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Those who have lost family members while in San Diego County jail custody continue to press for policy changes, including, from left, Shawn Mills, Tammy Wilson, Sabrina Weddle and Sundee Weddle. They carry photos of family members who died in jail. **NELVIN C. CEPEDA / U-T FILE**

Militant group's leader killed in Lebanon

Israeli PM celebrates death of Hezbollah chief, issues warning

By Aaron Boxerman, Ronen Bergman, Patrick Kingsley & Steve Lohr
THE NEW YORK TIMES

The Lebanese militia Hezbollah on Saturday confirmed the death of Hassan Nasrallah, its longtime leader and one of its co-founders, in a strike marking a major escalation of Israel's campaign against Iran's proxies in the Middle East.

The death of Nasrallah, after Israeli bombs flattened three apartment buildings near Beirut shielding what it said were Hezbollah's underground headquarters, pushed Israel's war against Iran-backed forces into new territory. Iran has long sought to have the proxies — Hamas in the Gaza Strip, Hezbollah in Lebanon and the Houthis in Yemen — serve as the front line in its fight with Israel.

But if one of its most important military assets, Hezbollah, has been substantially weakened, it could leave Israel feeling less threatened and put pressure on Iran to decide whether to respond.

While fiercely condemning the attack, Iran's leaders have not taken any direct steps in retaliation, nor have they punished

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In 5 years since jail death probe, little progress seen

Share of inmate fatalities in S.D. County lockups continues to exceed other systems'

By Jeff McDonald & Kelly Davis
UNION-TRIBUNE

In July, after Chase Mitchell died in the custody of the San Diego County Sheriff's Office, the department issued a news release announcing the seventh death in its jails this year.

That now-customary notice would not have happened five years ago, when The San Diego Union-Tribune published its findings from a six-month investigation into deaths in the local jail system.

Back in 2019, people tracking jail deaths had to submit California Public Records Act requests for copies of the one-page form that sheriff's departments are required to file with the state Department of Justice within 10 days of every fatality.

The San Diego Union-Tribune routinely filed such requests for several years. Those records helped frame "Dying Behind Bars," a three-day collection of stories, videos and originally sourced documents that revealed



Vianna Granillo died at Los Colinas jail in 2022. Records show she should not have been arrested to begin with. **HAYNE PALMOUR IV / FOR THE U-T**

how repeated lapses in medical care, a broad lack of accountability and a host of other conditions had pushed San Diego County jails to become the deadliest lockups among California's largest counties.

The series sparked public

outrage and prompted legislation — including two bills that eventually were signed into law. It helped push the sheriff to pitch a \$500 million upgrade and renovation plan and spurred civilian oversight and advocacy work that continues to this day.

But the investigation and the actions it helped prompt ultimately did little to drive down jail deaths, which hit a record with 18 in 2021 and another with 19 the following year, even after the COVID-19 pandemic had reduced the jail population by roughly 25 percent.

Many of the deaths were preventable, and some are disturbingly similar, raising questions about what lessons have been learned from past mistakes.

Of the 70-plus deaths that occurred after the publication of "Dying Behind Bars," at least 19 prompted lawsuits, costing taxpayers many millions of dollars. In the last five years, settlements and jury verdicts in lawsuits brought by the families of people who died in jail — as well as claims brought by people injured by deputy negligence or misconduct — topped \$75 million.

"It's a pattern," said attorney Danielle Pena, who has represented more than a dozen families in jail-related litigation over

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District to audit school funding groups

Step by San Dieguito follows students' look at foundation finances

By Kristen Taketa
UNION-TRIBUNE

The San Dieguito Union High School District will commission an external audit of all nonprofit foundations associated with its schools, after a report by two Canyon Crest Academy students on their school foundation's finances prompted praise, backlash and a spectrum of outrage in the school community and beyond.

The purpose of the audit is "to ensure that all practices are legally sound, transparent, and consistent with district policy, and executed with integrity," San Dieguito said in announcing the audit Wednesday.

The district added, "for the benefit of those who dedicate their valuable time and service to the foundations and to support the continued success of our foundations, recent questions regarding its operations must be answered."

The district said it will hire an external auditor to start work next month, with the aim of completing the audit by the end of the first semester on Dec. 19.

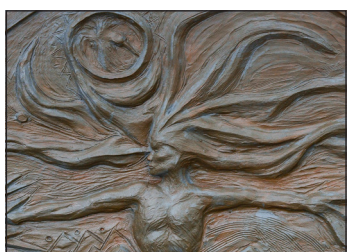
The announcement came days after The San Diego Union-Tribune reported on two 17-year-old Canyon Crest Academy seniors,

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ARTS & CULTURE

Transcending borders

Santana drum dynamo Cindy Blackman Santana will headline Friday's inaugural San Diego Tijuana International Jazz Festival, which marks the first time she'll appear here with her own band. **E1**



LOCAL

Bringing history to life

The Living Land Acknowledgment sculpture series, an interactive art installation by Johnny Bear Contreras at San Diego State University, aims to share the story of the Kumeyaay people. **B1**

American drug mules used to smuggle fentanyl into U.S.

Cartels recruiting thousands who can easily cross border

By Natalie Kitroeff & Robert Gebeloff
THE NEW YORK TIMES

The teenager practiced driving from his apartment in San Diego down to Tijuana and back, on the orders of the criminals he was working for in Mexico. He rehearsed how he would respond to questions from U.S. border officers. He tracked when the drug-sniffing dogs took a break.

The men who were paying him had cut a secret compartment into his car big enough to fit several bricks of fentanyl. When they loaded it up for the first time and sent him toward the border, Gustavo, who was only 19 at the time, began to tremble.

At the checkpoint, he steadied himself like he had practiced, and calmly told the border offi-



More than 80 percent of the people sentenced for fentanyl trafficking at the southern border are U.S. citizens, federal data shows. **MERIDITH KOHUT / NYT**

cers that he was just heading home.

They looked at his American passport — and waved him through.

Since 2019, when Mexico overtook China to become the dominant supplier of fentanyl

in the United States, cartels have been flooding the country with the synthetic opioid. The amount of fentanyl crossing the border has increased tenfold in the past five years. Mexico has been the source of almost all of

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DIGITAL ACTIVATION

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STEVEN P. DINKIN A PATH FORWARD

Strategies for combating antisemitism, Islamophobia

Where were you on April 27, 2019? If you were living in San Diego, you may recall: It was the day John Earnest entered the Chabad of Poway and opened fire. Fifty worshippers were there. Earnest killed one of them and injured three others.

Our community was rocked. A hate crime in San Diego? It couldn't happen here.

But it did.

Following Earnest's arrest, we learned he hated Muslims, too. A month before the Chabad event, Earnest attempted to burn down the Dar-ul-Arqam mosque in Escondido. Seven missionaries were asleep there, but no one was injured.

As an antisemite and Islamophobe, Earnest has plenty of company. In the five years since he committed his crimes, religious intolerance in the United States has only increased. Some say it's to be expected in a society that has become less religious overall.

Against this backdrop, the Applied Research Center for Civility launched a two-year research initiative in 2022 to assess the landscape of efforts to counter religious intolerance and alleviate the harm caused by hate and bias in our country. ARCC, a partnership of UC San Diego and the National Conflict Resolution Center, conducts cutting-edge research into the dynamics of society's most pressing issues and creates comprehensive models for national distribution and discussion.

On Monday, more than 175 academics, researchers, faith and community leaders from around the country gathered in San Diego for a daylong conference that included a presentation of ARCC's impact paper, "Combating Antisemitism and Islamophobia: Best Practices in Challenging Times." The conference was hosted by Imam Abdullah Antepli of Duke University and Ken Stern of the Bard Center for the Study of Hate.

The impact paper guides readers through the practices that organizations in multiple sectors are taking to address antisemitism, Islamophobia and intolerance more broadly, and illustrates an "ecosystem of approaches" at the individual, community and structural levels of engagement.

Researchers depicted the three levels of engagement in a pie chart. The individual slice is focused on education (promoting religious and cultural literacy, and teaching the histories of trauma and oppression groups have faced); strengthening skills (to enhance critical thinking and facilitate constructive dialogue); and supporting wellbeing (including efforts to intervene when a person is at risk of radicalization).

Community-level approaches bring people together to reduce intolerance while equipping them to prevent and respond to incidents of hate. Structural-level approaches are centered in three areas: research, legislation and

cultivating a culture of inclusion.

As the researchers concluded, this ecosystem is complex; their survey of 83 organizations revealed differences in their definitions of antisemitism and Islamophobia, and disagreements over which approaches are most impactful — even what the goal of the work should be.

Though their strategies diverged, these organizations agreed: a "whole-of-society commitment" is needed to counter antisemitism, Islamophobia, and other forms of intolerance.

The research initiative began before Oct. 7, 2023, and the start of the Israel/Hamas war, which has led to a dramatic increase in antisemitism and Islamophobia here, according to the Anti-Defamation League and Council on American-Islamic Relations.

Researchers noted, "The conflict in Israel and Palestine has placed great stress

on organizations working in the field of religious intolerance and bigotry, and it is a context that organizations are still working to navigate." They will publish a supplemental report that addresses the specific challenges and lessons learned from this current moment of crisis.

I'll be honest: As the conference date drew closer, I was concerned. The topic of antisemitism and Islamophobia is emotionally challenging for many people, especially given escalating tensions in the Middle East. The one-year anniversary of the Hamas attack will be marked next week.

But I was optimistic, too, that conference attendees would have a shared desire: to take meaningful steps toward reducing antisemitism and Islamophobia in our country, no matter their religious beliefs or opinions about the war. I shared NCRC's Code of Civil Discourse, built on the premise that the respect-

ful and constructive airing of different points of view is critical to successful dialogue, a goal of the day.

Sure enough, the conversation was civil, thoughtful and inspiring. Breakout sessions revealed intense feelings on both sides, as expected. But we also heard a yearning for more opportunities to come together — to build mutual understanding and bridge the Jewish-Muslim divide. Participants acknowledged the valuable role that a third-party, like NCRC, can play in facilitating these conversations.

We are finding a path forward.

Five years ago, it hardly seemed possible.

Dinkin is president of the National Conflict Resolution Center, a San Diego-based organization that is working to create innovative solutions to challenging issues, including intolerance and incivility. To learn about NCRC's programming, visit ncrconline.com.

SCULPTURE

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university's spoken land acknowledgment, a formalized statement that recognizes the Indigenous inhabitants of the land as its traditional stewards. The university has had a Kumeyaay land acknowledgment since 2019.

"Our history is not just written in the books or carved in stone; it is alive in the land beneath our feet, the sky above and the traditions we carry forward to this very day," Jacob Alvarado Waipuk, SDSU's tribal liaison and a San Pasqual tribal member, said Friday.

"These sculptures are more than just art," he said later. "They reflect the partnership and collaboration between the Kumeyaay Nation and San Diego State community."

The project is a collaboration between a number of campus organizations — the school's Native Resource Center, SDSU Story Lab, Virtual Immersive Teaching and Learning Research Center and Division of Student Affairs and Campus Diversity.

The first sculpture, "Stargazer," installed in March in front of Hepner Hall, features a man's face angled toward the sky, eyes closed. It's accompanied by an immersive virtual performance of a Kumeyaay bird song by Blue Eagle Vigil and his daughter Lovely Vigil.

At the second sculpture, "People of the Sun," installed in July near the North Library Quad, there's footage of Mike Connolly, the author of SDSU's land acknowledgment, explaining the project. The sculpture includes two



Johnny Bear Contreras and Remmy Canon install a sculpture as part of its Living Land Acknowledgment outside Manchester Hall on San Diego State campus in San Diego on Thursday. MEG MCLAUGHLIN / U-T

faces — a man and a woman — emerging from poppy flowers and relates to the people's connection to the land, Contreras said.

"Return of the Kumeyaay Creator," which represents the Kumeyaay creation story, is accompanied by a video of Contreras in his studio, discussing the work.

Combining art with technology takes the learning experience to a "deeper level," said Stuart Voytilla, the faculty lead at the SDSU Story Lab who helped bring the project together.

"We're actually opening up as a virtual world, in addition to a physical world, and truly transforming a spoken land acknowledgment," Voytilla said.

The Living Land Acknowledgment project has been under way for several years, but Chris Medellin, the university's Native Resource Center director, said the project felt especially important to Indigenous students in 2022.

That year, the University Senate overturned a rule that required faculty to include the land acknowledgment in course syllabuses — a move that "created an emotional response" from Indigenous students and advocates, he said.

The land acknowledgment is now an optional addition to course syllabuses.

"That was very disheartening for us," said Aiyiana Tiger, a first-year gradu-

ate student in multicultural community counseling who is Choctaw, Seminole and Creek, as well as Chamorro, a Pacific Island people. "It solidified that we need to get these (sculptures) out now."

For Tiger, who said she almost dropped out her first year of undergrad at SDSU because she didn't see Native students like herself represented on campus, seeing the land acknowledgment in syllabuses "helps students feel welcome and that they belong."

In a statement, SDSU said that while the land acknowledgment is optional for course syllabuses, it is customary for the land acknowledgment to be recited at many campus

events, including convocation and graduation.

"The university has long affirmed its commitment to acknowledging Native and Indigenous people and has taken specific action in support of the Kumeyaay," the university said.

It pointed to the opening of the Native Resource Center, the creation of the tribal liaison position and a partnership with the Kumeyaay Community College to better support Indigenous transfer students.

But some say that more can be done.

Last year, a state audit found that SDSU was one of several universities in possession of thousands of Indigenous artifacts and

remains — and far behind on returning those items to Indigenous owners, including the Kumeyaay. As of last July, SDSU had more than 90,000 Indigenous artifacts and remains in its collection.

The university said in a statement last week that it is "actively in consultation with culturally affiliated tribes and working toward the repatriation of all ancestors." The school's next inventory period will be completed at the end of this academic year, officials said.

"We want those remains returned to our people, so we can repatriate them ... in a proper, cultural, dignified manner," said Stan Rodriguez, a professor of Kumeyaay language and humanities at the Kumeyaay Community College. "So although they are taking steps, there are many parts or segments of this university where they do need to catch up."

Ethan Banegas echoes the sentiment. He is a lecturer at SDSU and the culture bearer in residence at UC San Diego, where he imparts his knowledge of the Kumeyaay people to the campus community.

Banegas, a descendant of the Kumeyaay and other bands of Native Americans, says land acknowledgments can feel performative if not followed up with real action.

He is working on writing a land acknowledgment for UC San Diego and says he wants it to have educational elements, including information about a Kumeyaay village that was located near the UC San Diego campus.

"We're making great gains," Banegas said. "But a land acknowledgment is only good if it's just the beginning of a thousand steps."

SMOLENS

From Page 1

The FPPC has one ongoing investigation of DeMaio and is reviewing at least one other complaint, with claims ranging from failure to report disclosures properly to wrongly using his Reform California organization for the Assembly campaign.

Hayes and his allies are making their own efforts on the Democratic front, along with holding the Republicans who backed him in the primary and attracting other GOP voters. Keep in mind that this is a very different election than the primary, with perhaps twice as many voters casting ballots.

Further, it's a presidential election year, which tends to juice Democratic turnout. So there are a lot of new voters to contact.

The voter registration

breakdown in the 75th District is 41.5 percent Republican, 29.4 percent Democrat and 21 percent indicating no party preference.

Hayes appears to be getting independent campaign backing worth hundreds of thousands of dollars from public-safety unions: The state Police Officers Research Association, the California Professional Firefighters, the California Correctional Peace Officers Association and the San Diego County Deputy Sheriff's Association. A few non-public-safety unions also endorsed Hayes.

A lot of that is targeted toward Democratic-leaning voters as well as Republicans.

But Hayes had similar backing in the primary, yet finished second with 18.7 percent of the vote to DeMaio's 42.9 percent. All

but a few percent of the remaining votes went to Juza and two other Democrats. A bit of subterfuge by Hayes supporters to promote Democrat Christie Dougherty may have helped keep Juza out of second place.

DeMaio may have served only one council term and lost elections for Congress and mayor, but he has become a high-profile political power with a statewide footprint. Combative, virulently anti-union and often anti-GOP establishment, he basically has said he wants to go to Sacramento to refashion the California GOP in his image.

The police and firefighter organizations may be unions but their endorsements are prized by candidates across the spectrum, particularly Republicans.

They may be motivated more by their hatred of DeMaio than what they like

about Hayes, who was a former top aide to state Sen. Brian Jones, R-Santee.

In 2010, then-Mayor Jerry Sanders and others pushed an initiative to do away with public employee pensions, while keeping them for police officers and firefighters. Councilmember DeMaio opposed both exemptions. A compromise was struck that left only police with pensions.

That still rankled the San Diego Police Officers Association, which at the time was headed by Brian Marvel, now the president of PORAC. Further, a side agreement to the pension ban was a five-year pay freeze for all city workers, including police officers.

Marvel filed the most recent FPPC complaint against DeMaio.

DeMaio also is battling the Republican Party of San Diego County. Internal strife that seemed settled

wasn't, and now the local GOP is gearing up to use its resources to back Hayes, who is directing contributors to donate to the party for his cause.

Hayes gained the party endorsement well before the primary, then DeMaio got in. After the March vote, DeMaio sought to flip the endorsement his way. He had an ally in then-party Chair Paula Whitsell. Her move angered some other party officials and influential Republicans.

A shake-up of party leadership ensued and Whitsell was forced out. An agreement was reached under which Hayes would keep the endorsement but the party would not use its ability through "member communications" to support either candidate. That was a big deal.

Key to that settlement was that DeMaio would not support any other candidate

who was running against a party-endorsed candidate. Cory Gustafson, the new chair, said DeMaio violated the terms by continuing to support a nonendorsed candidate for a Poway City Council seat, according to Scott Lewis, editor-in-chief of the Voice of San Diego.

Gustafson declared the agreement was void. DeMaio would not grant an interview but responded to an emailed list of questions with a general statement mentioning unfair taxes and how "a handful of people want to distract everyone with drama and infighting."

DeMaio entered this election promising to stir things up.

On that, he has delivered.

WHAT THEY SAID

Dame Maggie Smith (via Andrea Junker @Strandjunker)

"Speak your mind, even if your voice shakes."

LAWSUIT

From Page 1

released footage from cameras worn by officers who responded to the call.

The footage indicates the footage as Nutall was leaving the apartment. Still carrying the baby, he took off running through a trol-

ley station and eventually ended up hiding in bushes alongside a second apartment complex.

Gladysz spotted Nutall in thick bushes along the complex. Footage from the officer's camera shows the officer suddenly pointed his gun at the bushes and shouted at someone to show his hands.

A person, presumably Nutall, started to stand and appeared to move downhill away from the officer. Gladysz fired several rounds. Several seconds later, a second officer asked Gladysz if Nutall still had the child. "I didn't see a kid. I saw the gun," Gladysz replied.

Nutall and the baby ended up at the bottom of the hill.

Police found the baby atop a short retaining wall. Nutall was feet away, between the retaining wall and an apartment building.

The confrontation happened quickly. Footage from the officer's camera shows Nutall had been holding a dark object in his right hand when the officer opened fire as Nutall rose out

of the bushes. It is not clear what the object was. The baby appears to be under his left arm. The ensuing investigation turned up security footage that appears to show Nutall dropping a gun in the trolley parking lot as he ran from police.

Nutall was subsequently arrested. He has pleaded not guilty to several charges,

including assault with a semiautomatic firearm, child abuse and being a convicted felon in possession of a firearm. He remains jailed without bail.

Nutall's preliminary hearing for the criminal case in San Diego Superior Court is slated for October. He faces more than 44 years in prison if convicted of all charges.