



# Chronicle

A publication for friends and neighbors of the West Service Planning Area

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## Point of Interest:

SPA 5 Youth  
Network Invitation

### Sun Safety Tips

Protect Yourself with These Sun Safety Tips:

- Avoid the sun, or seek shade, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. when the sun's rays are strongest. Even on a cloudy day, up to 80% of the sun's rays can get through.
- Apply an SPF 15 or higher sunscreen evenly to all uncovered skin before going outside. Check the label for the correct amount of time to apply sunscreen before you go out. If the label does not give a time, allow 15 to 30 minutes.
- Don't forget to apply sunscreen to your eyelids, lips, nose, ears, neck, hands and feet.
- Avoid getting sunscreen in your eyes. It can sting.
- If you don't have much hair supply sunscreen to the top of your head or wear a hat.
- Reapply sunscreen often. Read the label to see how often you need to reapply.
- Wear protective clothing and a wide-brimmed hat to



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### Defying Stereotypes

SANTA MONICA, Calif.— Three men at a youth and family center are defying stereotypes and law enforcement expectations by starting their own computer business.

Society expected Omar Tapia, Brian Jarquin and Cesar De La Torre to lead lives filled with gangs and violence. But the three started taking computer classes at the Pico Youth and Family Center. At the beginning, their computer skills amounted to practically nothing.

But recently, the three men formed The Computer Collaborative, a business that charges \$75 per hour for computer service and repair.

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## Sun Safety Tips

Protect Yourself with These Sun Safety Tips:

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protect your head and face.

- Wear sunglasses with 99% to 100% UV protection to protect your eyes.
- Avoid artificial tanning methods such as sunlamps, tanning beds, tanning pills and tanning makeup.
- Check your skin regularly for signs of skin cancer.
- Ask a doctor before applying sunscreen to children under 6 months of age.

(Reprinted with permission from FDA & YOU)

## Defying Stereotypes

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“It was one of those things that spring up on you ... like a good business idea,” De La Torre, 23, said. “I’ve had a couple dollars here and there, but nothing like computer work. I get \$75 an hour and I said ‘oh this works for me.’”

All three are equal business partners, but perform different functions within the company. In addition to service and repair, Tapia is responsible for designing and printing business cards and brochures, Jarquin’s function is graphic design and De La Torre is the marketing director.

The Pico Youth and Family Center is a non-profit program that offers classes and support groups for youths ages 16 to 24 in the Santa Monica area. Many of the youths are classified as “at risk,” have had run-ins with the law or come from single-parent homes.

In 2000, approximately 1 out of 5 families in the Pico neighborhood were single-parent households, according to a Rand Corporation study. For example, De La Torre’s mother raised him as a single parent and his stepfather was a drug addict.

The three men devote the majority of their time to the business and staying out of trouble. They have never been in gangs, but have been affiliated with gang members. Their friends and peers have not been as fortunate.

“A lot of my peers are either in drugs, got kids or married, jail.... I know four of my close friends are dead,” De La Torre said. “For change, you got to want to change, and unfortunately, a lot of guys I went to high school with, they don’t want to change.”

Sheldon Kretchman teaches computer training classes at PYFC. Now he is also the business mentor to Collaborative.

“We learn together and I teach them about business because it can’t happen overnight,” Kretchman, 69, said. “You learn from experience.”

Collaborative was driven by a determination to stay out of a dangerous lifestyle. De La Torre and Tapia said police have pulled them over based on their looks. Neither of them have been arrested.

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## WEST NILE VIRUS

West Nile Virus (WNV) is a serious disease present in the United States. Primarily a disease in wild birds, WNV can also be spread to people and other animals by infected mosquitoes. Humans become infected with the virus through the bite of a WNV infected mosquito. Not all mosquitoes are infected with WNV, but it is best to avoid all mosquitoes as a general precaution.

### Symptoms of WNV infection

#### **Not everyone infected will get sick**

80% of infected persons will experience NO symptoms.

**West Nile Fever:** 1 in 5 (20%) of infected persons will experience symptoms such as fever, headache, and body aches, nausea, vomiting, and sometimes swollen lymph glands or a skin rash on the chest, stomach and back. Symptoms can last for as short as a few days, though even healthy people have been sick for several weeks.

**West Nile Neuroinvasive Disease:** 1 in 150 infections result in severe illness such as meningitis, encephalitis or muscle paralysis. Symptoms include headache, high fever, stiff neck, stupor, disorientation, coma, muscle weakness, and paralysis. Recovery is long term and neurological effects may be permanent.

#### **Note:**

The elderly and immune-compromised individuals (such as those with HIV/AIDS or diabetes) are at greatest risk for developing severe disease.

If you think you have these symptoms or have any other medical questions, please consult your healthcare provider.

### Local Mosquito and Vector Control Districts

*Contact your local mosquito control agency for mosquito problems where you live or work:*

**Antelope Valley Mosquito and Vector Control District**  
661-942-2917

**Compton Creek Mosquito Abatement District**  
310-639-7375

**Greater Los Angeles County Vector Control District**  
562-944-9656

**Los Angeles County West Vector Control District**  
310-915-7370

**San Gabriel Valley Mosquito and Vector Control District**  
626-814-9466

Pasadena  
(626) 744-6005

**Long Beach**  
(562) 570-4132



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## WEST NILE VIRUS



**Report all dead birds to:**  
**Los Angeles County**  
**Veterinary Public Health**  
**1-877-747-2243**

**California Department of Health**  
**Services**  
**1-877-WNV-BIRD**

*Sick or dead birds are an excellent indicator of the local presence of WNV. Although not all birds will be collected, your call is important to help the County, State and Local mosquito control and monitoring efforts.*

**NOTE:** Routine contact with birds (alive or dead) or other animals cannot transmit WNV to humans. Dead birds can be safely disposed of in the garbage by using gloves or a plastic bag to place the carcass into the garbage.

### Reduce your risk of becoming sick - Prevention begins at home

*Mosquitoes lay their eggs in standing water and can complete the cycle from egg to adult in just 5 days.*

#### **Don't breed mosquitoes.**

Check for and remove all sources of standing water. Mosquitoes can breed in very small amounts of water. A swimming pool that is not well maintained can breed thousands of mosquitoes each week. Change the water in wading pools, birdbaths and pet bowls twice weekly. Mosquito-eating fish should be placed in ornamental ponds and water gardens.

#### **Don't let mosquitoes into your home.**

Make sure that doors and windows have tight fitting screens. Repair or replace screens that have tears or holes.

#### **Reduce your risk of mosquito bites**

Avoid spending time outside when mosquitoes are most active during the evening and early morning hours (dusk to dawn). If outdoors during these times, wear long pants, long-sleeved shirts and other protective clothing to avoid mosquito bites. Use insect repellents (10-30% DEET for adults and children over 2 months of age) on exposed skin according to label instructions.

For more information:  
 Call (800) 975-4448 or  
 Visit [www.LAPublicHealth.org](http://www.LAPublicHealth.org)



“The only time I run into police is when they try to harass me,” Tapia, 22, said. “Most of the time, I’m not doing anything. I’m walking down the street and they pull me over just because of the way I look.”

With Collaborative, the men are spending less time on the streets and more time on their business, offering services seven days a week. The three partners plan to service the Pico neighborhood and slowly expand to other low-income cities. (By Christina Wu, Reprinted with permission from Leslie Sultan)

## Community Outreach

Meet me at



***Mondays from 6-8 pm***  
***At the Mark Twain Middle School, Room 117***  
***YOUTH Ages 4-18***

***Or***

***Tuesdays from 6-8 pm***  
***At Washington Court, 12525 Washington***  
***Place Community Room***  
***YOUTH ages 5-12***

*Come join us*

Participate in after school activities aimed at improving academics, self-sufficiency, and health.

### **What is COPE?**

UCLA students spending their evenings with youth from the surrounding communities  
Health Education, Mentoring, Tutoring, and Living Skills

Parental Support, Parenting Education, and Case Management

Field Trips and other planned activities.

**To schedule a registration appointment or to request additional information, please contact:**

Ana Romero  
2400 South Flower Street  
Lowman Outpatient Building, Fourth Floor  
Los Angeles, CA 90007  
213-259-0245

## SPA 5 Youth Network



- Would you like to get together with other youth, ages 13-21, living in your community?
- Would you like to talk about issues that affect your life like: school, your future, and your community?
- Do you live or go to school in Venice, Santa Monica, West Los Angeles, Mar Vista, Culver City or surrounding areas?
- Do you want to make a difference in your community?

Then the Youth Network is for you!

Meetings are every 3rd Monday of the month from 5pm to 6pm.

The Youth Network is a project of the SPA 5 council created to support leadership and development amongst youth living or going to school in the SPA 5 area. The youth Network will focus on opportunities for youth to improve their community.



**If you are interested or know of anyone that might be interested:**

Please contact the SPA 5 Office by phone or email.  
Phone: 310 391-1578  
Email: [res6m9x5@verizon.net](mailto:res6m9x5@verizon.net)

