

# TEMPLE CITY *Voice*

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SEPTEMBER 18, 2009

## Opinion: The Impact of Cuts to UC Schools

By Leslie Wu

The state of California imposed statewide budget cuts amassing to \$813 million that would affect the higher education system, namely the University of California (UC) campuses.

These deficits could spell a harsh reality in the long term, as it reduces educational opportunities for lower earning families. More importantly, it would hamper President Barack Obama's goal of having the United States be the world's leader in college education.

The resulting pay cuts and furloughs could possibly deter the "academic geniuses" of this nation from teaching at the public universities,

*"Higher Education" on Page 3*



**MULTIPURPOSE ROOM ALMOST COMPLETE:** The construction of the multipurpose room at Live Oak Park is almost complete. The Temple City Parks and Recreation department is expected to relocate to the facility once it is built.

## City Considers Working with Habitat for Hummanity

By Randy Shun

In a venture to readily secure state-mandated low income housing, the city of Temple City plans to work with Habitat for Humanity in future construction projects.

"Many local cities were involved with Habitat for Humanity housing requirements," says the councilmember. "We should look outside the box to meet low-cost alternatives."

Sternquist has arranged to meet with the Glendale chapter. She

also invited Community Development Manager Joseph Lambert to attend.

The meeting consists of a three-hour orientation that includes a video presentation, question and answer session and a van tour of ongoing projects.

Other councilmembers were receptive of the idea.

Councilman Tom Chavez supported Sternquist's visit, citing his own experience with Habitat for Humanity in New Orleans. But added, "details need to be worked out-who, what, how."

Vincent Yu, Mayor Pro Tempore, reaffirmed Chavez's statements. He also recounted designing

Habitat for Humanity homes as an architect.

Planning Commissioner Patrick Horton also praised the City Council for its willingness to interact with the philanthropic organization. "We are pursuing our 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary with a commitment to affordable housing," he says. Horton further suggested enlisting the aid of local Boy Scouts or District students to assist with construction.

Habit for Humanity uses volunteer workers to construct low-cost and effective housing, often cheap, interest-free mortgages. The organization also promotes alternative energy, youth involvement and recycling with its activities.

**News Brief:** Los Angeles city councilwoman Janice Hahn has opened an exploratory committee for the 2010 Lieutenant Governor's race.

*Sacramento Bee*

UNPUBLISHED, HISTORICAL NEWS STORY

# Temple City Councilman Capra Resigns

**By Matthew Wong**

**Capra will not be charged in Piazza bribery case**

Temple City councilman David Capra has resigned.

"Although I feel I have diligently and effectively represented the people of Temple City, it is with great regret that I am informing you of my immediate resignation from the City Council," Capra wrote in a statement to the City Clerk.

Capra was first elected to the City Council in March 2003. Four years later, Temple City voters re-elected Capra to a second four-year term. His term would have expired in 2011.

According to *Pasadena Star News* reporter Alfred Lee, councilman Capra had plead guilty on June 2, 2009, for not reporting a campaign contribution of \$1000 or more during the 2007 City Council election.

In exchange for admitting guilt, Capra was placed on probation for 36 months, must resign from office, agree not to run for four years and pay a \$150 fine. Prosecutors also promised not to file any charges against him in relation to the Piazza bribery case.

Since 2008, the Los Angeles County District Attorney's office has been investigating Capra,

councilwoman Judy Wong, former councilwoman Cathé Wilson and former city council and state assembly candidate Scott Carwile.

The four had been accused by Piazza at Temple City developer Randy Wang of bribery.

The Piazza developer claims he gave Capra, Carwile and Wong \$13,000 in cash during the March 2007 city council elections. He further alleges Wilson had demanded one of the 52 proposed one-bedroom condominiums and \$48,000 in cash.

All four have publicly denied the allegations.

**Piazza developer has proposed changes thrice since winning approval in 2006**

The \$75 million project, formerly known as the "Temple City Galleria" and "Piazza Las Tunas," once promised 52 one-bedroom condominiums and a large retail center. The development plans also included a proposed banquet facility.

Developer Wang secured approval of his mixed-use development in May 2006 despite fierce opposition from a group of neighborhood activists, known as Temple City Neighborhood Alliance (TCNA), and residents within the community.

After the City

Council approved the project, a referendum drive supported by TCNA was launched. More than 1900 signatures were gathered. But the push to place the development on the ballot failed on the basis of a technicality.

From 2006 to the present, the Piazza developer has held two ground breakings and has worked with three different construction management firms. Wang has proposed changes thrice, in 2007, 2008 and most recently April 2009.

Wang has until August 23, 2009 to complete his development according to the developer's agreement signed by Wang and the city of Temple City.

Last year, the city of Temple City filed a lawsuit against Wang, anticipating a breach in the Piazza development contract. A few months later, Wang countersued Temple City, accusing city officials of bribery.

If city officials are found to be guilty of

Wang's allegations, the contract signed between the developer and the city would be void. However, assuming the contract remains valid, Temple City may purchase the 3.7 acre site for \$5 million should Wang fail to construct the Piazza by August.

On May 25, the *Temple City Voice* sent an e-mail to Piazza spokesman Enrique Medina. The request for more information regarding the development was unanswered.

A court-mandated settlement conference will be held in July. Councilmembers Fernando Vizcarra and Vincent Yu will represent Temple City at the meeting.

According to city staff, approximately \$171,000 in legal fees have been spent in litigation with the Piazza developer, as of April 30. Temple City is being represented by Joe Buchman of Burke, Williams and Sorensen, LLP.

**Online community react,**

**"Piazza" on Page 3**

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# Cuts to Higher Education

Continued from Page 1

impeding the fostering of technological and scientific innovators in California.

For the many of us who are applying to colleges soon and those already enrolled in the public schooling system, the UC option is important – larger student populations, appealing locations, a bigger atmosphere.

There are other avenues of which the state can earn more money namely by enforcing illegal immigrant benefits, imposing severance taxes on the oil companies, and closing the numerous tax loopholes prevalent in California.



In a society thriving for competition and self-improvement, why are cuts being made to diminish the quality of education for the future societal contributors of this nation?

There are many doubts to the public system, especially with the new budget plans – will the individual needs of each student be addressed? Will the books and materials be up-to-par with the ever dynamic nature of advancement and changed?

The reduced spending in the UC school system directly involves, among other things, reduced admissions, larger class sizes, fewer class options, higher tuitions, and a denser teacher to student ratio.

When all is said and done, a looming question remains – How will the future of this nation be affected?



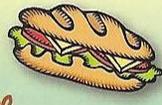
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# Piazza

Continued from Page 2

## speculate on next councilperson

A growing chorus of online commentators has expressed its disapproval of city officials' alleged involvement with the Piazza developer.

Since the *Star News* first reported the story, more than a hundred comments have been made on the Internet. Besides condemning Capra, Carwile, Wilson and Wong, posters are wondering who the current City Council will choose to replace Capra.

After hearing from interim city attorney Eric Vail, who began his job on June 1, the City Council decided to hold a special council meeting on June 11 to appoint a new councilmember. Each councilperson can nominate up to two people.

Candidates must either submit a written statement or provide materials to the City Council and will have the chance to speak before the legislative body.

Likely candidates will probably be past and current city commissioners and former councilmembers.

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## EDITOR'S COLUMN: INVESTING IN HEALTH

The state of the economy is not doing anyone any good.

Teacher lay-offs and cuts in education hinder, not help, the progress of students. More and more people are competing for limited spots in universities and workplaces. Our chances to succeed suddenly seem much more miniscule than before, and the statistics we love to rely on support our pessimistic conclusions. Although job declines have moderated in the past few months, unemployment has raised 0.3 percent to 9.7 percent since August, according to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. This means that the number of unemployed persons have grown from 466,000 to 14.9 million.

Knowing how tough situations were getting, I also wanted to know how much stress students were going through these days. Asking around, I found that everyone sleeps after midnight. Six hours of sleep is a grand luxury only affordable in the small portion of summer vacation that is actually used as a vacation. Everyone is exerting themselves to the fullest. We are in a critical time and critical measures are taken, namely, academic pursuits are regarded as more important than an individual's health.

The will to confront challenges is a virtue. However, a student should also pay attention to his or her mental and physical health. It's a bit harder for us to realize when we have an unhealthy or dangerous lifestyle, since we are at the peak of our physical strength. A lot of physical problems either accumulate over the years or are triggered by a brief period of unhealthy routine. For example, the fact that most students sling backpacks half their weight over their shoulders paves the way to a generation of arthritis patients. Let's not even get started on the health concerns that consistent sleep-deprivation poses.

It seems silly to imagine that what we can handle now will come back at us further down the road, especially when there seem to be greater things at stake, such as a job that will provide us with a decent quality of life. However, it also seems silly to put one's own health at risk now to provide for a healthy future later. While obstacles should be still faced and challenges still addressed, one's own health should never be compromised, and should always be a first priority.

*Sophia*

## TEMPLE CITY *Voice*

**Volume 4, Issue 9**

Letters to the Editor...

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## UPCOMING EVENTS

- September 19 Senior Health Fair  
*Live Oak Park 9 A.M. -12 P.M.*
- 21 City Council Meeting  
*Council Chambers @ 7:30 P.M.*
- 22 Back to School Night  
*TCHS @ 6:30 P.M. -8:30 P.M.*
- 23 Board of Education MTG  
*District Office @ 7 P.M.*
- 24 Free Flu Immunizations  
*Live Oak Park Community Center*  
*9 AM–11:30 AM*



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