



## Field Feature

By Maya Cornell

With construction of the new Paraclete High School athletic complex finally reaching its end phases, it is only a matter of time before our school's student athletes can make full use of the complex and its many amenities. Prior to construction of the athletic complex, Paraclete's sports fields were outdated and in desperate need of renovation.

Having been last renovated over twenty years ago, there were many features of the old field that were no longer optimal for use. "Anybody who played on that field would tell you gophers were the biggest problem. It was not [an] official sized field. The track, I believe, was [...] 400 yards, not 400 meters," explained Paraclete High School principal Mr. John Anson. "It was a dirt track, so every time it rained, it became a mud track." These design flaws became even more of a problem when sporting events had to be canceled due to the condition of the track, or when Paraclete students were required to travel elsewhere to play their home games. "We'd have to wait days. If anybody drove on the field after sprinklers, there'd be potholes. It just wasn't a great place for kids to run."

The new athletic complex features a standard size football field, as well as a nine lane rubberized track, shot put sector and baseball fields.

Following the initial construction phase, principal Mr. Anson commented on additional revisions to the stadium's design: "We have an idea of building a field house out there as well that would have a home and visitor dressing room, expanded restrooms, coaches' office, officials' room, trainers' room." Despite currently having the space to fit such facilities in, immediate construction plans have yet to be executed, granted that Paraclete's campus already has such facilities in operation in the present time.

Generating the funds for such an all-encompassing project was no small feat, and efforts to earn money remain ongoing. "In the Antelope Valley, we have people that work really hard for their money," Mr. Anson clarifies.



"Some of them commute two hours over the hill into San Fernando Valley. I take a lot of pride in being able to raise the money without having to raise tuition." As a parent himself, Mr. Anson expressed Paraclete's wishes to not put a burden on tuition-paying families by ensuring funding had been earned prior to construction. "I don't believe in debt, so I wasn't going to build until we had the money."

On top of funding, several other issues appeared, threatening to delay or prevent completion of the complex's construction. The most daunting of these issues being the incline of the land on which the previous track and field were constructed upon. "There's a 26 foot drop in elevation from the southeast to the northwest corner of the campus," explained Mr. Anson. Such an elevation difference made for a less enjoyable sporting experience, so the decision was made to grade, or even out, the land the new athletic complex was to be constructed upon.

Construction on a new field began in August 2022, and was described as a "long process", as plans for a comprehensive athletic complex began nearly two decades prior in 2004. Field renovations were one half of Mr. Anson's self-described "master plan" for campus construction, with the other half being the

St. Joseph's building: Paraclete's two-story, 17 classroom facility complete with the inclusion of the multipurpose room, or MPR. Phase three, a "performing arts and technology center", has also been considered for future campus extension, with the planning and timeline of said project currently undecided.

lection of students taking part in the planning stages of the athletic complex. "[There were] quite a few things that we missed that she made sure we got in there."

With roughly 250 students—around half the campus population—participating either in football, baseball, or track and field, the refreshed athletic complex is a welcome addition to Paraclete's campus layout. "There's just something special about seeing, you know, 70 to 80 percent of the student body out there at games," remarked Mr. Anson.

The high percentage of students participating in sporting events, both on the field and in the stands, creates a demand for seating and adequate arrangements for games, something lacking in Paraclete's previous field. "When we're playing in our own backyard, when we're playing in our own school, it's a lot easier for students to come." Mr. Anson communicated. "I think what it's going to do is really boost school spirit."

With the complex being built to last, Paraclete student athletes will continue to relish in the new field and all its amenities for years to come.

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~ Mr. Anson

When asked to describe how the field's design had deviated since the initial planning, Mr. Anson stated that "the final design is similar to the one that we had in 2004 with that master plan, but we had students, alumni, parents, community members all as part of that group that put that master plan together." Even then-students were involved in the process, with Mr. Anson naming Paraclete alumni Angela Hupp among the se-

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# Homecoming Game

By Jeremiah Aiyegbusi, Camila Vasquez, Maya Cornell

Paracelete High School kicked off their first ever football game at the new Calandri Stadium early this October against St. Francis. The game started off strong with a scoring kick off by Richard Diaz. Following the kickoff, player Tyler Soles came in with a 6 point touchdown making Paracelete 7 to 0. Both teams were fighting hard back and forth to score points, but by the second quarter, the score was still the same.

Despite St. Francis's tough defense, player #18 Dillion Booth scored the final touchdown of the second quarter leading into halftime making the score an even 14 to 14.

During halftime, the dance team put on a phenomenal performance, followed by an equally outstanding performance from Paracelete's cheer

team. Several alumni present at the event expressed their excitement at getting to experience one of Paracelete's most celebrated sports on a new-and-improved field, while many others expressed a comforting sense of familiarity from being back at their high school campus.

Once the halftime events had concluded, Paracelete started off with 7 to 0, scoring a field goal by Richard Diaz. Following that, St. Francis scored a touchdown tying it 7 to 7. Despite the eventual lead from St. Francis after a calculated touchdown, Tyler Neal quickly returned Paracelete to a tie of 21-21 by the end of the game. This tie led to an overtime, with St. Francis eventually emerging victorious through a touchdown, with a final score of 21-28.



Paracelete Spirits ready to snap the ball.

# Homecoming Court

By Jeremiah Aiyegbusi, Maya Cornell

Every fall, Paracelete High School celebrates Homecoming Week with various engaging activities. One teacher doing her best every year to make Homecoming Week happen is Paracelete High School girls dean Ms. Olague. When asked about improvements to the Homecoming Dance that were planned compared to previous years, she mentioned "beefing up" security to make sure that everyone who goes feels as safe and comfortable as possible while on campus. In addition, Ms. Olague was sure to take notes and pointers from the 2024 senior class, including hiring the cousin of senior student Richard Diaz as a DJ. She also held a vote on what snacks should be provided at the dance. When deciding on the theme of the Homecoming Dance, Ms. Olague was inspired

by the 2024 graduating class's senior theme: "Spider-Man: Into The Spider Verse".

When Paracelete teacher Mr. Urman-ski yelled Luciana Ramos's name during the 2023 Paracelete homecoming court ceremony, Luciana described feeling surprise at hearing her own name being announced. She spoke about the experience of putting her name in the running and telling her parents that she did so. Luciana also explained that her family had been extremely supportive throughout the entire experience. When asked to talk a little about her fellow runners, Luciana quoted that she was "surrounded by such amazing ladies", as well as how it had been the best week of her senior year thus far.



(From left to right) Sofia Vasquez, Aniste Hyde, Luciana Ramos, Camila Jimenez, Samantha Deharo.

# Christian Service

By Maya Cornell

Christian Service is mandatory at Paracelete, with student completion of projects expected on a semester-to-semester basis. As the Antelope Valley's sole Catholic high school, acts of service and community-building are to be expected, but it's how these projects impact both students and those in need alike that make them truly special.

Christian Service projects are based upon the Corporal Works of Mercy; a list of instructions for believers in Christ to serve those in need. Matthew 25 contains the



foundation of this list, stating, "For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me."

Using this list of activities, an overwhelmed student can narrow down their options to best suit their comfort level, as well as the needs of those they plan to assist.

Paracelete's status as a Catholic

high school means that its focus lies mainly in assisting other Catholic organizations. “Sacred Heart, Saint Mary, Saint Cera, but also the service organizations within them, for instance, Saint Vincent De Paul [...] they are one of the largest providers of service to the poor in the Antelope Valley,” explains Mr. Landa, one of the school’s administrators.

Not only do projects benefit those who lack material goods, but the spiritual lives of the very students who partake in them. Serving those in need is a cornerstone of both Christian teaching as well

as a foundation of Paracelete High School’s curriculum. “We see it as an act of love, especially if [students] meet the ones they help [...] they get to look into the eyes of the needy.”

As a whole, these mandatory community service projects do more than help students pass the semester. Christian Service projects offer Paracelete students the valuable opportunity to come face-to-face with those in need and answer the call of faith to offer up their valuable time to make a difference in their own community.

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Matthew 25:35-36

## New Teachers

By Maya Cornell

The 2023-2024 academic year has been full of changes to life around campus, and it is plain to see. In addition to the brand new field, new clubs, and various extracurricular activities, students may notice the addition of a handful of new teachers hired on to offer their skills teaching at Paracelete High School. In addition to the list of already familiar faces on the campus’s faculty list, Clete News had the chance to interview three of this year’s newcomers—Mr. Guillermo, Ms. Farrukh, and Ms. Nogales—to get a glimpse into their experience making the transition to teaching here.

Both Ms. Farrukh and Ms. Nogales never planned to work at a high school, despite both teaching college classes. They said that they were never planning to work at Paracelete until a position had opened up that they decided to accept. “I’ve taught at a prison and college and saw what college students had missed in high school,” Ms. Nogales explained. “I wanted to prepare the students for college.”

When asked about how transitioning to teaching at Paracelete had been, Ms. Nogales and Ms. Farrukh both mentioned that the transition had posed some challenges. “I’m not used to teaching everyday; college teaching is very different. If I teach a class it’s usually once or twice a week, so I’m not used to seeing the same groups of people everyday,” Ms. Farrukh remarked. In contrast, Mr. Guillermo, a Paracelete alumni, stated that everything felt familiar from his time being taught



Mr. Guillermo (above), Ms. Nogales (bottom left) & Ms. Farrukh (top left),

as a student.

In spite of the stark differences between Paracelete High School and other educational institutions, all teachers interviewed spoke highly of their experiences with faculty. Mr. Guillermo and Ms. Farrukh are Paracelete alumni, allowing the transition to teaching on campus to be more familiar. “Everyone here has been very welcoming so [I am] very grateful for that,” stated Ms. Farrukh. Mr. Guillermo added that “the community itself is a lot bigger in public school. [Paracelete] feels like a family.” Feeling Paracelete’s close-knit nature amongst students and faculty alike appears to be a shared experience. Mr. Guillermo did remark, however,

that his experience interacting with faculty—many of whom taught him personally—has naturally changed since his time as a student. “You talk to them like you wouldn’t talk to a student,” he explained “you just see them in a different light . . . you see them more as human beings.”

Upon being asked how the school has surprised them, Ms. Nogales mentioned that “many students practice kindness and respect for one another compared to public schools.” Ms. Farrukh added that she was impressed that her students are always “rising to the occasion” when necessary.

As the 2023-2024 school year reaches its halfway point, let the

Paracelete community continue to be warm and welcoming to our new teachers!

“The community itself is a lot bigger in public school,” he said during an interview “[Paracelete] feels like a family.”

-Mr. Guillermo

# Club Day

By Jeremiah Aiyegbusi, Camila Vasquez, Maya Cornell



To the average Paracelete student, being a member of a school club is a no-brainer. From Eco Club to St. George's Gaming Society and beyond, it's no wonder that there's something for almost everyone. To a new Spirit, however, deciding which clubs to join can be an overwhelming, complicat-

ed process. Paracelete's Club Day aims to solve this problem.

Club Day, held throughout part of a school day in mid-September, seeks to make readily available information regarding the year's clubs, along with sign-up opportunities for each. Students are encouraged to engage with club leaders, ask questions, and participate in communities that support their interests.

"Clubs really made me feel like I belong here," longtime teacher and Paracelete alumni Mrs. Hernandez shared. "Clubs made it feel like my school."

Together with student Tyler Neal (Vice President of Club Affairs) and fellow teacher Mr. Hernandez, Mrs. Hernandez orchestrates and runs club promotional events for the entire campus. Mrs. Hernandez handles the preparations, Mr. Hernandez the layout and setup, and Tyler does the more direct organization.

Clubs are more than just filler activities, as explained by Mrs. Hernandez: "The way colleges are accepting [...] clubs are crucial for kids to be involved with in high school, not just for the social aspect." Not only are clubs an enjoyable way to connect with

other like-minded students, but look good on college applications, too.

With the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020 leading to an international pause on people's in-person activities, campus life at Paracelete was forced to a grinding halt. Clubs took the weight of this change at full-force. Being described as a "building process," the number of clubs at present has steadily been returning to normal. In addition, new clubs joining the roster are always welcomed.

# Senior Sunrise

By Maya Cornell

Getting up early and lining up for...Cletehouse burritos? This is what awaited me one fateful Friday morning as I trudged up the hill to Senior Lawn. I was already used to getting up early, on account of my zero period in Journalism, but Senior Sunrise expected me to be up and running even earlier than usual.

Looking through the crowds of black-hoodied seniors, I quickly spotted my friends, joining them at our usual spot. Each of them exhibited similar levels of fatigue, and yet a vague sense of excitement remained clearly evident on each of our faces. We were seniors, and after four years of working toward our graduation, we were now receiving recognition for our efforts in the form of a morning, just for us. Breakfast was free, with many students expressing their enjoyment of the meal. "[The] food was great, and we got to hang out with our friends," said Abriel Ginn. The hot chocolate provided was also a welcome addition to the traditional breakfast fare. We lined up outside the cafeteria, returning to our spot on the lawn with burritos, fresh fruit, and the aforementioned hot chocolate in tow. We talked amongst ourselves for a while, before it was time for class photos.

First, we stood around on Senior Lawn as a teacher took a top-

down photo of us from the roof, before filing onto the new field for even more pictures. Together as a class, we made the slow walk to the field from the rest of the campus. It was nice to get to walk on the new turf field for the first time ever; while other students have already started using the fields, I had no reason to set foot there until Senior Sunrise. Several photos were taken with the class spread out across the fresh turf, printed Paracelete logo between us on the grass. Then, we all made our way onto the bleachers, sitting shoulder-to-shoulder and giving the camera a variety of poses and faces. After photos were taken, the event was over, and the school day went along as usual. "It definitely didn't go the way I thought it would," explained senior classmate Sariah Cornelius "but it wasn't bad."

Participating in an all-senior event with some of my closest friends was a generally positive experience. With the busy schedule held by most seniors as they prepare their for their transition into college and adult life, attending such a laid-back event was an entirely welcome change, as was the break from our usual school schedule. For many, Senior Sunrise was one of the last chances to interact with the whole senior class, all in one place, before departing to bigger and better things.



Above: Students arrived at Senior Lawn, eating breakfast at their Senior Sunrise.

Below: Senior Sunrise became a good opportunity to interact with friends.

