsteps of his role model, the famous martial arts film star Bruce Lee.

"I like the stuff he stood for, his main philosophy of life. Push yourself to the limit and never give up."

Alfredo will be attending UC Merced in the fall and will study either civil or mechanical engineering. He hopes that in ten years he will be well known or even famous.

"By the powers of truth, I while living have conquered the universe!"

-Beatrice Rivera



## Juan Zamora

Juan (J.M.) Zamora walked onto the Unity campus as a baby faced freshman who would carry his violin with him everywhere he went. He was the boy who looked shy, but once you got to know him, it was hard to stay away from him. Asking a simple question about the homework could turn into a conversation about anything from music to food, said friend Alfredo Moran.

The more time J.M. spent at Unity, the more he became known as the activist and support system for the class of 2008. For the last

four years, J.M. has been an active member of civil rights youth movement group B.A.M.N. (By Any Means Necessary).

He has organized protests from the Bay Area to Michigan about eliminating the SAT, immigrant rights, and honoring Cesar Chavez Day as a national holiday. But his most important accomplishment has been getting his fellow classmates more involved in the community.

"J.M. helped me to be more aware of the problems in the community that people face. It's not just about being Black or White or Latino. It's about being aware. That's what J.M. helped me to realize," said Tayler Davis.

Although he has accomplished a lot during the last four years, what J.M. is most proud of is being able to say that he made it to senior year and will be attending San Francisco State University in the fall, where he plans to study Spanish or geography.

"I feel really proud. My mom said to go far, and I'm proud of myself because I made it without a father. I did it without needing a father's guidance. I am proof that anything is possible if you work for it."

-Brittany Douglas



## Viviana Zamora

"Throughout my life I fell through some holes I had to get out of by myself," said Viviana Zamora.

During her junior year, Viviana had to deal with her grandfather's death. Jose Zamora Gonzalez passed away on April 17, 2007. His death not only affected Viviana mentally but also her family physically. The stress of his death, said Viviana, caused her family to break apart.

As if her grandfather's death was not enough, José Luis Buenrostro-González, Viviana's second cousin, was shot and killed by Oakland police on March 19, 2008. Even worse, at the memorial service, a bullet almost grazed Viviana's father and cousin.

In the face of all the challenges, Viviana has stayed strong for both her family and for herself.

Daniel Zarazua, her advisor, was there to back her up.

"Even though she has a lot of barriers to overcome and responsibilities to deal with at home, she still gets her stuff done. If you didn't know her, you wouldn't realize all of the obstacles she has to face," Mr. Zarazua said.

The main accomplishment she takes pride in is finishing high school because her older sister didn't get to.

In the fall Viviana plans to attend Cal State East Bay and study architecture or engineering.

-Kevin Lopez



## Leopoldo Zubiri

Leopoldo Zubiri has come a long way to get to where he is today. After immigrating from Veracruz, Mexico, Leo had to face all kinds of challenges, including fitting into a new country and facing racism and discrimination, something he never encountered in his old home.

"It was hard when I came over here to the states because I didn't know English, and I struggled to communicate," Leo said.

During his sophomore year, Leo's friends gave him a nickname. Due to his unique style of walking, they called him Pinguino, or the Penguin. At first he used to get mad, but now he has gotten used to it and accepts his name.

"Leo is hella cool because he goes along with anything. He just goes with the flow and doesn't make a big deal out of anything," said Juan Contreras.

Leo will attend Alameda Community College and major in journalism and graphic design. He plans one day to design a video game that will take video games to a whole different level and make history.

"I want to make a revolutionary action video game that would have better graphics and make it seem so real that it'll make you think twice about killing someone even though it's just a game."

When his video game is done, Leo, an editor of the Unity Chronicles, will show off his writing skills and write a story on his achievement, telling the whole world how he did it.

-Kevin Lopez



# ENTERTAINMENT

## Guatemalan grub to munch on International

By Edwin Santay

Just a few steps in the door at San Miguel, a Guatemalan restaurant at 4729 International Boulevard, diners can smell the natural herbs that make the food taste exquisite and delicious. But the smells of this East Oakland eatery are just part of the experience. As I sit waiting for my food, I see a painting of the national bird of Guatemala, El Quetzal, extending its colorful wings and flying over the tropical forest.

Opened in the spring of 2006 by Justimiano Gomez, the small restaurant has different eye-catching paintings and colorful typical clothing hanging from the door and chairs.

Ana Riaga, one of the restaurant workers said, "Here we only sell authentic and fine Guatemalan food."

Ana recommends trying out the plate called Pollo en Pepian.

"I recommend it because it's a plate that no other restaurant



PHOTO BY EDWIN SANTAY

Pollo en Pepian is a favorite dish of students with Guatemalan ties. Above is the famous dish as served at San Miguel Guatemalan Restaurant on International Boulevard near 47th Avenue.

serves," she said, adding that some of the ingredients in this famed Guatemalan dish are chicken, tomatoes, onions, and sesame seeds. It goes for \$13.50 and includes tortillas.

As I eat my Pollo en Pepian, the taste of the chicken and all of the different ingredients make an explosion in my mouth that ends in my stomach. I need more tortillas to mop up all of the food.

"Quiero mas tortilla por favor," I tell the waiter.

I wash my meal down with "agua de tamarindo," which is tamarind juice. The taste is one of a kind because it's a sweet flavor

and at the same time fresh.

San Miguel is one of only a few Guatemalan restaurants in the Bay Area, which is teeming with Mexican restaurants.

"The way that we stand out of the competition is that we sell authentic food that other places don't sell," said Riaga. "The reason that this restaurant was opened in this location is that there are a lot of paisanos (people from Guatemala) in this area."

Marcos, a regular customer at San Miguel, said, "I like to eat at this restaurant because I like the food. Whenever I eat this food, it reminds me of my pueblo and my family."

In addition to the mouth-watering Pollo en Pepian, the restaurant also serves Cocido de Res, a beef soup with a variety of vegetables. The price for this plate is \$9.95. The restaurant also offers a wide selection of appetizers, desserts and drinks, ranging from \$3.45 to \$12.45.

## Prep and punk join hands for the summer

By Yareli Ortiz

This summer will bring punk rock and preppy together hand in hand. Punk rock for the summer means neon colored sweaters and bright colored skinny jeans with white or black tops featuring graphics on the shirts. As for preppy the style is shorts with the bottom folded up the way people did it in the 80s with loose pastel colored shirts.

What's also looking great for the summer is larger geometric patterns. To make a punk look, geometric patterns to look for include polka dots, solid colored shirts with geometric knitting, and peacock prints. To create a preppy look, seek out shirts with floral sewn designs or floral geometric shapes.

"You can never go wrong with geometric shapes as long as you don't overdo the accessories. Keep it plain, and it'll look great," said senior Tayler Davis.

Another preppy look for the summer focuses on those rad 80s shorts with a fold. When wearing shorts you can always accessorize with leggings, fishnets, pumps, peep toes or jellies.

"The 80s shorts are horrible. They remind me of middle school,



PHOTO BY MARTIN ROCHIN

Seniors Beatrice Rivera and Yareli Ortiz display their punk and preppy outfits.

being the kid who sat alone at the lunch table. I just don't like them," said math teacher Erin Craig.

Picking out accessories is a very important part of your fashion statement to complete your overall summer look. You can wear fun and exotic tribal earrings, necklaces, and bracelets. Scarves are very popular and cute to wear; always choose the right color to add style and glam to your outfit. Handbags, especially canvas bags with beautiful embroidery, can also make your outfit hip this summer. Don't forget to wear trendy sunglasses such as big bug glasses or aviator glasses with brown shaded lenses.

"I love to accessorize my outfits with nice tribal necklaces and big earrings," said freshman Vicky Barragan. "It gives a good look to any outfit."

## Unity artists exhibit at Oakland gallery event

By Martin Rochin

Oakland's Rock Paper Scissors Collective Art Gallery exhibited the work of seven Unity seniors and four juniors throughout the month of May. At the opening reception on May 2, people flooded the gallery to view the Unity students' paintings, as well as nearby Esteban Sabar Gallery, where seniors Gregory Brinkley and Mori Franklin had their photography on display.

Phillesha Brown, one of the student artists, was happy with how her paintings turned out.

"I struggled, but I felt the end result was a big accomplishment," she said.

One of her paintings depicts a faceless woman with two different skin tones splitting her face in half, which, according to Phillasha, represents the universal struggle everyone goes through regardless of the color of their skin.

This opening reception was a part of Art Murmur, a tradition held in Oakland on the first Friday of every month to raise artistic awareness by having every gallery open a brand new show and host a free reception on the same night. Rock Paper Scissors' reception featured a fashion show in



PHOTO BY DANIEL ZARAZUA

Senior Emmanuel Gutierrez admires student art work at Rock Paper Scissors Collective Art Gallery.

which juniors Dominique Crosby and Maritza Rocha and seniors Gregory Brinkley and Emmanuel Gutierrez participated.

Brooke Hatch, a regular Art Murmur visitor, was pleased to see student work in the gallery.

"I think it's great that students can hang their art for the community to see," she said.

This art show gave Unity

artists useful experience for the future.

"When deciding which artists should put their art in the gallery, I considered students with finished art pieces and those who showed interest in art outside of school. I think it was good for them to have a gallery to put on their resumé," said art teacher Jamie Treacy.

## Mariah Carey satisfies her number one fans

By Jessica Patino

Passing Elvis Presley for most No.1 singles on the Billboard Hot 100 and coming in second only to the Beatles, Mariah Carey is back once again with her 11<sup>th</sup> album, "E=MC2." Released on April 15, the album sold 286,000 copies in its first opening week.

"E=MC2" is more of a pop and R&B album, similar to her previous album, "The Emancipation of Mimi," which was released in late 2005. Both albums have a similar musical vibe and similar

themes. The album's music appeals to listeners who enjoy genres such as pop, R&B, and hip-hop, although some of her songs include gospel and reggae beats. This time, Carey has collaborated with artists such as Young Jeezy and T-Pain to create more of a hip-hop feel; she also collaborates with artist Damian Marley.

The lead single, "Touch My Body," became Carey's 18<sup>th</sup> No.1 single and made it to the Billboard Hot 100. This track has an addictive hook that catches your attention and makes you want to



sing along. Although the song is all pop, Carey's high pitch adds an unforgettable impression. "Touch My Body" also has a remix featuring "The Dream," which is not featured on the album.

"Bye Bye," her second single, is easy to listen to and is dedicated to anyone who has lost someone in their life. Although the lyrics of this song seem to be personal, Carey also tries to keep it universal so that people can relate to it.

The album starts off with an energetic and upbeat tempo track, "Migrate," which features T-Pain. This track appeals more to fans of the hip-hop genre. "I Wish You Well," is the last track on the album. This song's melody is mellow and has a piano instrumental. This track would satisfy fans who

prefer Carey's early work. But for those who prefer a more energetic beat, I recommend "Side Effects," featuring Young Jeezy, which sounds more like today's hip-hop.

Overall, Mariah Carey has delivered an album that will please fans who enjoyed her previous work. The album's tracks all have variety to please a broad spectrum of listeners. Whether you are into hip hop, pop, or even instrumental, Mariah Carey's E=MC2 definitely laces up all three genres into one eccentric album.