

Daily Pilot

FRIDAY, AUGUST 11, 2023 /// dailypilot.com



Spencer Grant

A MURAL that used to be on the side of the RVCA headquarters, at 960 W. 16th St. in Costa Mesa, has been painted over.

Two well-known Costa Mesa murals quietly painted over

BY SARA CARDINE

In Costa Mesa, City of the Arts, two well-known murals — including one used by the city to market the town's cultural riches — have been quietly painted over on a commercial property, sparking questions about what constitutes public art.

Doing business in an area primarily zoned general industrial, the headquarters of apparel company RVCA was home to two large-scale artworks visible from the street or to those who visited the retail store at 960 W. 16th St.

One of them, an untitled 2009 collaboration between globally recognized L.A. street artists El Mac, aka Miles MacGregor, and Marquis Lewis, who goes by RETNA, features a woman cir-

cumscribed by a prayer.

We come to you with open hands, we offer the fruits of our toils. These are days when our hearts and souls embrace the spirit of creation. For this we give thanks, it reads.

The iconic image has appeared in blog posts and marketing materials created by tourism nonprofit Travel Costa Mesa and is featured in the city's Arts Master Plan and on the cover of the 2022-23 budget.

Local artist Skeith DeWine said he was shocked during a visit to the site on Monday to discover the untitled work, and another mural of unknown provenance fronting 16th Street, had been completely covered over with

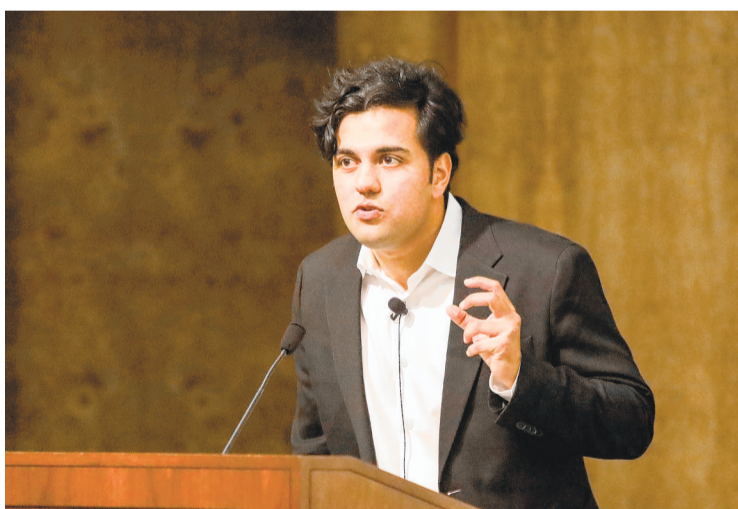
See **Murals**, page A5



Courtesy of the city of Costa Mesa

A MURAL by an unknown artist, painted outside RVCA headquarters in Costa Mesa, was painted over earlier this year.

Aditya Pai retracts announcement that he's suspending his campaign for CA-45



Courtesy of Aditya Pai for Congress

ADITYA PAI'S campaign said he was suspending his run for the 45th Congressional District against Rep. Michelle Steel but later backtracked.

BY LILLY NGUYEN

One of four Democratic candidates vying for Rep. Michelle Steel's seat in Congress appeared to call it quits Thursday morning but reversed course by the end of the day.

In a statement released by his campaign Thursday morning, attorney Aditya Pai said he would be suspending his bid because of what he says is "a lack of joy."

Pai, 31, said he was running because he felt the government needed young leaders focused on a brighter future. But, in the morning statement sent out by a person Pai described in a subsequent message as a "now former aide," the attorney stated he wasn't enjoying the campaign trail, although the campaign was

"going well."

"We have a service message that resonates here in a purple district. We're raising the money to be competitive. But my heart is not quite in it," Pai stated in the announcement suspending his campaign. "I love the subject matter dearly: politics, law, policy, government. I love helping people. But at least at this moment, I don't enjoy the life of a politician. And were I fortunate enough to be elected, I am now certain, I would be unhappy in Congress."

"I didn't know that four months ago. I know that now."

But, in a subsequent email message sent out late Thursday afternoon, Pai said the letter sus-

See **Retracts**, page A4

Shelter plans for mental health clients

County to allot \$718K to Costa Mesa to add 15 beds, services for people with behavioral health, substance abuse issues.

BY SARA CARDINE

Costa Mesa's bridge shelter annually serves about 200 clients, but since its 2021 opening there haven't been specific services for those with mental health or substance abuse. But now, with assistance from the county, officials hope to change that.

Taking advantage of a new state law that allows for court-mandated treatment for homeless individuals with severe mental illness, the city plans to partner with the Orange County Health Care Agency to add 15 shelter beds for clients with behavioral health needs.

The county will give Costa Mesa \$570,000 — approximately \$38,000 per bed — of a \$31.6 million allocation from the state Department of Health Care Services for the expansion. Another \$148,000 will aid in the provision of service workers to support those designated for treatment through June 30, 2027.

Nate Robbins oversees shelter operations as the city's neighborhood improvement manager. He told the City Council the partnership would help make the bridge shelter a more comprehensive service provider.

"The city of Costa Mesa does an amazing job of supporting our residents experiencing homelessness. [But] the one real gap that we have in our system is behavioral healthcare," Robbins said during an Aug. 1 council meeting. "This [partnership] avails us of a lot of services we don't currently have, which would elevate our shelter to the next level."

Council members asked about the shelter's average length of stay (about 160 days) and whether priority might be given to Costa Mesa residents requiring mental

See **Shelter**, page A4

ALSO FROM THE DAILY PILOT:



Eric Sondheimer

WHY LAGUNA BEACH HIGH'S RYNER SWANSON TRADED IN HIS VANS FOR FOOTBALL CLEATS PAGE A3

Financial literacy nonprofit teaches the power of the dollar

BY MATT SZABO

Huntington Beach native Dylan Jin-Ngo has seen his Youth Investors Corp. nonprofit come a long way since he founded it in 2019.

He's now planning for the evolution from a summer financial literacy course for youth to a year-round school program.

Youth Investors Corp. held its fifth program awards ceremony Wednesday night at the Huntington Beach Central Library. Eight young adults from around Southern California were surprised as \$500 grant recipients, including two from Huntington Beach.

Surf City residents Sherlyn Castillo, 19, and Karis Oishi, 15, were among the honorees.

Castillo, a Huntington Beach

High graduate who's an incoming sophomore at Long Beach State, said learning about financial literacy has been important as a first-generation college student. She found out about the program after receiving an email from the Huntington Beach Public Library.

"I'm really grateful for winning this grant," Castillo said. "I didn't really expect it. I came into this program wanting to learn more about how to invest, learn how to apply for credit cards, learn about insurances. I was pretty surprised when I won, but I'm grateful that I did."

Jin-Ngo, now 19 and an incoming sophomore economics student at Harvard University, said all eight of the students were of

See **Nonprofit**, page A5



ANAHI ALACALA, 19, and Destiny Montella, 12, of Whittier represented the oldest and youngest ages of the eight grant recipients.

Courtesy of Youth Investors Corp.

F.V. police arrest pair suspected of mail theft

BY ANDREW TURNER

Fountain Valley police took two individuals into custody on suspicion of robbery and mail theft on Saturday, officials announced.

The arrests were made in connection with an incident that had occurred roughly two weeks earlier. On the afternoon of Monday, July 24, authorities responded to a report of a robbery in the area of Bushard Street and Toucan Avenue.

Officers arrived to find a U.S. Postal Service worker, who had just been robbed at gunpoint. The suspects had fled the scene in a vehicle.

Authorities made the related arrests just before 2 a.m. on Saturday. The suspects were found inside a vehicle parked near a mail collection box located at Magnolia Street and Talbert Avenue.

Officers searched the vehicle, finding a handgun, stolen mail and property belonging to the mail carrier.

Jonathan Alberto Prieto, 18, of Los Angeles, was booked into the county jail. Prieto faces charges of conspiracy to commit a crime, petty theft, mail theft and robbery.

A Huntington Beach minor, A 16-year-old boy, was also detained and sent to juvenile hall on charges of

conspiracy to commit a crime, mail theft, possession of stolen property and robbery.

Prieto, who pleaded not guilty to all counts during his arraignment on Aug. 8, was being held in the Central Men's Jail on \$250,000 bail. His next date in court is scheduled for Aug. 17 at the West Justice Center.

Fountain Valley police are requesting that anyone with information regarding the incident contact the department at (714) 593-4485. Det. Ivan Arce can be reached via email at ivan.arce@fountainvalley.org.

andrewturner@latimes.com
Twitter: @AndrewTurnerTCN

AROUND TOWN



File Photo

THE ROTARY CLUB of Los Alamitos/Cypress/Seal Beach will stage its 31st annual Seal Beach Fishing Derby for kids 15 years old or younger on Saturday, Aug. 19, at the Seal Beach Municipal Pier. Above, a fifth-grade student learns how to fish from a member of the Huntington Beach Fishing and Recreation Club in this file photo.

Kids invited to a free fishing derby

The Rotary Club of Los Alamitos/Cypress/Seal Beach will stage its 31st

annual Seal Beach Fishing Derby for kids 15 years old or younger on Saturday, Aug. 19, at the Seal Beach Municipal Pier.

Registration for the free

event will take place at the pier from 7 to 9 a.m., with the derby beginning at 7:30 a.m. and ending at noon. A pancake break-

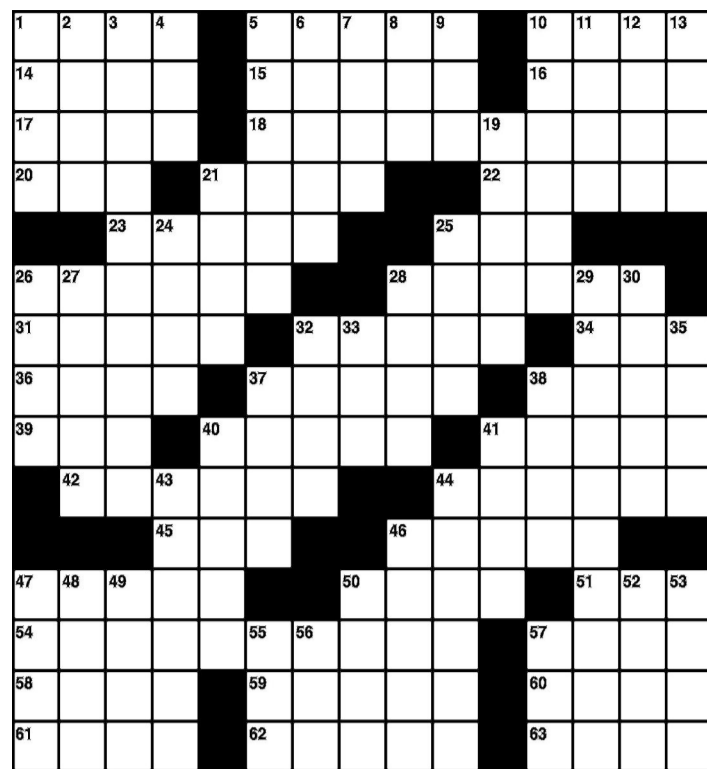
See **Around**, page A6

THE DAILY COMMUTER PUZZLE

By Jacqueline E. Mathews

ACROSS

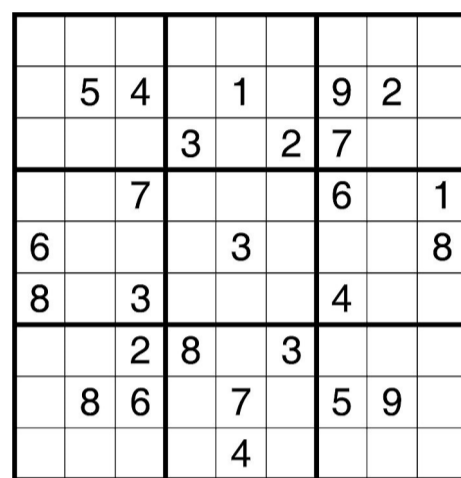
- 1 Little night light
- 5 Opinions expressed
- 10 Objectives
- 14 Word attached to eye or whip
- 15 Mary Tyler or Shemar
- 16 Entreaty
- 17 "Suffice _ say"
- 18 Tropical fruits
- 20 Not up to _; substandard
- 21 Effortless
- 22 Endures
- 23 In a peculiar way
- 25 "My _ Sal"; Rita Hayworth musical
- 26 Get by somehow
- 28 Bells and whistles
- 31 Piano key wood
- 32 _ for; symbolized
- 34 Part of TGIF
- 36 Heavy volume
- 37 "Nothing _!"; adamant refusal
- 38 Ladder rung
- 39 Girl's nickname
- 40 "The _ of Music"
- 41 Merriment
- 42 Minor earthquake
- 44 In a just manner
- 45 Basketball hoop
- 46 Singer Ross
- 47 Become frayed
- 50 College official
- 51 Bathroom feature
- 54 Rockets
- 57 Cartoonist Goldberg
- 58 Camp shelter
- 59 Wreak _; cause chaos
- 60 On the house
- 61 _ up; spends all of
- 62 Saw _ eye; agreed
- 63 Actress Deborah



SUDOKU

By the Mephram Group

Complete the grid so each row, column and 3-by-3 box (in bold borders) contains every digit, 1 to 9. For strategies on how to solve Sudoku, visit sudoku.org.uk.



For answers to the crossword and Sudoku puzzles, see page A6.

DOWN

- 1 _ up; err
- 2 "Bye!"
- 3 Stargazer
- 4 Greek letter
- 5 Pierce with a stake
- 6 Unpleasantly loud

- 7 Small horse
- 8 Suffix for press or depart
- 9 Chinese export
- 10 Shock and dismay
- 11 Miseries
- 12 Gather together
- 13 Be impudent

- 19 Kilt pattern
- 21 Jittery
- 24 Copenhagener
- 25 Pirate's drink
- 26 National League team
- 27 Approximately
- 28 Isn't _ of; dislikes
- 29 English major's subject
- 30 Iron alloy
- 32 Unpleasant
- 33 Light metal
- 35 Agile
- 37 Dire fate
- 38 _ splints; runner's woe
- 40 Put on a happy face
- 41 Actor Scott
- 43 Builds
- 44 Utter failure
- 46 Bus station
- 47 VW forerunners
- 48 Jungle animals
- 49 Wind indicator
- 50 Shabby nightclub
- 52 Hired car
- 53 Stein contents
- 55 "Murder, _ Wrote"
- 56 Stable meal
- 57 JFK's Attorney General

Tribune Media Services

LA Times PLANTS

Get the joy of nature in your inbox.
A monthly newsletter for plant people.

Cultivate your love of flowers and foliage with the L.A. Times Plants newsletter! Every month, we'll send you a roundup of upcoming plant-related activities and events in Southern California, along with tips, guides and articles you may have missed.

Free for subscribers!
Scan the code or visit latimes.com/plants-newsletter to sign up.

HIGH SCHOOL FOOTBALL

He traded his Vans for football cleats



Eric Sondheimer

AFTER DISCOVERING football, Ryner Swanson has become a star tight end, but the 6-foot-4, 240-pound player always finds time to head to the waves and surf.

BY ERIC SONDHEIMER

At 6 feet 4 and 240 pounds, 17-year-old Ryner Swanson of Laguna Beach High has to be the biggest, nicest, most intriguing surfer dude in Orange County.

"You've never met a nicer, sweeter kid. He may well believe in Santa Claus," his football coach, John Shanahan, said.

"Nah, my parents told me a couple weeks ago," Swanson said.

A tight end and defensive end who has blond hair, broad shoulders and carries a bright green surfboard when he heads to the beach, Swanson is well on his way to challenging Rob Gronkowski as a player and entertainer.

First, there's the story of how he became a football player. It was the fall of 2020. There was no football because of COVID-19. He was a 14-year-old freshman hanging out in his backyard hot tub with a friend who kept trying to convince him to come out to football practice.

"Dude, I don't know. I kind of like basketball," Swanson told him. "I'm kind of tall."

"Well, we get team meals," his friend said. "Wow, I'm coming."

So began Swanson's football career motivated by food. He showed up to the first practice wearing red Vans, not cleats. An assistant coach asked, "Ryner, what position do you play?"

"Any position you want." The coach replied, "Ryner, it's going to be the best decision you've made in your life."

"And it has," Swanson said on a cloudless, picturesque afternoon with the ocean visible from the Laguna Beach football office.

As a junior, Swanson caught 83 passes for 952 yards and 12 touchdowns. He wears size 13 shoes, runs 40 yards in 4.7 seconds and has "growth potential" off the charts because he didn't start playing tackle football until 2021. He committed to Brigham Young in June.

Then there's his personality. It starts with surfing, which he first tried when he

See **Football**, page A4

HIGH SCHOOL FOOTBALL

Edison football team cancels Maui trip due to wildfires

BY ERIC SONDHEIMER

Huntington Beach Edison High has informed parents of football players that a scheduled nine-day trip to Maui to play two football games has been canceled because of wind-whipped wildfires that have forced evacuations and burned down businesses in historic Lahaina Town, athletic director Rich Boyce confirmed Wednesday.

Eighty players were scheduled to leave Thursday and play Saturday against Wailuku Baldwin and the following Friday against Lahainalulu.

A hotel to be used by Edison players is in the fire zone. There's also uncertainty about flights to Maui.

Now Boyce will scramble to see if he can find replacement games. The team has been practicing for two weeks in preparation for opening the season in Maui.

"Our hearts go out to the people of Maui," Boyce said. "Football at Edison will go on. We'll find games."

Players were "in shock" when informed about the wildfires, Boyce said.

Eric Sondheimer is a reporter for the Los Angeles Times.



FIRE AND smoke from wildfires near Lahaina, Hawaii, fill the sky on Tuesday.

Zeke Kalua | County of Maui via Associated Press

EXPERIENCE Sawdust Art Festival

OPEN DAILY THRU SEPTEMBER 3RD

- ART**
Shop handcrafted art by 168 local artists in a variety of artistic media, including glass, jewelry, painting, textiles, ceramics and mixed media.
- NATURE**
Held outdoors in a eucalyptus grove in the heart of Laguna Canyon, the festival features a handcrafted artisan village, with free art classes and exciting demonstrations.
- MUSIC**
Sawdust offers live music and entertainment daily on three stages, featuring local musicians and bands.

FREE ART CLASSES

- ART SPOT**
Featuring art for the little ones! Crafts, painting, mixed media and more, for ages 6 and under.
- CERAMIC CENTER**
Guests of all ages are welcome to hop on the pottery wheel for a one-on-one instruction. Greenware is free to take home!
- STUDIO ONE**
Classes for ages 7 to adult, in painting, mixed media, printmaking and more! Many classes are taught by professional Sawdust artists.

935 Laguna Canyon Road
Laguna Beach, CA 92651

949.494.3030
SAWDUSTARTFESTIVAL.ORG

MURALS

Continued from page A1

white paint.

“They’re super iconic to Costa Mesa’s cultural identity,” he said Tuesday, wondering whether a leasing agent for the building may have been readying the building for a sale. “There was no consideration to historical relevance or the fact that the murals were touchstones that immediately identified the city of Costa Mesa.

“[El Mac] is not just a regular artist, he’s a global artist — I don’t even know that he knows his mural has been painted out.”

An email sent to MacGregor through his website requesting comment was not answered. An employee at the retail store, who asked not to be named, confirmed Wednesday RVCA had recently been acquired and the murals painted over earlier this summer. A manager for the store could not be reached for comment by deadline.

Australian surf wear company Billabong acquired the Costa Mesa clothing company in 2010 for a reported \$30 million. Eight years later Billabong, along with Huntington Beach-based apparel company Quiksilver, was purchased by Boardriders, a subsidiary of asset management company Oaktree Capital.

Industry reports indicate that Boardriders was in the process of being acquired by New York-based Authentic Brands Group, whose subsidiaries include Vol-



Courtesy of the city of Cost Mesa

AN UNTITLED MURAL, created in 2009 by Los Angeles artists El Mac and RETNA, was recently painted over at the RVCA headquarters.

com, Reebok, Forever 21 and Juicy Couture, in a deal that is to be finalized later this month. Costa Mesa spokesman Tony

Dodero said in an email Thursday the city has little control over art created for private businesses. “We recognize that murals play



Sara Cardine

A PAINTED OVER wall by the entrance of the RVCA headquarters in formerly contained a mural often used to promote the city’s art scene.

an integral part in making us the City of the Arts,” he wrote. “However, the city was not directly involved with these murals on private property.”

As part of the Arts Master Plan process, city officials worked with consultant Arts Orange County to create an “Art in Public Places” report designed to recommend policies and procedures related to acquiring and displaying such pieces.

The document also makes a distinction between murals placed on publicly owned land and those commissioned by private property owners, confirming Dodero’s assertion the city doesn’t have much control over the design and content of the artworks.

“While it may be tempting for a municipality to regulate the de-

sign and content of murals on private property, First Amendment rights of the property owner limit the oversight of mural approval processes to regulations such as the mural lifespan, placement, size, materials and methods, and process of permitting,” it reads.

DeWine questioned whether Costa Mesa has earned the right to call itself a City of the Arts.

“It hasn’t truly demonstrated its commitment to its arts, its artifacts and the overall well-being of its artists,” he said. “In order for artists to put their faith into the city, we need to see their commitment. Otherwise, anything can happen.”

sara.cardine@latimes.com
Twitter: @SaraCardine

NONPROFIT

Continued from page A1

ferred internships at financial firm TSG Wealth Management.

About 80 students were involved in the summer program this year, as a partnership with the Los Angeles County Department of Parks and Recreation proved beneficial in expanding it. Jin-Ngo said that Youth Investors Corp. has helped more than 1,000 youth learn about financial literacy since its inception.

“Now we’re also working with the schools in California,” Jin-Ngo said, adding that the program will start later this month. “It’s going

to be a much more intensive process throughout the school year ... Our mission is really to rebuild the American Dream. We have so many bright, talented and really motivated students throughout California who simply don’t have the resources to understand what could be on the horizon, and what to even do in the next step.”

He said the nonprofit has a new three-prong model that continues to focus on education but also funding opportunities and pairing the kids with internships or jobs at local financial institutions.

Ava Schreiber, an incoming senior at Mater Dei High, serves as the Youth

Investors Corp. Orange County regional director and taught in the program this summer.

“Teaching in this program has helped me learn more as well,” she said. “We taught from middle school kids all the way to people in their 20s. I think [financial literacy] is useful for kids in any age, any grade.”

Jin-Ngo has continued to learn more about the financial world. Earlier this summer, he had an internship that allowed him to work at the House Committee on Ways and Means in Washington, D.C.

“I learned a lot about tax rebates, the tax code and how useful it is for the students here at Youth In-

vestors Corp.,” he said. “I brought back so much information. There’s so much money that’s left on the table for so many families who don’t know how to navigate the tax code in America ... I’ve included a whole new module now in our program that specifically discusses how to file these tax rebates for low-income families.”

Wednesday night’s ceremony featured remarks from Huntington Beach Mayor Pro Tem Gracey Van Der Mark, TSG Wealth Management Partner Allen Schreiber and state Assemblywoman Diane Dixon.

matthew.szabo@latimes.com
Twitter: @mjszabo



Courtesy of Youth Investors Corp.

YOUTH INVESTORS Corp. founder Dylan Jin-Ngo and Huntington Beach Mayor Pro Tem Gracey Van Der Mark flank Sherlyn Castillo, 19, of Huntington Beach on Wednesday at Huntington Beach Central Library.

Los Angeles Times
FOOD BOWL

Presented by
CITY NATIONAL BANK
AN RBC COMPANY

A monthlong food festival celebrating L.A.’s diverse and dynamic culinary scene.

Taste your way through the best of L.A. with a month of unique culinary experiences: The 7th annual L.A. Times Food Bowl, presented by City National Bank, returns this September!

The Times has curated a full month of can’t-miss events, celebrating L.A.’s world-class food scene with the legendary **Gold Award**, Times food critic Bill Addison’s **Restaurant of the Year** and **Night Market**, a weekend food festival at Paramount Pictures Studios.

Most events sell out, so don’t wait!
Scan the code or visit lafoodbowl.com to get tickets and browse the schedule.

PRESENTING PARTNER
CITY NATIONAL BANK
AN RBC COMPANY

MAJOR SPONSORS
SINGAPORE AIRLINES
BEEF 'N BERRY
STEEL ARTIST

EVENT SPONSORS
AGUA PANNA
S.PELLEGRINO
tajin

BEVERAGE SPONSOR
Don Julio

CHARITY PARTNER
FOOD BANK

SCR Theatre Conservatory presents the Summer Players in

Into the Woods
FINAL WEEKEND

Music and lyrics by
Stephen Sondheim

Book by
James Lapine

Originally directed on Broadway by
James Lapine

Orchestrations by
Jonathan Tunick

Music direction by **Erin McNally** Directed by **Hisa Takakuwa**

NOW-AUG. 13
on the Julianne Argyros Stage

After all the dreams come true in this Tony Award-winning musical, Cinderella, Little Red Riding Hood, Jack (of beanstalk fame) and Rapunzel return to the woods for a reality check. Journey with the Summer Players into a fantastical world where traditional fairytales take on fractured new lives and teach important new lessons.

SCR’s Summer Players are dedicated actors ranging from 10 to 20 years old, who audition for their roles after at least one year in the Theatre Conservatory.

Recommended for ages 8 and up.

BUY NOW
(714) 708-5555 • SCR.org

NOW ENROLLING | **ACTING CLASSES FOR KIDS & TEENS** | **FALL SESSION Sept. 5–Nov. 11, 2023**
more info online

South Coast Repertory
Orange County’s Tony Award-winning Theatre

