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Introducing Ava Community Energy

By Hector Aguiniga

This month, Stockton and Lathrop residents and businesses are transitioning to clean electricity at lower rates through Ava Community Energy. Many of you have questions about this change. As a Stockton native and Ava Community Energy's Outreach Coordinator for San Joaquin County, I'd like to address the most common concerns I'm hearing from my neighbors and fellow community members.

What is Ava Community Energy and why is it in Stockton and Lathrop? Ava Community Energy is a not-for-profit public agency that generates electricity at rates 5% lower than PG&E. We've been serving communities in Alameda County since 2018 and Tracy since 2021. In 2022, the Stockton City Council voted unanimously to join Ava, followed by Lathrop in 2023. We're dif-

ferent from PG&E in a few ways, but one key difference is that we don't have shareholders expecting profits. As a public agency, we reinvest revenue back into the communities we serve through lower rates, local programs, and clean energy projects.

Why was I automatically enrolled? Can I opt out?

State law (AB 117) says that community choice energy providers like Ava become the default option for their communities. That means that, by law, we must enroll everyone through automatic enrollment. We know this process can feel disconcerting. However, you have the choice to opt out and return to PG&E service at any time. There is no fee to opt out through April 2026 for Stockton and Lathrop customers. You can opt out by visiting AvaEnergy.org/opt-out or calling

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Hector Aguiniga: San Joaquin County Outreach Coordinator at Ava Community Energy

Presentando Ava Community Energy

Por Hector Aguiniga: *Coordinador de Alcance Comunitario del Condado de San Joaquín en Ava Community Energy*

Este mes, los residentes y negocios de Stockton y Lathrop están haciendo la transición a electricidad limpia a tarifas más bajas gracias a Ava Community Energy. Muchos de ustedes tienen preguntas sobre este cambio. Como nativo de Stockton y Coordinador de Alcance Comunitario de Ava Community Energy para el Condado de San Joaquín, me gustaría abordar las inquietudes más comunes que estoy escuchando de mis vecinos y miembros de la comunidad. ¿Qué es Ava Community Energy y por qué está en Stockton y Lathrop?

Ava Community Energy es una agencia pública sin fines de lucro que genera electricidad a tarifas 5% más bajas que PG&E. Hemos estado sirviendo a comunidades en el Condado de Alameda desde 2018 y a Tracy desde 2021. En 2022, el Concejo Municipal de Stockton votó unánimemente para unirse a Ava, seguido por Lathrop en 2023. Somos diferentes que PG&E en varias formas, pero una diferencia clave es que no tenemos accionistas que esperen ganancias. Como agencia pública, reinvertimos los ingresos en las comunidades que servimos a través de tarifas más bajas, programas locales y proyectos de energía limpia.

¿Por qué fui inscrito automáticamente?

¿Puedo optar por no participar? La ley estatal (AB 117) establece que los proveedores de energía de elección comunitaria como Ava se convierten en

la opción predeterminada para sus comunidades. Esto significa que, por ley, debemos inscribir a todos a través de una inscripción automática. Entendemos que este proceso puede resultar desconcertante. Sin embargo, usted tiene la opción de darse de baja y volver al servicio de PG&E en cualquier momento. No hay cargos darse de baja hasta abril de 2026 para los clientes de Stockton y Lathrop. Puede optar por no participar visitando AvaEnergy.org/opt-out o llamando al Servicio al Cliente de Ava al 833-699-2668.

¿Recibiré una factura separada?

No. Continuará recibiendo solo una factura de PG&E. La única diferencia es que los cargos de generación de Ava (que son 5% más bajos) reemplazarán los cargos de generación de PG&E. De hecho, puede ver lo que PG&E le habría cobrado mirando su Crédito de Generación en la factura. PG&E continuará entregando su electricidad, manteniendo las líneas eléctricas, manejando la facturación y respondiendo a los cortes de energía.

¿Cuánto ahorraré?

El hogar promedio en Stockton y Lathrop ahorrará aproximadamente \$5 al mes con nuestro servicio Bright Choice, que es automáticamente 5% más bajo que las tarifas de generación de PG&E. Desde 2018, Bright Choice ha ahorrado a nuestros clientes más de \$102 millones en comparación con lo que habrían pagado con PG&E.

¿Perderé mis beneficios de CARE, FERA o Medical Baseline?

Absolutamente no. Estos programas

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Preparación financiera para futuras emergencias: desarrollo de resiliencia y preparación

Patrocinado por JPMorganChase

En un mundo impredecible, las emergencias financieras pueden surgir en cualquier momento, ya sea debido a gastos médicos inesperados, pérdida del empleo o desastres naturales. Los incendios forestales del sur de California han subrayado la importancia de estar financieramente preparados para estos eventos imprevistos. La creación de resiliencia financiera no se trata solo de tener una red de seguridad; se trata de cultivar hábitos y estrategias que ayuden a garantizar la estabilidad y la tranquilidad ante la incertidumbre.

Estos son algunos consejos prácticos para ayudarle a prepararse financieramente para futuras emergencias, lo que le permite afrontar los desafíos de la vida con confianza:

Crear un Fondo de Emergencia: Comience ahorrando dinero restante cada mes, acumulando gradualmente para cubrir los gastos de manutención de tres a seis meses. Puede establecer transferencias automáticas desde su cuenta de cheques a su cuenta de ahorros para garantizar contribuciones constantes sin tener que pensar en ello. Al almacenar su fondo

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SER ECOLÓGICO DEBERÍA SER ACCESIBLE



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Emergencias

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de emergencia en una cuenta de ahorros de alto rendimiento o en una cuenta de mercado monetario, puede ganar intereses y, a la vez, seguir siendo fácilmente accesible.

Presupuesto inteligente: utilice aplicaciones u hojas de cálculo de presupuestos para supervisar sus gastos e identificar áreas en las que pueda reducir potencialmente. Asegúrese también de priorizar las necesidades sobre los deseos centrándose en los gastos esenciales y reducir los gastos discrecionales para ayudar a liberar más dinero para ahorrar. Revise su presupuesto periódicamente para adaptarse a los cambios en los ingresos o gastos y asegurarse de estar bien encaminado.

Administre la deuda de manera efectiva: Concéntrese en liquidar deudas con intereses altos, como saldos de tarjetas de crédito, y explore opciones para consolidar o refinanciar préstamos con tasas de interés más bajas para ahorrar dinero y simplificar los pagos. Tenga cuidado de asumir nuevas deudas, especialmente para compras no esenciales, para mantener la flexibilidad financiera.

Proteja sus activos: Asegúrese de tener un seguro de salud, de vivienda, de automóvil y de vida adecuado para protegerse contra gastos inesperados y mantener documentos financieros importantes, como testamentos y pólizas de seguro, en un lugar seguro.

Plan a largo plazo: Contribuya regularmente a cuentas para la jubilación, como un plan 401(k) o una cuenta IRA, para ayudar a asegurar tu futuro financiero. Consulta con un asesor de J.P. Morgan para desarrollar un plan financiero integral adaptado a tus necesidades. Ajustarse a un presupuesto lleva tiempo, ya que se trata de encontrar el equilibrio adecuado entre gastos y ahorros. Al implementar estas sugerencias, puede ayudar a construir una base sólida para soportar futuras emergencias y mejorar su seguridad financiera. Revisar regularmente su presupuesto con respecto a sus gastos reales le permite refinar y optimizar su estrategia financiera.

Para obtener más información, visite chase.com/es/personal/financial-goals/budget

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Ava

continued from Front Page

Ava Customer Support at 833-699-2668.

Will I get a separate bill?

No. You'll continue to receive just one bill from PG&E. The only difference is that Ava's generation charges (which are 5% lower) will replace PG&E's generation charges. In fact, you can see what PG&E would have charged you by looking at their Generation Credit on the bill. PG&E will continue to deliver your electricity, maintain power lines, handle billing, and respond to outages.

How much will I save?

The average household in Stockton and Lathrop will save about \$5 per month with our Bright Choice service, which is automatically 5% lower than PG&E's generation rates. Since 2018, Bright Choice has saved our customers more than \$102 million compared to

what they would have paid with PG&E.

Will I lose my CARE, FERA, or Medical Baseline benefits?

Absolutely not. These discount programs continue exactly as before, plus you'll receive the additional 5% Ava discount.

What if I have solar? Will this benefit me?

If you have solar panels, your transition to Ava service will maintain many familiar aspects of your current setup while offering new options. When you're enrolled with Ava, you'll sell your surplus generation to Ava instead of PG&E, and you'll purchase electricity from Ava instead of PG&E when needed. A key difference with Ava is the choice between monthly or annual true-ups for generation charges.

More information for solar customers is available at AvaEnergy.org/welcome-solar.

Who governs Ava?

Ava is governed by a Board of Directors composed of elected officials from each city and county we serve, including Mayor Fugazi from Stockton and City Councilmember Minnie Diallo from Lathrop. Board members receive a \$128 stipend per monthly meeting—there is no other compensation. All Ava board meetings are open to the public. You're welcome to attend in person or online and participate in decisions about your electricity service.

Is Ava the same as those door-to-door energy salespeople?

No. Ava is a public agency created by local governments, not a private company. We never go door-to-door, we don't lock you into contracts, and we have a proven track record of consistent savings

since 2018. If someone comes to your door claiming to represent Ava, please report it to us and/or local authorities immediately.

How are you investing in our community?

Ava sponsors local community events and local sports teams, including the Stockton Ports and Stockton Cargo. We also offer \$2,500 sponsorships three times per year to local community-based organizations and develop local energy programs to help our customers save money and improve their quality of life.

How can I learn more?

Visit AvaEnergy.org/welcome for more information. As your local representative, I'll also be hosting webinars and in-person office hours this summer. Check the calendar at AvaEnergy.org/events or look for our booth at community events throughout Stockton and Lathrop!

Energy

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de descuento continúan exactamente como antes, y además recibirá el descuento adicional del 5% de Ava.

¿Qué pasa si tengo paneles solares?

¿Me beneficiará esto?

Si tiene paneles solares, su transición al servicio de Ava mantendrá gran parte de su configuración actual, y ofrecerá nuevas opciones. Con Ava, venderá su excedente de generación a Ava en lugar de a PG&E, y comprará electricidad de Ava en lugar de PG&E cuando la necesite. Una diferencia clave con Ava es la opción entre true-ups mensuales o anu-

ales para los cargos de generación. Más información para clientes solares está disponible en AvaEnergy.org/welcome-solar.

¿Quién gobierna Ava?

Ava está gobernada por una Junta Directiva compuesta por funcionarios electos de cada ciudad y condado que servimos, incluyendo a la Alcaldesa Fugazi de Stockton y la Concejal Municipal Minnie Diallo de Lathrop. Los miembros de la Junta reciben un estipendio de \$128 por reunión mensual—no hay otra compensación. Todas las reuniones de la junta de Ava están abiertas al público. Le

invitamos a asistir en persona o en línea y participar en las decisiones sobre su servicio de electricidad.

¿Ava es lo mismo que las compañías que venden energía puerta a puerta?

No. Ava es una agencia pública creada por gobiernos locales, no una empresa privada. Nunca vamos de puerta en puerta, no lo atamos a ningún contrato y tenemos un historial comprobado de ahorros constantes para nuestros clientes desde 2018. Si alguien viene a su puerta diciendo que representa a Ava, por favor repórtelo de inmediato con nosotros y/o a las autoridades locales.

¿Cómo están invirtiendo en nuestra comunidad?

Ava patrocina eventos comunitarios locales y equipos deportivos locales, incluyendo los Stockton Ports y Stockton Cargo. También ofrecemos patrocinios de \$2,500 tres veces al año a organizaciones comunitarias locales y desarrollamos programas locales de energía para ayudar a nuestros clientes a ahorrar dinero y mejorar su calidad de vida.

¿Cómo puedo aprender más?

Visite AvaEnergy.org/welcome para más información. Como su representante local, también estaré organizando seminarios web y horarios de oficina en persona este verano. Visite AvaEnergy.org/events o busque nuestro puesto en eventos comunitarios en todo Stockton y Lathrop.

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Congress Considers \$800 Billion Medicaid Cut, Putting Healthcare In Jeopardy for Millions of Working Families

By Sunita Sohrabji

11 civil rights organizations March 13 jointly released a report on the impact of a proposed \$800 billion cut to Medicaid, which would put at risk health care coverage for 70 million Americans.

The House passed its budget proposal Feb. 25, calling for an overall \$2 trillion in spending cuts. The proposal also allows for \$4.5 trillion in spending for tax cuts — which advocates say benefit only the very wealthy — and also raises the debt ceiling by \$4.5 trillion. The Senate is expected to put through its proposal in April. After that, both the House and Senate will go through a budget reconciliation process to agree on proposed cuts and spending.

The proposed cuts would disproportionately impact Latino and Black families, noted the report. More than 20 million Latinos, 13 million Black people, and 3.5 million Asian Americans rely on Medicaid. 31 million children are also covered by Medicaid, through the Children's Health Insurance Program. More than half of Latino kids are covered by the program, and 60% of Black children are also enrolled. 60% of Native American children are enrolled in CHIP, and almost half of Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander children are also enrolled in the program.

In California, Medicaid is known as MediCal, and covers all state residents,

including undocumented people. Nationwide, 1 out of 5 people, and 1 out of every 3 children are covered by Medicaid. 62% of adults on Medicaid are working full or part-time jobs, according to data from the California Health Care Foundation.

On average, about 68% of state spending on Medicaid comes from the federal government, reports KFF. Feed the Rich, Starve the Poor

“These are the worst cuts to Medicaid in the history of the program,” said Stan Dorn, director of the Health Policy Project at UnidosUS. “These huge budget cuts pay for tax breaks that primarily benefit the wealthy. We’re cutting health care services and food for working class people so that billionaires can buy more yachts and jewelry,” he said in an interview with Ethnic Media Services.

“We know that when you take health care away from children, the effects last a lifetime. Health problems are more likely in adulthood. People are less able to support themselves, more likely to need to turn to public assistance,” said Dorn. “Researchers tell us that every dollar invested in children’s health results in a \$4 savings to taxpayers down the line. So even if you care nothing about human beings and care only about gold dollars and cents, you don’t want to make these cuts,” he stated.

Dorn noted that \$230 billion in cuts are also being proposed for the Supple-

mental Nutrition Assistance Program — SNAP — reducing food benefits for almost 42 million people. ‘Kicking Elderly Out of Nursing Homes’

“Budgets are a reflection of our values,” said Rep. Grace Meng, chair of the Congressional Asian Pacific American Caucus — CAPAC — at a press conference March 13 morning. “Republicans have said with their budget proposal that they prioritize billionaires over the working class. It is beyond shameful,” said the congresswoman from New York, noting that millions of people will lose healthcare coverage.

Darren Soto, D-Florida and chair of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus, noted that millions of older adults will lose financial support to be able to live in nursing homes. Derrick Johnson, president and CEO of the NAACP, echoed Soto’s remarks. “Our vulnerable elderly people should not be kicked out of nursing homes so that billionaires get bigger tax breaks,” he stated.

People who lose their Medicaid coverage will not be able to easily transition to coverage under the Affordable Care Act, also known as Obamacare, noted Anthony Wright, executive director of Families USA. ACA coverage is expensive — about \$10-\$12,000 annually for a family. “These are low-income, working families. The idea that they can afford private health coverage is not fea-

sible,” he said.

Community Health Clinics May Shut Down

Community Health Clinics can provide a short-term safety net to people who lose Medicaid coverage: CHCs accept people without health insurance. “However, if big Medicaid cuts go through, that is going to devastate community health centers because they rely on Medicaid to furnish a huge part of their revenue,” said Dorn, noting that if revenue goes down, CHCs will be forced to offer fewer services or shut down entirely.

“We know that women without insurance who have breast cancer developing and they don’t know it are less likely to go to the doctor. They’re not going to be screened. That means their cancer isn’t picked up until it is advanced and harder to treat. And we know that means that people are more likely to die,” said Dorn.

‘Health Care is a Human Right’

Rural hospitals and CHCs are likely to take a big hit from Medicaid cuts, said Maya Wiley, president and CEO of the National Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights. Many will simply close down, which means that the community at large in those areas will have no place to go, she said.

“Health care is a civil and human right. We’re talking about real people and real lives,” said Wiley.

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Sophie Cruz: A Young Activist Making a Difference

By Julia Barnes

Celebrated on April 30th, El Día del Niño or “Children’s Day” is a day that is dedicated to recognizing and celebrating children throughout Mexico and other Latin countries. Children are celebrated and cherished as the next generation that will carry on the heritage and traditions of the Latino culture. They will pick up the baton and champion the challenges of their generation.

Every so often, one encounters a gifted child who is wise beyond their years, an amazing visionary that not only picks up the baton, but leads the way forward. At the age of five years old, Sophie Cruz, was one of the youngest activists in the world, who picked up that baton and became a symbol of hope, courage and activism.

Born to undocumented Mexican immigrants in the U.S., Sophie’s story is a powerful testament to the impact that even the youngest voices can have on social change.

Her parents, Raul and Zoyla Cruz, crossed the U.S. border from Oaxaca, Mexico, seeking a better life for their family. Living with the constant fear of deportation, Sophie grew up in silence alongside many other undocumented families in America.

Despite these challenges, her parents instilled in her a sense of resilience and the importance of standing up for what is right. This foundation would become the cornerstone of her future endeavors. From a very young age, Sophie became an enthusiastic advocate for the rights of immigrant families, winning the hearts of many with her courage and determination.

In September 2015, when Sophie Cruz was five years old, Pope Francis visited Washington, D.C., advocating for undocumented immigrants. On that day as the Pope’s car passed by, Sophie ran into the street to greet him but was stopped by security. However, the Pope noticed her and asked to meet her. He embraced her and received the note that she had brought which detailed how worried she was about her parents being deported and she begged the Pope for help.

It is hard to believe that her moving words came from someone so young, but they spoke with the clear-sightedness of youth, when she wrote the letter about her parents’ legal status to Pope Francis that stated,

“Pope Francis. I want to tell you that my heart is sad. I am scared they will take them away from me. Don’t forget about us, the children, or about those who suffer because they’re not with their parents because of war, because of violence, because of hunger.”

Sophie made an such impression that the following day, Pope Francis addressed the issue of immigration at a joint meeting of the United States Congress, calling for greater compassion and openness toward immigrants and refugees.

The next year, Sophie was invited to speak at the Washington Women’s March. At six years of age, she bravely spoke in front of tens of thousands of people, delivering her speech in English and Spanish, she began this important moment by saying:

“We are here together, making a chain of love to protect our families. Let us fight with love, faith, and courage so that our families will not be destroyed.” Sophie added, “I also want to tell the children not to be afraid, because we are not alone.

Sophie added, “I also want to tell the children not to be afraid, because we are not alone. There are still many people that have their hearts filled with love. Let’s keep together and fight for the rights. God is with us.”

This incredible young child continues to inspire people around the world. As she advocates for justice and educates others about immigration. She has visited the White House, sat in Supreme Court hearings, campaigned for people to vote, and continues to encourage us all to make a difference.



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Caucus Hispano del Congreso insta al IRS a rechazar uso de datos con fines migratorios

Por María Ortiz

Los 43 miembros del Caucus Hispano del Congreso (CHC) enviaron el martes una carta al secretario del Tesoro, Scott Bessent, y a la comisionada interina del IRS, Melanie Krause, expresando su fuerte oposición a cualquier acuerdo que permita al IRS compartir información de los contribuyentes con el Departamento de Seguridad Nacional (DHS) o el Servicio de Inmigración y Control de Aduanas (ICE) para fines de aplicación de la ley de inmigración. La carta de CHC advierte que tal medida violaría las protecciones de privacidad y “socavaría la integridad de nuestro sistema tributario, pondría en peligro a las comunidades vulnerables y dañaría la economía estadounidense en general”.

“El IRS no tiene autoridad legal para reutilizar sus datos para la aplicación de la ley de inmigración, y cualquier esfuerzo para hacerlo constituiría una gran extralimitación de la misión de la

agencia y una clara violación de la ley federal”, escribieron los miembros del Caucus Hispano del Congreso.

La carta también enfatiza las contribuciones económicas de los inmigrantes indocumentados y los contribuyentes de ITIN, que pagan miles de millones en impuestos anualmente.

“Si los contribuyentes temen que la presentación de una declaración pueda conducir a la aplicación de la ley de inmigración, es posible que se desanimen a cumplir, lo que reduce los ingresos fiscales generales y perjudica la administración tributaria para todos los estadounidenses”, señalaron los miembros.

Al hacer un llamado al IRS y al Departamento del Tesoro para que respeten la ley federal, el CHC los instó a “reafirmar y honrar el deber legal del IRS de proteger la confidencialidad de los contribuyentes y rechazar cualquier intento de usar la información tributaria para la aplicación de la ley de inmigración”.

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Cesar Chavez mentor Fred Ross' organizing legacy

A new documentary about Cesar Chavez's mentor offers lessons for activists in dark times

By Gabriel Thompson

The new documentary "American Agitators" looks at the life and legacy of Fred Ross Sr., one of the most influential community and labor organizers of the 20th century. Ross, who died in 1992, was active during some of the most sweeping and consequential periods of California history, from the Dust Bowl migration to the incarceration of Japanese Americans during World War II, before mentoring a generation of Mexican American leaders that included Cesar Chavez and Dolores Huerta.

Capital & Main recently spoke with award-winning director Ray Telles about the making of the film and what lessons Ross' life can offer budding organizers today. The film premieres in San Jose, California, on March 16 at the Cinequest Film & Creativity Festival.

This interview has been edited for brevity and clarity.

Capital & Main: Let's start with your own story. How did you first come to learn about Ross?

Ray Telles: In the 1960s my dad was a union electrician in Los Angeles and had done some wiring at farm-worker camps. He first introduced me to the story of the United Farm Workers and Cesar Chavez. Later, I worked at KQED [San Francisco's public radio station] from the early '80s to 1992 or so and covered agriculture and labor stories up and down the state. That

eventually led me to work on "The Fight in the Fields" with Rick Tejada-Flores. I knew Ross as the person who had trained Chavez and Dolores Huerta. But it was over the years talking to his son, Fred Ross Jr., that I really learned more about him and had a better understanding of the work he did and the impact he had.

Why isn't Ross better known?

He was a behind-the-scenes kind of guy. In the film, people talk about how he was always in the back of the room, a strategist. He never wanted to be in the limelight. He didn't want the attention; he didn't make speeches. He was just doing the work.

What are some of the key take-aways young organizers can learn from Ross?

First, people have to come together to make change. Fred was able to work with many different people from many different backgrounds. The whole concept of building coalitions, of people working together, is more important now than ever. But the lesson that resonates most for me at this time is that we have to keep moving forward. If we encounter an obstacle, we go around it, we go over it — we just keep going and never give up.

Did anything surprise you during the making of the documentary?

My big surprise was how much influence he had over so many people. He trained far more people that I really



Fred Ross and Dolores Huerta

appreciated.

As an independent producer, I normally raise my own money. For this, Fred Jr. [Fred Ross' son] and the folks he knows were able to raise a huge amount of money in a very short time — from labor unions, foundations, individuals, organizations. It was astonishing. So many people attributed their success to Ross Sr. and wanted to help share his story.

What challenges did you have to overcome to make "American Agitators"?

Fred Jr. and I discussed the idea of a film about his dad for 30 years. Fred Jr. was also a great organizer who had tremendous love for his father and enthusiasm for sharing his legacy. Finally, in 2021, we said, "Let's move on it.

We need to do it now." In early 2022 we were going full speed ahead, and a couple months later, Fred Jr. was diagnosed with pancreatic cancer. We had weekly meetings right up to the day he died. [Fred Jr. passed away in November 2022].

Can you talk about how you decided to structure the documentary, which includes a history of Ross' life and work and then shifts to documenting contemporary organizing campaigns?

The question was, what is this film about? In conversations with Fred Jr. over the years, we decided that it was the story of his dad but also the lessons. What work was going on now that reflects the work that Ross did? We wanted to follow solid movements with track records, so we looked at groups like the Fight for \$15 [a movement started by fast-food workers seeking to unionize and raise the minimum wage] and the Culinary Workers Union in Las Vegas. I wanted to combine the old with the new, the biographical with a bigger picture about the story of organizing.

For Ross, organizing was everything. Do you have hopes of using this film as an organizing or educational tool?

The long life of this film is in the schools and as an organizing tool with labor unions. We're going to cut it down to about 40 minutes, so that

See **ROSS** Page 10

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Why Stockton Needs to Invest in the Next Generation of Latino Leaders

An Interview with Phillip Hon, Executive Director of Unbound Stockton Community School, and Inés Ruiz Huston, Community Leader and Advocate

By Phillip Hon

Phillip Hon: Stockton is a city rich in diversity, with a vibrant Latino community that has played a key role in shaping its identity. Yet, for many Latino families, there are still significant barriers in education—whether it’s outdated teaching models, lack of resources, or systemic inequities. Inés, from your experience advocating for Latino students, why do you think Stockton needs to invest more in the next generation of Latino leaders?

Inés Ruiz Huston: Investing in the next generation of Latino leaders is crucial for the future of Stockton. The Latino community is growing, and our young people represent the future workforce, educators, and community leaders of this city. However, they often face barriers that limit their potential—disconnected curricula, limited resources, and lack of mentorship. By investing in their education and empowering them with the tools they need to succeed, we’re not just improving their individual futures—we’re investing in the long-term success and prosperity of the entire city.

Phillip Hon: I couldn’t agree more. As someone who grew up in Stockton, I’ve seen firsthand how the education

system can either lift up or hold back a student. And for many Latino students, the opportunities just haven’t been there. This is exactly why we started Unbound Stockton. Our mission is to provide a culturally affirming, academically rigorous education that connects students directly to real-world opportunities. We also want our future students to understand Stockton’s history, see their families’ contributions reflected in it, and feel proud of where they come from. Can you speak more about why it’s so important for Latino students to have an education that’s both relevant and connected to their community?

Inés Ruiz Huston: When Latino students see themselves reflected in their education, they are more likely to engage and succeed. The traditional one-size-fits-all approach doesn’t always work for our community. Education must be relevant to students’ lives, experiences, and the challenges they face in their communities. For Latino students, it’s essential that they feel their culture is valued and that their education prepares them to address the issues that matter most to them—whether it’s social justice, economic opportunity, or community development. That’s why schools like Unbound Stockton are so

important. They are creating learning environments that center the needs and strengths of Latino students, giving them a sense of purpose and pride in their education.

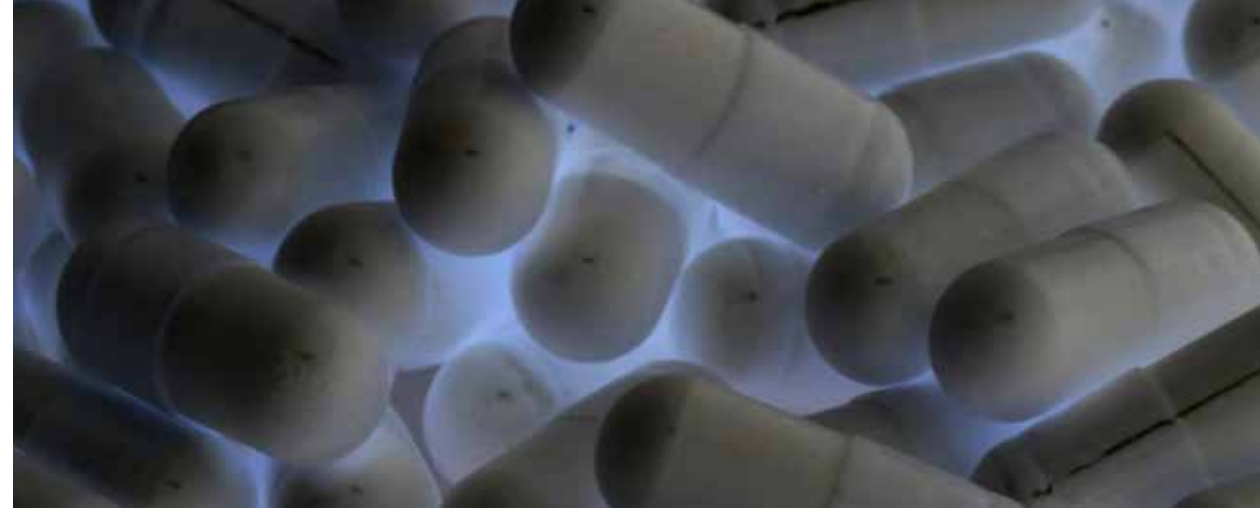
Phillip Hon: Exactly. At Unbound Stockton, we’ve taken a hands-on approach to education. Every Friday, students work on community projects that apply what they’re learning in math, science, and other subjects to real-world problems. We’ve seen how this type of learning ignites their passion and helps them realize the power of their education. For example, our coding program gives students the opportunity to build apps that address local challenges. In doing so, they not only gain technical skills but also experience the direct impact they can have on their community. By engaging in these projects, students don’t just learn skills—they also gain a deeper appreciation for their city’s past and the role they can play in shaping its future. What do you think the impact of this type of education can have on Latino students?

Inés Ruiz Huston: It’s transformative. When Latino students are empowered to solve real-world problems, it gives them a sense of agency and own-

ership over their futures. They start to see education as a tool for change, not just something they have to endure. And by focusing on projects that are tied to the community, students can see the direct connection between what they’re learning and how it can make a difference in the world around them. It also instills a sense of pride—not only in their academic abilities but in their heritage and the contributions their families have made to Stockton. For many Latino students, this approach instills a sense of pride, not only in their academic abilities but also in their role as future leaders who will shape their communities.

Phillip Hon: That’s why our school is committed to making sure it reflects and serves the Latino community in Stockton. We want to make the application and enrollment process accessible to Spanish-speaking families, create a curriculum that integrates cultural identity, and remove financial barriers so that every student can participate. For Latino families, it’s not enough to simply have access to a good education—we want them to feel welcomed, understood, and supported. Why do you think this is so critical?

See **LEADERS** Page 10



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Leaders

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Inés Ruiz Huston: Latino families need to feel that the schools they send their children to are not just providing an education but also embracing and celebrating their culture. When a school shows that it values Latino students and their communities, it builds trust and strengthens partnerships with families. That connection is essential, because without the support of families, it's much harder for students to succeed. We need schools to be places where Latino families feel seen and heard, where they know their culture is respected and integrated into the learning experience. When schools do that,

they lay the foundation for students to thrive.

Phillip Hon: At Unbound Stockton, we firmly believe that investing in the next generation of Latino leaders isn't just an investment in individual students—it's an investment in the entire city. As our Latino population grows, so too does the potential for Stockton to become a leader in innovation, social progress, and economic development. But that can only happen if we ensure that our Latino students have the tools, opportunities, and support they need to succeed. That's why we've built a school that honors their culture

and prepares them for leadership roles. What do you think is at stake if we fail to invest in Latino students?

Inés Ruiz Huston: If we don't invest in Latino students, we risk losing out on a generation of talented, capable young people who could help drive the change Stockton desperately needs. Without access to quality education, these students will continue to face the barriers that have held back so many before them. Stockton's future depends on these students—and we have a responsibility to ensure that they have every opportunity to succeed. By investing in their education, we're investing in the entire community's future, and that's why it's so critical that we do it now.

Phillip Hon: Unbound Stockton is

now enrolling grades 4-7 for the 2025-2026 school year, and we encourage all families in Stockton to consider joining our community. If you want your child to be part of a school that values culture, community, and opportunity, we invite you to apply.

Inés Ruiz Huston: Absolutely. The future of Stockton is in the hands of our young people, and it's up to all of us to ensure they have the support they need to lead with confidence. I encourage every family to take advantage of the opportunities that schools like Unbound Stockton offer. Together, we can shape a brighter future for our community.

Visit www.unboundstockton.org to learn more and apply today.

Aviso de disponibilidad Periodo de comentarios Públicos de 30 días



El Consejo de Gobiernos de San Joaquín (SJCOC, por sus siglas en inglés), en su función como la Agencia Regional de Planificación de Transporte (RTPA, por sus siglas en inglés) y Organización Metropolitana de Planificación (MPO, por sus siglas en inglés) del condado de San Joaquín, se complace en anunciar la disponibilidad del borrador inicial del Informe de Evaluación de Necesidades de Tránsito no Satisfechas para el año Fiscal 2025-2026, el cual estará disponible para revisión y comentarios públicos. El informe puede consultarse en: Sitio web www.sjcog.org/UTN o en la oficina del SJCOC. El periodo de comentarios públicos comienza el 15 de abril de 2025 y finaliza el 15 de mayo de 2025. Los comentarios pueden enviarse a Joel G. Campos, Planificador Regional Principal, a el correo electrónico campos@sjcog.org o utn@sjcog.org. La Junta Directiva del SJCOC votará para una resolución sobre los hallazgos del informe el 26 de junio de 2025.

Ross

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teachers can use it in the classroom, and we will develop a curriculum with modules, so teachers can look at particular themes. And we want it to be used in communities and labor unions. That's where the value of this film is.

Ross organized during dark and challenging periods in American history, including the Great Depression and the incarceration of Japanese Americans. What sorts of insights can we learn from him that might have relevance to our current moment?

I teach at UC Berkeley. Last night I showed the film in a class called "Ethnicity and Race in Contemporary American Films." I was interested in

their reaction. Is this relevant to you guys these days? And the youngsters in there, who wanted to get involved in social change work, said it was really inspiring — that you don't just go out and demonstrate, you've got to follow up, you've got to do the work afterwards. Eliseo [Eliseo Medina, an influential labor organizer who was trained by Ross] said in the film that Ross taught people to organize step by step, and that you've got to have that one-to-one contact. You can't do it all just by texting or with social media. And that anybody can do it. People can see the film and say, "Oh, there are ways to do it — but it takes hard work."

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Trump's tariffs may hurt CA's budget

By Lynn La

With a state budget that's partially dependent on the income tax generated from stocks, Gov. Gavin Newsom's administration is not surprised that California's budget could take a hit from the tariffs imposed by President Donald Trump. Here's more from CalMatters Capitol reporter Alexei Koseff:

H.D. Palmer, the spokesperson for Newsom's Department of Finance, said the governor flagged all the way back in his January budget proposal that broad-based tariffs were the biggest potential risk to California's economic forecast.

"Now that they're in place, we'll incorporate what we believe to be their effect," Palmer said, though state officials

are still consulting with outside experts, such as the UCLA Anderson Forecast, as they wait to see whether the Trump administration sticks with the tariffs and how other countries respond.

The tumbling stock market could take a significant bite out of the state budget next year, because California receives a disproportionate amount of income tax revenue from capital gains earned by the wealthiest taxpayers. That's especially true with the steep valuation drops this week for major tech companies, many of which are headquartered in California.

The state, whose largest trading partner is China, is also worried about how the tariffs could weaken Califor-

nia's large manufacturing and agriculture sectors, as well as tourism and major ports in Los Angeles, Long Beach and Oakland.

Palmer said the Department of Finance will finalize its economic forecast by the end of the month as the governor develops a revised budget proposal for May. Finance officials are modeling different scenarios, some of which would require spending cuts, but Palmer declined to share what programs could face reductions if the economy turns south.

Palmer: "I don't want to get into that game. That can just kind of inflame concerns that at the end of the day might not be warranted."



EVOLUCIONA UNA TRADICIÓN: LAS QUINCEAÑERAS

Antes los quinceaños se trataban de presentar a las mujeres en sociedad, pero ahora, ellas ya no necesitan presentación

CALIFORNIA.- La prueba de la evolución de esta fascinante tradición quedó demostrada durante el lanzamiento de la nueva colección 'Selena', de la línea 'Morena y Esencial' de la empresa mexicana Ragazza Fashion, durante el icónico evento National Bridal Market.

Según Carolina Vázquez, CEO de Ragazza, "Ya no es el significado de que la mujer se presenta en sociedad, sino que estos vestidos ahora quieren decirle 'se lo que quieras ser', y 'estás lista para comerte el mundo'".

La también diseñadora y fundadora, agregó que ahora cada mujer dice "Aquí estoy, brillo", por lo que hacen que ese brillo interior se refleje en el exterior de sus majestuosos atuendos.

Fue la actriz y conductora mexicana Liza Echeverría, en su regreso a los escenarios, la encargada de presentar a su bella hija Isa Laporte, como la modelo principal de la colección. El vestido que usaba la hermosa joven impactó a la audiencia.

Vázquez dijo que desde hace 20 años empezaron a proponer


una moda disruptiva y de altísima calidad para las quinceañeras. Ahora muestran trajes bordados a mano, inspiración en la música mexicana, rebozos, flores y botones charros, tan únicos de México. "Cada pieza de la colección lleva consigo un pedacito de la tradición y del orgullo de ser realizado por manos mexicanas", enfatizó.

Ragazza abrió la invitación para todos aquellos que se quieran unir a sus distribuidores en Estados Uni-

dos. Vázquez dijo, "Además de ser muy rentable también es maravilloso porque éste es un negocio de ilusiones, uno nunca se cansa de ver este producto porque es muy colorido, y tiene una energía y una estética fabulosa".

La empresa también tiene distribuidores en México y América Latina. Lo que tendrían que hacer los interesados es enviar un correo electrónico a Luis Tejeda: ltejeda@corporativoandalucia.com Ragazzafashion.com.mx

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