

# Santa Barbara Happenings



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## City of Santa Barbara Hires New Planning and Land-Use Director



The Santa Barbara City Council approved the hire of Elias Isaacson for Planning and Land-Use Director. Isaacson previously led the Planning and Land-Use Department for the cities of Santa Fe and Espanola in New Mexico. He is credited with streamlining internal procedures and will be responsible for planning and development services, building and safety, and housing and human services in Santa Barbara. The Community Development Department now has a staff of 77 employees and an annual budget of \$16 million.

## Homelessness Needs a New Solution

With issues of homelessness still looming, Santa Barbara, along with many other local authorities, have been hearing pleas to defund the police and spend more money on social services.

Santa Barbara County employs 758 people in Social Services with a budget of \$191 million and 411 people in the drug, alcohol, and mental health department with a budget of \$148 million. Together, these total 1169 employees and \$339 million per year. The sheriff's department, in comparison, has 755 employees and a budget of \$176 million per year.

The issue of homelessness still remains and has not changed.

## California Private School Tuition Lower than Public School Student Costs

In California, the majority of private schools provide education at a cost that is significantly less than what taxpayers pay to the public-school education system. In 2019-2020, the State was spending approximately \$21,000 per student in the public school system. If we add in the additional state and federal funding to public schools through Governor Newsom's "Comeback Plan," taxpayers will be

paying closer to \$25,000 per student. In contrast, private school tuition costs in California average approximately \$13,000 per student.

Over the last six years, enrollment in the public schools has seen a steady decline, while charter school enrollment has grown. This discrepancy in public and private schools also increased this year when private school reopened and public schools remained closed to in-person learning. Many California families moved their children to private schools during the pandemic if they had the resources to do so.

## Introducing Santa Barbara City Council Candidate: Barrett Reed



Santa Barbara native Barrett Reed is seeking a seat in District 4 (Riviera, Upper East, and San Roque) of the City Council. Reed has been a member of the Planning Commission since 2019 and is the co-founder of Miramar Group, an investment company prioritizing the renovation of declining buildings

on the Central Coast.

Reed is focused on protecting single-family neighborhoods from crime and overdevelopment. Given the State's increasing demands for more housing, Reed hopes to maintain Santa Barbara's local control.

He is challenging incumbent Kristen Sneddon.

## A Warm Welcome Back – But Newsom Keeps State of Emergency in Place

California's highly anticipated reopening occurred on June 15, 2021. This day marked a milestone for the businesses within Santa Barbara, especially those that relied on tourism. As of June 15, 2021, the State lifted capacity restrictions and eliminated mask requirements for fully vaccinated people in most settings.

This reopening helps our local business owners rebound after the government mandated closures. During the week of the reopening, Santa Barbara Airport almost broke the record for passenger counts.

However, when the state reopened, Governor Newsom was expected to give up his emergency powers to govern under a public health emergency. Unfortunately, Newsom decided to keep the state of emergency order in place beyond June 15, maintaining his ability to impose restrictions on people at any time.

### **Fraudulent Unemployment Claims Cost the U.S. \$400 billion**

Prior to the pandemic, unemployment claims were relatively sparse. Once the pandemic began, states were not prepared for the surge in unemployment claims. The U.S. was more focused on getting money out quickly than checking to make sure the claims were legitimate.

### **New Aerospace Developments to Boost Central Coast and Vandenberg**

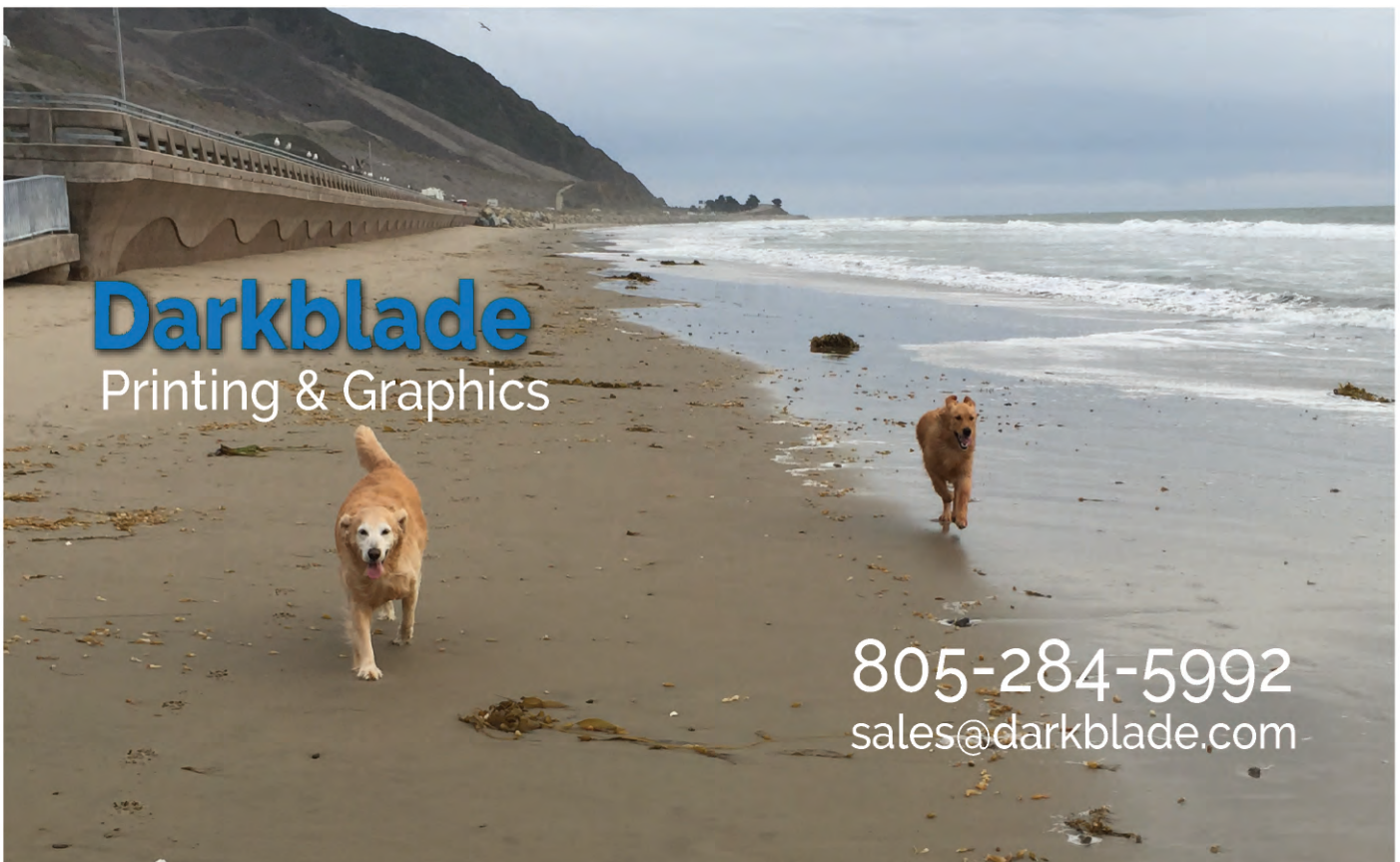
California recently invested in the aerospace industry by awarding aerospace firm Relatively

Space the third largest California Competes tax credit of \$30 million. The regional effort to enhance commercial space activity could greatly benefit the Central Coast. The industry's growth is expected to result in the creation of sustainable jobs and the development of more modern infrastructure, including roads, utilities, and access to the internet.

### **Voter Fraud Claim at UC Santa Barbara**

In the November 2020 election, approximately 3,000 mail-in ballots were cast by UCSB students allegedly residing in a precinct that includes UCSB dorms. The problem is that many UCSB dorms were locked down through most of 2020.

Once these voting irregularities were discovered, a complaint was made and it entered into what seems like a black hole of the local government. The complaint was made to the Santa Barbara District Attorney's office. The District Attorney's office directed the complainant to the Santa Barbara County Sheriff's office, who then turned the case over to the UCSB Police Department. UCSB Police sent the complaint back to the District Attorney's office stating that Santa Barbara County elections were not their jurisdiction. When the claimant spoke to the District Attorney's office, there was no record yet of the case.



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