

"DON'T LOOK UP" MOVIE REVIEW



What do Jennifer Lawrence, Timothee Chalamet & Leonardo Dicaprio have in common? Read contributing writer Medha Upadhyay's article critiquing these three in their new film, "Don't Look Up!"

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TRITONS COME BACK FROM THE BRINK OF DEFEAT TO SHOCK

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VERBATIM

"As a student, my goal is to continue going to school and getting an education. If a vaccine — that is researched and tested by top scientists — is what will guarantee that, then I'm going to have some faith and get vaccinated."

- ANNA DAN
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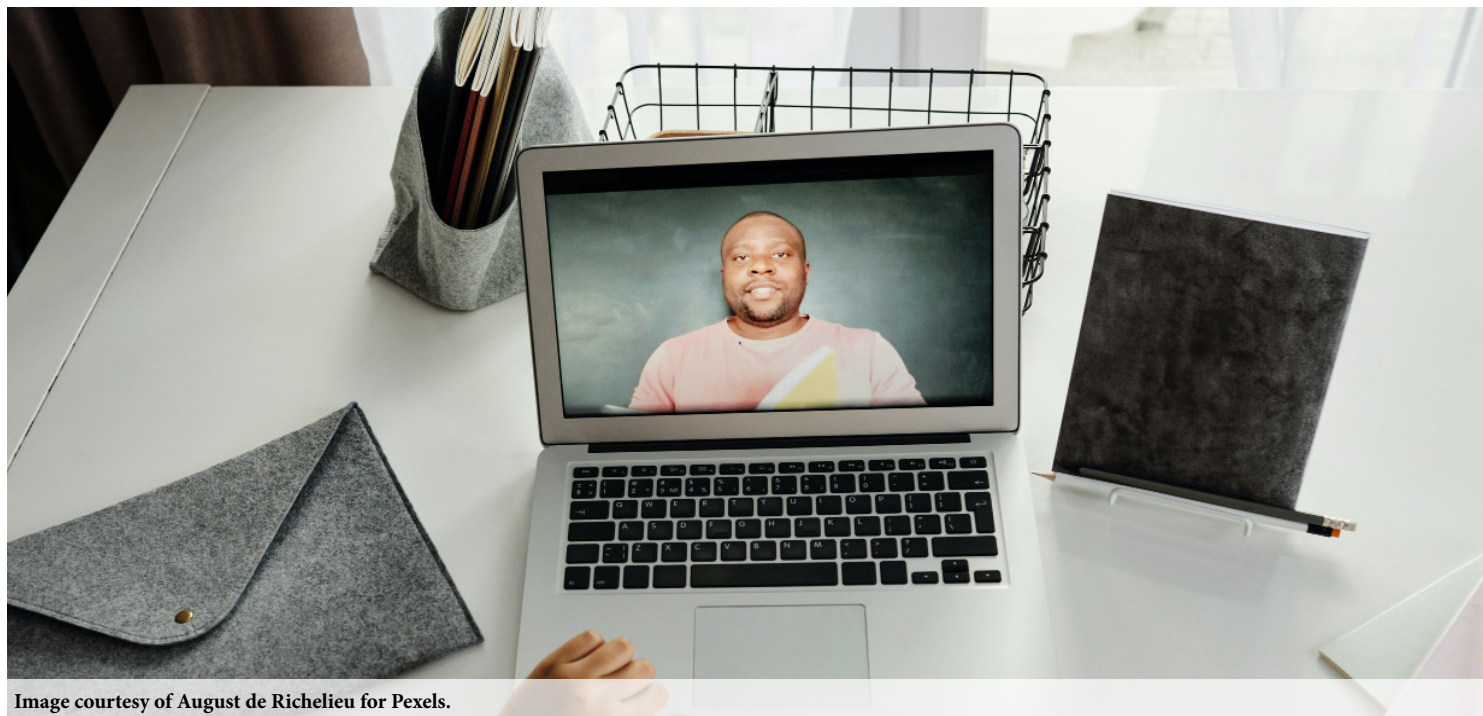


Image courtesy of August de Richelieu for Pexels.

CAMPUS

UCSD Announces Shift to Online Learning

BY TIANRUI HUANG Staff Writer

On Dec. 21, UC San Diego Chancellor Pradeep Khosla announced in a campus operations update that instruction will be remote-only from Jan. 3 to Jan. 17, 2022, in anticipation of a surge in COVID-19 cases that may coincide with the planned start of Winter Quarter. In-person instruction is scheduled to return on Tuesday, Jan. 18 during Week 3, but is subject to change depending on COVID-19 infection rates.

The Omicron variant, first detected in South Africa, has swept through the United States. According to the New York Times, the number of new daily cases in New York was up to 55,000 as of Dec. 27.

A similar rise occurred in California, as new cases rose to a high of 20,000 on Dec. 26, a 5,000 person increase since Dec. 24. The average number of daily new cases rose to 1,400 in San Diego reported on Dec. 24, while on Dec. 14 the average case was only half that number, reaching a total of 700.

According to the Return to Learn webpage, faculty and teaching assistants may teach remotely from home or from campus during the online instruction period. Research will continue in person, but undergraduate and graduate students will not be required to report to campus research sites in person during the online instruction period.

During this time campus will be incrementally populated using a more comprehensive testing regime. Additional steps have been implemented to increase safety as students return to campus.

As a measure of caution against the new variant, UCSD is mandating that all students test on the first and the fifth day of check-in. Individuals who are not vaccinated and individuals who are vaccinated but have not received a vaccine booster will be required to test for SARS-CoV-2 two times per week, between three and five days apart. Housing Dining and Hospitality (HDH) Executive Director Hemlata Jhaveri and Student Health and Well-Being Interim Executive Director Dr. Angela Scioscia sent a student residential update on Dec. 29, in which they strongly recommend testing within 48 hours of arrival on campus and outlined procedures for the return of students to on-

campus housing.

Students are recommended to report their planned date of arrival via Housing Portal, so that Student Health Services can better deal with the repopulation process. UCSD has offered incentives encouraging residential students to put off their arrival to campus. Students who arrive between Jan. 8–14 will receive a \$325 credit, while those who arrive between Jan. 15–22 will receive a \$650 credit. Credits will be applied to resident housing accounts by the end of Winter Quarter.

24 hours prior to their arrival, residential students who return to campus after Jan. 7 are required to self-administer rapid antigen tests. Students who traveled over the break within the United States can complete this form before Jan. 9 to request that a rapid test be mailed to them.

Students should take a picture of their negative results before moving into campus. If the test result is positive, students must complete their isolation before they are allowed to return to campus. These students would need to reach out to Student Health Services either through email (studenthealth@ucsd.edu) or sending messages through MyStudentChart, so that they can receive enough medical guidance and additional support from college.

All residential students are also required to complete a PCR test upon arrival. According to the email, returning residents would first need to check in at the PCR test vending machine located in their residential community. Triton Health Ambassadors (THAs), who will be present from 8 am to 5 pm, will make sure if resident students have arrived and completed the PCR test. They will also provide KN95 masks that resident students should wear until students receive their PCR test results.

These cautionary measures in campus operations and housing are subject to change if needed. If students have any questions regarding the test or process, they are encouraged to email UCSD Triton Health Ambassadors at ucsdtha@ucsd.edu or visit the Return to Learn website.

HEALTH

University of California Mandates Booster Vaccine for Students

BY RODRIGO GUTIERREZ Contributing Writer

In a letter sent to the 10 presidents of the University of California campuses on Dec. 21, President Michael V. Drake mandated that all students, faculty, staff, and academic appointees are now required to receive a COVID-19 booster vaccination under the existing UC policy. This announcement came as the United States witnesses skyrocketing case numbers associated with the new Omicron strain of the coronavirus. The Omicron variant was first documented in the U.S. on Dec. 1 and is shown to be more transmissible than previous strains.

The COVID-19 booster shots are the third dose of the COVID-19 vaccine that is administered as the original vaccines' effectiveness decreases over time. The CDC recommends getting a booster shot six months after receiving your second dose of the Moderna or Pfizer vacc

inations for students returning to campus.

"In anticipation of a surge that may coincide with the planned start of our in-person, residential Winter Quarter, UC San Diego is exercising caution and moving our instruction to a remote-only mode from Jan. 3 to Jan. 17," the statement read. "During this time we will incrementally populate the campus using a more comprehensive testing regimen."

"To protect yourself during this time, we urge you to: get vaccinated or boosted now, avoid congregate settings and wear a mask, and test regularly," the statement continued.

In a series of further emails sent on Dec. 21 and 22, UCSD Chancellor See **HEALTH**, page 2

►HEALTH, from page 1



Image courtesy of Irvin Yang for The UCSD Guardian.

lor Pradeep Khosla outlined the benefits and expectations for vaccinations and the timeline omitted for students and staff.

“As mentioned in yesterday’s announcement, current vaccines combined with a booster dose are expected to protect against severe illness, hospitalizations, and deaths due to infection with the Omicron variant,” Khosla said. “We require that all faculty, staff, and students who are now eligible receive their booster no later than January 31, 2022. Those who are not eligible for a booster by January 17 will need to be boosted no later than two weeks after their booster eligibility.”

Students such as Eleanor Roosevelt College junior, Joaquin Quintero, view the mandating of the booster vaccine as a way to ensure a safer environment among the UCSD community.

“I fully support a vaccine mandate with medical exemptions,” Quintero said. “The mandate is a good idea because it requires us to fulfill our basic responsibility of cultivating a safer learning environment for all our fellow Tritons, allowing us to focus on learning, working, researching, and living with relative normality.”

Quintero also shared how the risks and effects of the variant outweighed any fears perpetuated by mandating vaccines.

“While I feel a degree of concern and continue to exercise COVID-conscious practices, I am less worried about the mandate in and of itself than I am of the Omicron variant,” Quintero said.

“Knowing that virtually all the Tritons I will interact with will be vaccinated with a booster does make me feel safer.”

“For other students, such as Earl Warren College senior Anna Dan, the statistics released and risks associated with contracting coronavirus outweigh any sort of fear and reluctance with supporting the mandate.

“I am getting my booster and I planned on getting it before it was even mandated,” Dan said. “I can sympathize with the freedom of autonomy arguments, but really there are so many other vaccinations we’ve been required to get as students/employees such as the flu and meningitis shots. As a student, my goal is to continue going to school and getting an education. If a vaccine — that is researched and tested by top scientists — is what will guarantee that, then I’m going to have some faith and get vaccinated.”

Dan expressed to The UCSD Guardian the belief that mandating boosters is just one of the means that provide campus officials with the ability to approve for students to once again meet for clubs and activities.

“The mandate also ensures a greater probability of returning to in-person events which are vital for clubs such as Urban Changemakers, which depends on interactions with the students, staff, and faculty at UCSD to foster a greater sense of community and inclusivity on campus,” Dan added.

For UCSD students and staff, vaccine booster appointments are currently available on campus at Price Center and by drive-up at two UCSD Medical Centers: La Jolla and Hillcrest. Further information about clinics and appointments for California residents can be found here.

LABOR

UC-AFT Strike Called Off Hours Before Picket Line Commences as Faculty and UCOP

BY JOCELYN BROSSIA Associate News Editor

Early in the morning of Wednesday, Nov. 17, UC-AFT faculty received the news that their planned two-day strike was canceled due to the tentative labor agreement reached by the union president, Mia McIver, and the UC Office of the President following 2.5 years of stagnant bargaining.

In the face of high job insecurity, insufficient pay, and allegedly confusing contracts, the UC-AFT has been attempting to get the UCOP to reach a new labor agreement since April 2019. The union had advocated for an agreement that would provide clearer guidelines for the University’s reappointment processes, increase salary and benefits, and create a uniform workload, among other things.

A number of UC San Diego lecturers previously expressed to The UCSD Guardian their feelings that the University viewed them as expendable, economic tools who would be extracted for labor only to soon be churned out of the system in favor of younger, more robust Ph.D. graduates. In the years of recent bargaining, the UCOP proposed solutions in contract negotiations that UC-AFT faculty would not accept due to significant caveats they saw — which included the potential for disqualification from the proposed strengthened reappointment process.

Because UC-AFT felt their insufficient contract negotiations had reached a stalemate, the union passed a 96 % majority vote in June 2021 to collectively strike at any given moment.

The historic agreement that came early on in the morning of the planned strike meets the aforementioned concerns of the

faculty and, if ratified, could significantly diminish the precarity of a lecturer’s employment with the University.

Contract clauses included in the tentative agreement as outlined on the UC-AFT website are as follows:

- Transition plan to 2022-23 appointments
- Increased job stability
- Outlined pathway to senior continuing lecturer
- Statement of interest for available courses
- Specific and transparent performance review criteria
- Defined workloads
- Increased compensations and bonuses
- Timely and more specific appointment letters
- Credit toward continuing for summer session teaching
- Expanded eligibility for paid medical leave
- Increased support for unit members with children,
- Expanded retirement and health benefits for Summer Session lecturers
- Stronger health and safety provisions
- Professional development funding
- Release time for stewards
- Online instruction protections

If ratified, the agreement’s job stability provisions will go into effect on July 1, 2022.

Dr. Brie Iatarola, a lecturer from the Communications, Environmental Studies, and Warren College Writing Program Departments, felt relief upon reading the email she received at 4:30 a.m. that morning that announced the agreement.



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“I was relieved when I heard the news of the agreement,” Iatarola said. “I am optimistic about the future for UC lecturers. I also feel I must remain vigilant and proactive due to potential challenges of implementing these changes across the UC system.”

Iatarola believes that much of the external pressure and the planned strike were what led to the UCOP’s ability to finally reach an agreement with the union.

“The outside political pressure from state representatives, viral Op-Eds, and social media campaigns gained traction during a critical time of bargaining [led to the decision],” Iatarola said. “A two-day unfair labor practices (ULP) strike with final exams on the horizon is not an ideal situation for anyone in

higher ed. I think UCOP’s Labor Relations team realized the union, lecturers, students, and community members had already mobilized and were not leaving the bargaining table quietly.”

Although the picket line was called off on that Wednesday, UC-AFT nevertheless decided to gather, flipping their plans.

What began as a strike turned into a celebration for the UCSD community. Gathered outside of the Gilman Parking Structure at the south end of Villa La Jolla Drive, students, instructors, and supporting community members gathered to eat cake, rally, and commemorate their newfound secure labor agreements.

However, other instructors, such as Iatarola, chose to return to their students that they had

initially intended on not seeing that day due to strike plans.

“I chose to hold my New Media, Youth, and Democracy class,” Iatarola said. “My heart felt the need to be with these students that day. The emotional impacts from this experience have been hard to navigate. I’m still attending town halls to make sure I have secure grounds for a celebration.”

In order for the contract to be ratified, a vote will be held amongst dues-paying union members from Nov. 29 at 8 a.m. until Dec. 3 at 4 p.m. Multiple UC-AFT town hall meetings will be held until the vote closes in order to assist union members in making a fully-informed decision in their vote.

**Disclaimer: This is a reprinted article to correct previously made errors.*

TRANSPORTATION

San Diego Trolley Rolls Into Campus With New Mid-Coast Extension

BY ISAIAH IRIZARRY
Contributing Writer

The sounds of commotion, laughter, and music filled the air on Sunday, Nov. 21, at Earl Warren College Field as the Metropolitan Transit System (MTS) hosted an event celebrating the opening of the new Mid-Coast Trolley Extension. The new Mid-Coast Trolley will carry the Blue Line of the San Diego Trolley from Downtown San Diego to campus and University City, with trains running every 15 minutes. This will allow UC San Diego students, staff, and community members a one-seat ride to Downtown, South Bay, and the Mexican border.

“The trolley will connect the university to the community like never before,” Associate Director of University Communications Leslie Sepuka said.

The event saw roughly 8,000 community members attend. Notable attendees included Congressman Scott Peters, Congressman Juan Vargas, San Diego Mayor Todd Gloria, and Catherine Blakespear, the mayor of Encinitas and chair of the San Diego Association of Governments (SANDAG), the region’s chief transportation organization overseeing the project’s planning and construction.

“It’s not frequently you open a \$2.17 billion, 11-mile, nine-stop trolley line,” Blakespear said.

According to SANDAG Direc-

tor of Engineering and Construction Sharon Humphreys, San Diego MTS, SANDAG, and UCSD worked to create a carnival-like atmosphere for the event. Free hot dogs and kettle corn were available to attendees, along with a rock climbing wall and game booths.

“Because UC San Diego is such an important partner, we worked with the university to hold our grand opening celebration on campus ... [the event] was a phenomenal effort that required dozens of people to make it happen,” Humphreys said.

As the largest public transportation project in the region’s history, preparations to meet the Nov. 21 opening required urgency and attention to detail. Humphreys noted that supply chain problems nearly derailed the planned opening date, as the safety fencing needed for stations was delayed.

“[SANDAG] had to send people to the [manufacturer’s] plant in Wisconsin, to monitor, supervise and encourage the delivery of the materials ... people were working 24/7 to make sure that it was installed in time for opening,” Humphreys said.

In the weeks leading up to opening, SANDAG also conducted over a hundred...

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OPINION

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Image courtesy of Rod Long from Unsplash.

A Cure too Premature
*Our world is crumbling.
It is time to be proactive.
Prevention is always better than cure.*

BY SPARKY MITRA
Staff Writer

This past year, some things went right, but arguably a lot more went wrong. From COVID-19 to poverty and natural disasters, humanity failed to forestall many calamities in 2021. As part of a generation largely disillusioned with ineffective politics, I feel that this year was a continuation of the effects of one way of thinking that needs drastic alteration to counter our world’s problems. Namely, we think of the cure before the prevention.

This reliance on a panacea often leads to dramatically positive discoveries like alternative energy and the COVID vaccines, but also leads to a lot of inaction on solving problems like a pandemic at their roots. Despite massive floods, wildfires and temperatures that are far from the norm due to climate change, businesses and world leaders continue to invest in industries like oil and gas instead of overhauling the energy sector with guidance from Indigenous communities. Instead, they only invest when they have to mitigate disasters like Hurricane Harvey, wildfires that have been abetted by the climate crisis, and out-of-control

weather patterns across the country. Kentucky’s senators hail from one of the poorest states in the union. Yet they neglected to support popular and transformative federal aid for their constituents and other impoverished Americans until tornadoes devastated the

the public and the media to focus efforts on analyzing spike protein permutations via genetic mutation tracking along with vaccine development. We know what blindsides us in each of these issues, yet we refuse to invest that little additional amount to eradicate these imminent threats

between majority and minority races within a country, to two national governments. There are many cases in American history where we’ve seen such misdirected anger, including in the aftermath of 9/11 which led to injustices such as the imprisonment of many innocent

of Germany. These reparations were a cure to the present problem, which the winners of World War I thought was Germany’s access to a military. But the Treaty of Versailles and subsequent establishment of the League of Nations were meant to ensure not only a temporary peace, but also to stop another world war from ever taking place. But this ambush of Germany went to economic and political lengths that explains their later involvement in World War II. The amalgamation of such cycles of the powerful oppressive class attempting to find immediate cures for their problems have kept repeating through different scenarios throughout history, leading to crimes as horrendous as those committed during the Holocaust genocide.

In a contemporary fashion, similar cycles have emerged such as racist attitudes towards people of East Asian descent during COVID and fascist views of the legitimacy of one of the world’s most secure elections. A cure to all of one’s problems no matter who it harms in the process seems to be the best option when the powerful have that choice in their hands. But it is time to abandon this quick-solving mentality in favor of one that encourages radical preventative measures.

We must abandon the status quo and our traditional notion of practicality that favors premature cures over mature prevention.

entire state in December 2021. World leaders largely remained ignorant even as they entertained the prospect of new COVID variants. They took credit for vaccines, and they took the bare minimum of precautions to protect their people against a pandemic that has killed over 5 million worldwide. There has been a little push from the government in conjunction with

from the world before, not after they wreak havoc.

Additionally, this is important beyond forestalling problems directly related to these largely predictable disasters. Many people can end up being blamed or scapegoated for the plight of those on the upper end of a power dynamic between two groups of people. This can range from dynamics

Muslims in Guantanamo Bay.

But one of the most consequential and infamous of these dynamics was largely at play in the years leading up to and during World War II. Following World War I, Germany being on the losing side was forced to pay significant financial reparations despite previous assurances that such demands would not be asked

The Sexist Roots of “You”

BY CATALINA FOGG
Staff Writer

Netflix’s popular TV show “You” is a psychological masterpiece. It follows the complex and disturbing perspective of a male psychopathic murderer in Season 1, accompanied by a female equivalent in Season 2. One of the main unique draws of the show is its ability to make the main character, a murderer, likable and personable to the viewers. It does this astonishingly well with Joe Goldberg (Penn Badgley), the male lead, while seemingly intentionally leaving Love Quinn (Victoria Pedretti), the female lead, in the dust. This striking dichotomy between the two main characters is rooted in the stereotypical idea that women are more impulsive, emotion-led, and irrational than men, allowing for the strong potential of this female character to fall through the cracks and become victim to the sexist outlook on female emotions.

Throughout Season 2, Love’s character is portrayed as an intelligent, independent and strong woman extremely capable of handling her own life and decisions. Joe is also portrayed in the same light as intelligent and determined, but his impulsive killings in Season 1 differentiate him into a new serial killer label. He kills more than what one would deem necessary. This narrative of him develops in Season 2 with the stark contrast to Love’s self-control and down-to-earthness. She is really only revealed to act as a killer when absolutely necessary, as seen

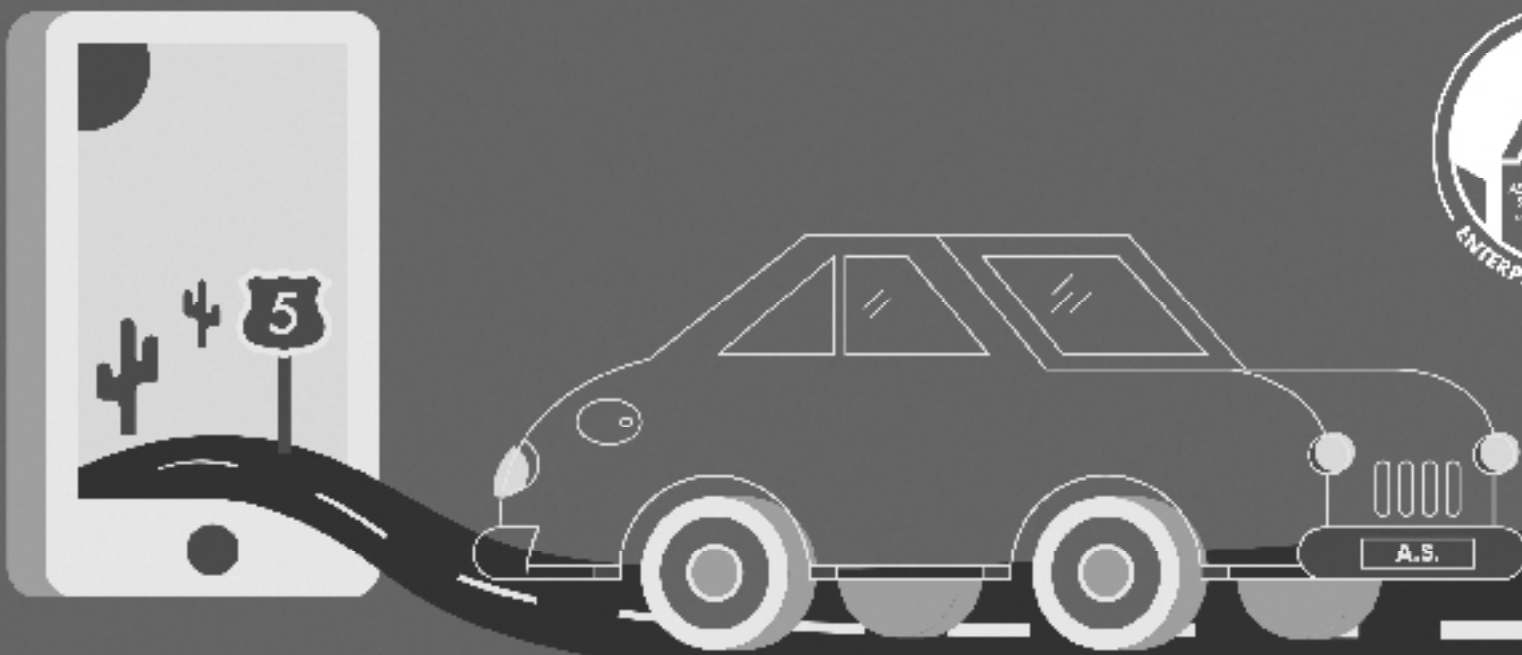

with the murder of her brother’s pedophilic nanny. This refreshing narrative of a strong, equally-matched and intelligent woman turned a corner in Season 3, however. During Season 3, Love’s character changed drastically and became inconsistent with her character in Season 2. She began to murder people around her as an emotional reaction, which had never been the case before. Any time she got mad or jealous, she would murder or hurt them to the point where she was blatantly illustrated as a hysterical woman. Meanwhile Joe’s character, while quite honestly more creepy than Love’s

with his stalking and obsession of different women, flourished in Season 3 as the show portrayed him as the rational one in him and Love’s marriage. He often had to clean up her messes and hide the bodies she murdered while she was left speechless with her ill-thought-out actions. It was truly disappointing that this never got resolved and her character never made a recovery. The final scene was in fact the most disappointing in Season 3, when Love ends up trying to paralyze Joe so that she can force him to fix their marriage. Not only is that unrealistic for her character but it’s a stretch for a psychopath of her type in

general. Joe ends up outsmarting her in the end by killing her with her own poison she intended to use to kill him. This is yet another instance where the narrative is distorted, as previously Love had always been a step ahead of Joe, which gave a refreshing twist to Joe’s character development and journey. The quick fall of Love’s character is a premium example of the film industry’s subtle stereotyping of women. The repeated emphasis on Love’s impulsiveness and emotional hysteria serves as a larger observation on society’s view of women as a whole and their reaction compared to men who

are in the same situations. Season 3 of “You” has proven that even if a man and woman commit the same crimes, the woman will typically be viewed through the lens of the irrational and emotional stereotypes of women. Joe’s murders are rationalized and justified because he was trying to “do the right thing,” while Love doesn’t get the same credit and it is once again chalked up to her emotional hysteria. Whether intentional or not, the observation Season 3 of “You” provides to its viewers is that women act on emotion while men act on rationale and intent, which is a smashing narrative to continue to affirm society with.





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ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

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New Years Blurbs

As the world looks forward to an uncertain 2022, A&E Staff Writers reflect on the many pieces of art that helped them through what felt like an eternal 2021.

Fabian Garcia - “Licorice Pizza”

“Licorice Pizza” is beautiful because it doesn't give the audience what they want. It doesn't present a traditional love story nor does it tell a cautionary tale. Instead, it presents the world exactly as it is —, a mess of connected events colored in moral greyness. Despite focusing mainly on the relationship between its two main characters, one can consider the world of the film its unofficial third lead. In many respects, Paul Thomas Anderson pays homage to the peace-loving LA environment both Alana and Gary find themselves in. The disco era is a fitting backdrop for such a polarizing film; a time where new ideas were constantly being thought up and consequently challenged. In a way, “Licorice Pizza” strives to do the same thing, asking us if we are willing to set aside our preconceived notions for the sake of art or continue to be spoon fed the same self-contained formula? For now, the answer can only be found within the court of public opinion. In this particular case, we believe “Licorice Pizza” stands as one of the finest pieces of cinema to be brought to light this year and nothing short of a masterpiece.

For a full review of “Licorice Pizza” click [here](#).



Image courtesy of CinemaBlend.

Fabian Garcia - “The Turning Wheel” - Spelling

In her previous outings, Spelling has opted for a variety of sounds rooted in the current music zeitgeist. Even with this record, she borrows a lot from contemporary R&B and Pop. However, what she accomplishes with “The Turning Wheel” is far more than any other artist has in the past year. Spelling demonstrates to the listener what those genres could be rather than what they are in a long series of dreary vignettes and eclectic inspirations. It's theatrical to the highest degree and flaunts its electrifying sonic palettes while never detracting from its mysterious and foreboding nature.

There isn't really a simple way to describe the tone Spelling sets with every song, as they all carve their own unique path for the listener to follow. A new bar is constantly being set for the music as a whole and then promptly broken with each following note. It's a disturbing monster of sounds, concepts and rhythms. All of which feel so unfamiliar but still so captivating.

The record draws heavily on gothic themes and soundscapes and they connect beautifully in each track. Spelling herself sings with such howling conviction, it constantly strikes the mix like a bolt of lightning or an orchestral sting. The body of work is nothing short of perfection, making listeners question how something can be brimming with life while being artful to death.



Image courtesy of Under The Radar.

Kamiah Johnson - “Succession” (Season 3)

In a year filled with so many new television series and blockbuster films from big studios like Disney, it's a surprise that one of my most anticipated shows of the year was season 3 of HBO's award winning family drama “Succession.” One might not see the appeal of watching a rich white family struggle for power over their multibillion dollar conglomerate media corporation, but the amazing writing by Jesse Armstrong and directing by various directors makes it extremely fun to watch. Season 3 brought the same level of Shakespearean drama that previous seasons have shown us, but elevated it. Nicholas Britell returns with an amazing score that brings intensity into every scene. The returning cast showed us all why they deserved their Emmy nominations and wins; the showrunners truly know how to utilize their actors to make us engaged in what was a slow start to the season but ended in a wild ride. The characters are all so flawed it feels wrong to like them, but they can also be charming and likeable — so much so that you find yourself rooting for them despite their flawed morals. The show's clever, quippy writing and its self awareness makes following the Roy family's drama so entertaining, especially when most of the trouble they get into is self-inflicted. After season 2's bombshell of a finale, I was surprised to see that season 3 managed to deliver an even better season finale. It felt like everything that led up to the betrayal of the season felt earned and paid off. “Succession” continues to be a knockout when it comes to HBO's catalog of prestige television shows and fans like myself cannot get enough of it.



Image courtesy of Complex.

Kaley Chun - “Tick, Tick... Boom!”

The musical film “Tick, Tick, ...Boom!” exudes the same amount of explosive enthusiasm as its title. One of the first sequences, a song called “30/90,” is a frenzied, detailed depiction of New York life as an up-and-coming artist. The semi-biographical musical sustains this energy as it follows Jonathan Larson, famed creator of the musical “Rent,” as he nears his thirtieth birthday. The clock is ticking on Larson's youth, and the struggling composer questions whether he will ever create something extraordinary or if he has to give up his dreams and move on to a more sensible career. The movie chronicles every part of Larson's creative process during the development of his first musical “Superbia,” from idea-drafting to frenetic writing to the insurmountable feeling of writing block. Though the message of growing up and facing responsibility is relatable to many young people, the real heart of this movie comes in the performances, particularly in Andrew Garfield's portrayal of Larson. Garfield's creative spark and electric energy leap off the screen, and his singing is great for an actor with no prior musical roles. Though Garfield stands out as the clear star, he is aided by a strong supporting cast and a perfect combination of catchy, vibrant songs. All of these elements add up to “Tick, Tick, ...Boom!”'s greatest strength: its honest representation of Jonathan Larson, a now-revered artist who had to struggle before achieving greatness.



Image courtesy of Decider.

Don't Look Up

Movie Review



Adam McKay's "Don't Look Up" aims to be a cheeky satire that points a finger at capitalist greed in the era of false news, but flat jokes and an overwhelming cast severely undermines the film's mojo.

“Don’t Look Up” is a Netflix movie that sets out to bottle the chaos and confusion that we are all living through right now: the result is a discordant and confused film that does a very good job at capturing the unique blend of exhaustion and anger that we’ve been lugging around for the last few years. World-ending events have just been coming and going, and we’ve become desensitized. It’s physically impossible for us to become more worried — we have to turn off the anxiety and enjoy our lives somehow. These themes are echoed in the premise of the film; “Don’t Look Up” stars Leonardo DiCaprio as astronomy professor Randall Mindy and Jennifer Lawrence as PhD student Kate Dibiasky who discover that a giant comet is headed directly towards Earth. When the two set out to share their findings with the general public, havoc is unleashed.

The movie rests on the shoulders of Leonardo DiCaprio and Jennifer Lawrence, but Meryl Streep, Jonah Hill, Ariana Grande, Timothee Chalamet, and Cate Blanchett are just some of the other names that make an appearance. Beyond the core cast though, everyone else's appearance feels forced, and it really doesn't feel like the characters are coming together or even adding anything to the story. The roller coaster of emotions also makes it really difficult to connect with any of the characters; they all seem to veer from one extreme to another. Jennifer Lawrence's character in particular swings between apathy and anger with alarming frequency. She handles an impending apocalypse with grace, but slips into a depressive episode when her boyfriend breaks up with her. To be clear, there is nothing particularly wrong with this; the movie just doesn't take the time to fully explore the character's development, leaving the audience with a sense of whiplash and an incomplete picture of who Kate Dibiasky is. Each character is going through their own experiences, but in attempting to capture all of their stories, the movie is unable to create a compelling narrative and ends up bouncing wildly. The result is a sort of cacophony rather than the harmony we've come to expect; the story flares up, then mellows down suddenly; the highs and lows come and go, never quite letting you settle in. The movie's editing also feels discordant and frantic, switching from languid, lingering shots to rough, panicked scenes.

The themes of “Don’t Look Up” echo those of “Wall-E” or “2012,” with additional attempts to bring a dash of comedy and satire to the mix. The issue is that the film is just not funny. There is a bit of situational irony here and there, and the bizarreness might shock a laugh out of you, but most of the jokes don’t land. For example, there is a scene where Meryl Streep addresses the country in the face of an apocalypse, but spends most of her speech leaning into nationalistic ideology and exits into a shower of fireworks. While it is insane, it pales in comparison to the reality that we are living through, making for very ineffective satire. Juxtaposing celebrity relationship news with doomsday news just isn’t that funny in 2021 because we’ve lived through it. The political commentary is blatantly on the nose and the film starts to drag very quickly, especially with a runtime of 2 hours and 20 minutes. Despite its lofty goals, or perhaps due to them, “Don’t Look Up” ends up feeling frenzied and chaotic and fails to bring anything new to the table.

Grade: C

Starring: Leonardo DiCaprio, Jennifer Lawrence

Rated: R

Directed by: Adam McKay Release Date: December 24, 2021

[illegible]

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Botox Gets a Facelift

A new study from researchers at UCSD points to positive mental health effects from the use of Botox. With more data still needed, the conversation around the face altering procedure is shifting.

BY NELSON ESPINAL
Features Editor

Plastic surgery’s standing within society evolved from being frowned upon to more often accepted. Overall acceptance of body sizes, shapes, and boundary-pushing fashion all highlight a shift in appearance acceptance.

In the early version of social media, the surgery of pop culture stars like Kim Kardashian and more recently, Kylie Jenner, generated massive uproar due to their altered bodies with people saying they went too far in their surgeries as well.

Shows like “Botched” showcased the pitfalls and risks of undertaking too many changes as well. The people covered on the show either had too much surgery done to their body or the surgeon made mistakes when it came to the surgery.

Both sources of backlash and negative coverage of plastic surgery created controversy and a lack of acceptance from society as a whole.

Yet, in modern pop culture, the lack of care for consensus opinions from certain figures allowed for reconstructive surgery to remain an option for people unhappy with their bodies.

Now, with the body positive revolution and the boundaries of what is socially acceptable expanding, the plastic surgery industry is growing. The procedures, as the science improves, are also improving with less complications coming as a result of the surgery.

Recently, researchers from Skaggs School of Pharmacy

released a study finding that people who received Botox for facial treatment reported an overall 22-72% decrease in their levels of anxiety.

These results came from the FDA database, as the effects of Botox were compared to other treatments for the same conditions.

The uses for Botox, according to the American Family Pediatrician, are focused around eliminating facial wrinkles, specifically the frown lines. Botox is one of the most frequently performed cosmetic treatments with improving patient satisfaction and very few negative effects.

“This effect was significant for the indications/injection sites cosmetic use/facial muscles, migraine/facial and head muscles, spasms and spasticity/upper and lower limbs, torticollis and neck pain/neck muscles, and sialorrhea/parotid and submandibular glands,” the researchers from Skaggs School of Pharmacy stated.

The focus of the study started from research about attempting to find negative side effects of Botox when a trend of improvements in anxiety levels of patients was established. The researchers then shifted their focus towards a positive effect of Botox.

The reason why Botox reduces the patients anxiety is not exactly clear, with the FDA data not taking into account potential outside factors, but the study did highlight a few potential important factors.

“Raising the eyebrows belongs to the expression of anxiety and is accomplished

by the frontalis muscle, which is also covered by the migraine scheme and is frequently injected for cosmetic reasons, too,” the researchers from Skaggs School of Pharmacy stated. “Hence, interruption of the corresponding proprioceptive feedback may explain the reduced incidence of anxiety.”

One of the factors is the interruption of migraine due to the injections. This interruption stops an avenue for discomfort and pain which then leads to less stress and a greater sense of relaxation overall.

The other is a boost in the patient’s appearance then leads to a greater sense of themselves. With the frowning and wrinkles being treated, the patient is left at ease that the problem is treated and that their faces look overall better.

This study is not the only one to link the Botox treatment to an improved sense of mental health.

Michelle Magid, a psychiatrist at the University of Texas, Austin, prescribed some of her patients with Botox as a means to address depression. Her basis for prescribing botox is centered around the connection between the physical act of smiling and the connection to the brain.

“In addition to its cosmetic effect, the neurotoxin has been shown to have a positive influence on mood and affect,” Magid published in her study. “Several randomized clinical trials (RCTs) have examined the effect of botulinum toxin on the treatment of depression. Combining the results of the five RCTs in a random effects meta-analysis revealed that patients treated with BTX showed a more intense improvement

of depressive symptoms in comparison to subjects that received placebo injections.”

Magid is one of the strongest supporters of Botox and the role it plays as the solution to depression and anxiety.

Along with Magid, Tillmann Kruger, a psychiatrist at Hannover Medical School, led a study which found evidence that even this artificial smile can provide a boost to a person’s mental health. He points to breaking a negative feedback loop by eliminating the frowning, which provides benefits as an alternative to taking traditional antidepressants.

The findings of these studies still remain somewhat questioned within the scientific community with many scientists questioning the validity of their claims or the means from which they generated the claim.

One of the skeptics is Nicholas Coles, a social psychologist at Stanford University, who used similar information to the supporters of Botox, but ended with the opposite results from the data. He found there was overall harm done to the patients and urges for more solid evidence before outright adopting Botox as a solution for depression.

With other established methods of treating depression and anxiety, Coles feels as if there is a better way to treat the mental health issues than relying on a method with inconclusive data and findings overall.

Along with Coles, Dr. Michael Lewis of the School of Psychology, Cardiff revealed a study at the British Psychological Society’s Annual Conference which asserted the use of Botox injections actually created

more depression than patients previously reported.

“The expressions that we make on our face affects the emotions we feel; we smile because we are happy, but smiling also makes us happy,” Dr. Lewis published his study. “Treatment with drugs like Botox prevents the patient from being able to make a particular expression.”

Dr. Lewis argues the overall limits placed on a person’s facial expression have the opposite effect to which Magid and Kruger point to, in which the limitations of the face present issues for the mental connection between the physical facial expression and the effects on the mind.

Although the skeptics about Botox’s effect on depression and anxiety remain, the overall conversation about Botox shifted from a risky, stigmatized procedure to a potential solution to ailing mental health issues.

Those from the UC San Diego study still feel as if more research is needed, with more data and expansive trials. Most of the researchers also feel more data and trials are needed for stronger, more conclusive results. The future of Botox as a mental health boost still remains uncertain without the expansive trials.

A once frowned upon procedure now has a face lift, with the number of surgeries and procedures increasing every year and becoming par for the course of people with fame or just a desire for a rejuvenated face. With a mental health focused reason for getting Botox, the number of surgeries could potentially continue to grow.



Image courtesy of Wind Ira from Unsplash.

SPORTS

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UPCOMING
UCSD
GAMES

M Volleyball	1/6	3PM	vs USC
M Basketball	1/6	7PM	at UC Riverside
W Basketball	1/6	7PM	vs UC Riverside
MW Swim	1/8	12PM	at UCLA
W Basketball	1/8	4PM	vs UC Davis

Tritons Come Back from the Brink of Defeat to Shock UCSB In Instant Classic

BY PRAVEEN NAIR
Sports Editor

Redshirt sophomore forward Jake Kosakowski drained a heavily-contested corner three at the buzzer to tie the game at the end of regulation, redshirt sophomore guard Bryce Pope hit two clutch game-winning free throws, and UC San Diego's men's basketball team (7-5, 1-0 Big West) stunned defending conference champions UC Santa Barbara (7-5, 0-1 Big West) in overtime, 85-83. Senior forward Toni Rocak had a career-high 34 points, including 9 consecutive UCSD points to begin overtime, as the Tritons scored a massive win in which they had their backs against the wall at the end of both regulation and overtime.

The Tritons entered the match, their Big West season opener, having had little answer for the Gauchos in their two meetings last season, including an 84-53 route that remains the Tritons' worst defeat at the Division-I level. UCSD was coming off of a tough 78-57 road loss to crosstown rivals San Diego State University but returned to RIMAC Arena seeking to stay undefeated at home in their fifth game in La Jolla this season — however, due to the spread of the Omicron variant of COVID-19, the match was played without spectators.

After each team scored their first 2 points off the jump, UCSB put the Tritons in a hole quickly, scoring 10 consecutive points as UCSD failed to score on 6 possessions in a row. The Tritons would get back in the match, however, and a paint jumper from Pope with 12:20 to go in the half brought UCSD within 2 at 12-10. Three minutes later, redshirt junior Matt Gray splashed in a three-pointer in his first possession of action to give UCSD a 17-16 lead, their first advantage so far. After the Gauchos responded with a layup, redshirt sophomore guard Jace Roquemore found Pope for the fastbreak triple to once again put UCSD ahead, 20-18.

As the first period wound down, Rocak, still donning a plastic face mask after breaking his nose in early December, began to heat up. First, after drawing a double team on a screen, Roquemore flipped the ball over his head to a wide-open Rocak at the 3-point line, who brought UCSD within 1 at 24-23 with 4:05 to go in the half. A minute later with the Tritons down 3, Rocak drove inside for a layup, drew contact, and earned an extra point on the free throw to tie the game.

On the next UCSD possession, after freshman forward Francis Nwaokorie got his own rebound in the post, Rocak drove inside and took a hard fall on a layup attempt, but drew a blocking foul and sank his two shots to go up 28-26 with 2:24 left. The Gauchos mustered one more point before halftime arrived with UCSD leading, 28-27.

Graduate guard Jake Killingsworth swished an open triple in the Tritons' first possession of the second half to extend their lead to 31-27, the biggest yet of the night for UCSD. But the Gauchos kept it close as the half continued. With 13:59 remaining and the Tritons down 1, Pope banked in a deep 3 from the center of the floor to put UCSD up 2; on the very next Triton possession, Pope caught an inbounds pass in the left corner, pulled up, and sank another shot from downtown to extend the lead to 5 with 13:14 to go.

The Tritons had a scary moment soon after with 12:42 remaining, as Nwaokorie and Rocak collided at the baseline and fell with a thud to the hardwood, staying down while UCSB scored the 5-on-3 powerplay easily. Nwaokorie was up quickly, but Rocak stayed down for nearly a minute and walked back into the tunnel. But Rocak would soon be back on the bench, and checked back into the game with 9:55 on the clock.

Meanwhile, the Gauchos had erased the Triton lead and were up 5 with 9:25 remaining, but Roquemore made a smart pass

from the post to Killingsworth in the corner for a triple to cut the lead to 2. Still, the Tritons couldn't capitalize and UCSB was in the driver's seat as the minutes ticked away, and the Gauchos led by 6 with 2:41 remaining.

Rocak cut the lead to 3 as he sank a driving layup while getting fouled, and hit the foul shot. UCSB responded with a fastbreak layup to push the advantage back to 5, and the Tritons once again faced an uphill battle, down 5 with just 41 seconds to go. Killingsworth missed a three-pointer, but Nwaokorie made a key clutch rebound despite being surrounded by three Gauchos, slapping the ball back out to Killingsworth at the 3-point line. Killingsworth found Rocak, who drove into the lane and laid it up with his left hand to make it 69-66 with 42 seconds remaining.

The next possession was key, as a UCSB bucket would all but end the game, especially as the Gauchos bled the clock down to its final seconds. But the Gauchos' midrange attempt was off target, and UCSD called a timeout with 11.8 seconds to go, with the ball at the baseline and down three. The Tritons got the ball into Roquemore, who was intentionally fouled by UCSB to send him to the line, as the Gauchos feared a game-tying three-pointer. Roquemore made both shots, cutting the lead to just 69-68. The Tritons then quickly fouled UCSB's Ajare Sanni with 6.8 seconds to go, sending him to the line, where he made both shots to make it 71-68.

After a timeout, the Tritons got the ball to Rocak at halfcourt, but he was swarmed by defenders and didn't see an opportunity for the shot, so he quickly called another timeout with 2.6 seconds to go. On the subsequent play, Pope got the ball at the 3-point line and was immediately mobbed by Gauchos; he then was called for a travel on the missed shot attempt with 1.2 seconds remaining, much to the chagrin of Triton coach Eric Olen. That

meant the game was all but over for UCSD, as all the Gauchos had to do was run a second off the clock to win.

But UCSB mishandled the inbounds pass, which sailed to the other end of the court and was tipped out-of-bounds as the buzzer rang. But after a lengthy review, the officials determined the ball was last touched by UCSB, and the Tritons got one last gasp, an inbounds pass from the right side of the court with 0.9 seconds to go. Killingsworth inbounded the ball to Kosakowski in the right corner, and with a defender in his face and fading away, Kosakowski turned around and hit the bottom of the net to tie the game at 71, force overtime, and send the Triton bench wild. While Kosakowski leads the Tritons in three-pointers made this season, this was his first triple of the night, and it couldn't have come at a better time.

While Kosakowski was the hero at the end of regulation, the start of overtime was the Toni Rocak show. First, Rocak gave UCSD a 73-72 lead with a post bucket, then after Roquemore missed three on the next possession, drew an over-the-back foul and sank two foul shots to put UCSD up 75-72. On the Gauchos' next time down the floor, Pope made a steal in the key, and on the other end, Rocak sized up his opponent, then pulled up and knocked down a three from the wing, giving UCSD a 78-72 advantage. On the Tritons' next possession, Rocak drove into the paint, switched the ball to his right hand, and laid it in; in just half of the overtime period, Rocak had single handedly outscored the Gauchos 9-3, and was the only Triton to score.

But despite the momentum being firmly on the Tritons' side, UCSB wasn't out of it yet, scoring the next 7 points and taking an 81-80 lead with 1:24 remaining. Pope responded by taking the ball inside himself, and got a lucky bounce on his layup to go up 82-81. The Gauchos didn't score on their next possession, and Roquemore

added one to the lead with a free throw to make it 83-81.

This gave UCSB the ball down two, and Rocak fouled the Gauchos' Calvin Wishart on the shot; being his fifth foul of the game, this sent Rocak to the bench, and Wishart to the charity stripe. Wishart hit both shots and tied the game at 83 with 7.6 seconds remaining. The Tritons came down the floor looking to win the game, and in a major mistake for UCSB, their Miles Norris ran into Pope on a deep 3-point attempt with 2.0 seconds to go, sending Pope to the line for three shots. Pope hit both of his first two shots, then intentionally missed the third, and the Gauchos could only hoist a three-quarters-court heave off the mark, giving UCSD the victory, 85-83.

Rocak led the Tritons with 34 points on 12-of-16 shooting, followed by 22 from Pope, including 4 three-pointers; Rocak's 34 are the most points by a Triton since Tyrell Roberts dropped 45 in the California Collegiate Athletic Association semifinals in March 2020. Rocak also led UCSD with 7 rebounds, and sank all 8 of his free throws. Both teams were evenly matched all night, as the lead changed hands 15 times.

"That was a great performance. Our competitiveness was at a high level tonight. It would have been easy to give in at a couple points in a game... Nobody really blinked. We kept working and kept competing," said coach Olen after the game.

The down-to-the-wire win is a massive one for a UCSD team new to the Big West, as the Gauchos were conference champions and played in the NCAA tournament in 2021, and were voted top in the conference by the Big West coaches' poll. After publication, the Tritons will next go on the road against UC Riverside on Thursday, January 6, and UC Davis on Saturday, January 8.



Image courtesy of Mike McGinnis / UC San Diego.