



Vaguely  
necessary

By JAPNEET  
KAUR  
Photo editor

## Help those in poverty

This week, I'd like to talk about the world. This column will be about something that's on my mind a lot.

Poverty.

With the recent news of what may or may not have almost happened to one of the child stars of *Slumdog Millionaire*, children living in poverty is once again fresh on the minds of many. What is unfortunate but true is that there are many children in the world whose parents are successful in similar attempts, but no one knows about them. Will it take a movie about each of them? A movie about the child soldiers in Africa? A movie about the children who work in dangerous conditions in China? What about the impoverished and the handicapped in our own nation?

And what about the adults who have to work 15-hour days for less than the equivalent of minimum wage to support their families? Those who work for people who exploit them and get rich off of their sweat, and many times, blood? While there are many films highlighting the plight of the poor in many nations, a movie won't be made to remind us of what's going on every time someone needs help.

Many of us – like me – have easy lives. Many others work hard but still have much better lives than most. We get so caught up in things like "American Idol" and "Family Guy," Facebook and Twitter, that we forget to live the lives outside of our selfish worlds. Sometimes all it takes is a few dollars donated to a nonprofit organization or ten minutes of your time spent using something like [www.freerice.com](http://www.freerice.com).

As human beings, it is our duty to help out our fellow human beings. You may ask why you should have to help "those people." You're not the one who put them in that position. If you were in their position, however, living in poverty, wouldn't you need help? And wouldn't you appreciate any help that came?

There is no excuse for not helping in any way that you can. Not everyone can give large sums of money, but everyone can give time. Even people going to school and working two jobs make time for the things they need or enjoy, so why not for helping the impoverished? It starts with staying informed: subscribe to sites like [www.one.org](http://www.one.org) to keep up with what's going on in the world. Wait to buy the newest iPod Touch to replace your year-old iPod, and instead give that money to someone who needs it.

You have a good life – open your eyes and your hearts to those who don't have it anywhere near as good. You might even appreciate what you have just a little more somewhere along the way.

# Chalkdust: a new kind of bailout

By ERIC DORMAN  
Editor-in-chief

Perhaps Obama's stimulus package is slow in making its way into your life. Perhaps this late in the semester, you're feeling the need for a personal recovery package. If so, Math and English Professors Jeff O'Connell and Mark Brosamer promise to deliver a change you can believe in with the annual Chalkdust and Friends benefit concert this Friday, a show that they guarantee to be part music, part comedy and yes, part stimulus.

"It's the Mark and Jeff stimulus package," explained O'Connell. "Well, [except that] there's not going to be any money left over."

The show, which will be held at 7:30 p.m. in the Smith Center's NUMMI Theater, will feature YouTube artist and Ohlone student Shawn Megofna, Transfer Center Specialist Frances Fon and the "Ukulele Renegades" trio—Mail Room Clerk Hal Griffin and Librarians K.G. Greenstein and Kathy Sparling. Both O'Connell's and Brosamer's bands—"Volume Control" and "Animal 54," respectively, as well as O'Connell's dad, will also make guest appearances.

Although the posted ticket price for the show is \$7, in the spirit of economic recovery, O'Connell and Brosamer disclosed that they have chosen to include a special promotional deal—one can obtain two tickets for \$14. This "2 tickets for the price of 2 tickets" deal is available for a limited time only and must be expressly asked for at the box office, said O'Connell. He acknowledged that the special offer was likely to increase the size of the Chalkdust budget deficit, but said it was a measure that needed to be taken. "It's all about the people," explained O'Connell.

It's debatable who the biggest name on Friday's bill is, but there's no question who has the most YouTube views. Megofna ([www.youtube.com/user/SMegofna](http://www.youtube.com/user/SMegofna), [www.myspace.com/shawnmegofna](http://www.myspace.com/shawnmegofna)) has established a significant presence on the site, with dozens of videos and more than 200,000 channel views. These include not only hits such as Chris Brown's "Forever" and "Hey There Delilah" (Plain White T's), but also a number of original songs, accompanied on the ukulele, guitar and piano. He will be performing one such original, "Addicting," at the show.



Photo by Eric Dorman

**English Professor Mark Brosamer, right, along with Librarians K.G. Greenstein and Kathy Sparling and Mail Clerk Hal Griffin, warm up their ukuleles in preparation for Friday's Chalkdust concert.**

Brosamer discovered Megofna's talent in an unusual setting—the English 101B class Megofna was taking from Brosamer at the time. After hearing Megofna sing for the class, Brosamer persuaded him to come be a part of the concert. "We're exploiting his celebrity," explained Brosamer.

Though without a YouTube presence the size of Megofna's, another Chalkdust performer, Dan O'Connell, is no stranger to show business. He plays accordion with the Irish-themed band "The Skelligs" (official motto: "Anything worth doing, is worth doing

poorly").

Closer to home are Ohlone's own Ukulele Renegades, who will be performing alongside Brosamer, a recent "uke" convert. The Renegades date back to around the time of Chalkdust's inception more than seven years ago, when Greenstein and Sparling ran into ukulele-wielding Griffin at a bookstore Hawaiian luau event. The three started practicing conjointly and have been performing together ever since.

Unable to completely satiate her ukulele-playing desire with the Renegades, Sparling is also a member of another band, Dodge's Sundodgers. According to Sparling, the group is "a stringband that plays music from the 1890s through the mid 1930s, featuring National Steel guitar, mandolins and ukuleles." The band currently has a CD out, called "Under the Sun," which is available on iTunes as well as other music outlets. To learn more about the Sundodgers, visit <http://dodgesundodgers.com>.

O'Connell and Brosamer de-

clined to comment on the specifics of the night's bill, preferring to leave it as a surprise, but revealed that among the featured songs will be Jason Mraz's "Lucky," with Fon and Brosamer teaming up on vocals, and a song Brosamer said was "specifically for people over [age] 60." And, as always, Friday's concert will be an eco-friendly event. "If you give us seven pieces of green, we will recycle them," explained Brosamer. "We'll return it to the economy," O'Connell added.

Lest any prospective concert-goers receive the wrong impression, Brosamer took a moment to offer a disclaimer. Chalkdust is not, he said, a group that overburdens itself with aggregating the punctilios of perfection. "We play the wrong chords, we sing the wrong lyrics, we trip over microphone cords."

"But it's worth \$7," O'Connell finished.

For more information on Chalkdust, see the band's MySpace page at [www.myspace.com/chalkdust-band](http://www.myspace.com/chalkdust-band).

## Gallery to feature student art

By DEVERY SHEFFER  
Staff writer

Art students have a chance to showcase their artwork at the Spring 2009 Ohlone College Student Fine Art and Design show. The winning artwork will be presented at the award ceremony Monday, April 27 at 7 p.m. in Room 3201.

There are 10 categories in the annual contest, including painting, interior design and 3-D sculpture.

Art Professor Kenney Mencher is in charge of this event, along with Christian Fagerlund, a part-time drawing teacher. Students can enter up to five pieces of artwork as long as they were made in an Ohlone art class within the past year.

This year approximately 500 pieces were entered in the contest, and about 200 will be in the show.

Each winner will receive a cash prize. The money comes from ASOC, the president's office and also a fund created by Dan Archer, a former Board of Trustees member, according to Mencher.

Students must show up to this

ceremony if they want to know whether they won. Afterward, a reception will be held in the gallery from 8 until 9:30 p.m. The winners will be on display until May 11.

Students whose artwork did not make it to the show are not completely out of luck. Curators for the gallery will pick out artwork to display in the president's office.

## Dancing for shoes

By NICOLE JOHNSON  
Features editor

The Sole to Sole Spring Dance Concert will be performing soon, but before the big show, the dancers will put on a sneak-peek performance.

The main performance will be held from Thursday, April 30, to Saturday, May 2 at 8 p.m. The preview performance will be on Wednesday, April 29 at noon in the Jackson Theater.

The show is called Sole to Sole and is working with Soles4Souls, a shoe charity.

Dance director Janel Tomblin-Brown said they will be asking for small donations and want people to bring "gently worn shoes" so that they can give it to Soles4Souls. The charity will then distribute the shoes to people in need around the world.

## Poetry celebration

By SEAN NERO  
Staff writer

In celebration of National Poetry Month, the Ohlone English department invites all students, staff and faculty to attend or participate in the eighth annual open poetry reading today, April 23.

The event, to be held in the library from 1-3 p.m., is open to anyone who would like to share a poem or listen to others as they present poems. Participants are encouraged to recite either their own original poem or one from their favorite poet.

The event is being held to observe National Poetry Month,

which, according to Poets.org, was started by the Academy of American Poets in 1996. The website explained that the purpose of National Poetry month is to "widen the attention of individuals to the art of poetry, while increasing the visibility and availability of poetry in pop culture."

Individuals interested in participating or seeking more information should contact English Professor Robert Mitchell by email at [rmitchell@ohlone.edu](mailto:rmitchell@ohlone.edu) or by telephone at (510) 979-7415.

There will also be a sign-up sheet at the library reference desk. Refreshments will be provided.



# Soto jazzes Jackson

By **ESMERALDA LEON**  
Staff writer

Jay Soto brought magic to the night as he and his band played a collection of “smooth jazz” and Latin jazz to an attentive audience, last Friday. I found myself tapping to his rendition of the famous composition “Samba Pa Ti” and “Europa,” an original piece from the famous guitarist Carlos Santana.

Soto said that Santana was one of his inspirations as a guitarist. This song in particular was a perfect rendition for Soto as he took the lead with his firepower-filled guitar solo.

Soto’s ability to incorporate Latin jazz with classical jazz made him unique and diverse. Audience of all ages came out and enjoyed his music lighted by the gentle red stage lights which brought a smooth and calm mood into the theatre. He captivated the audience with his energy and enthusiasm on stage.

One of the highlights was a song called “A Love Like Mine,” which was a personal favorite of his. It was a colorful composition that consisted of unpredictable rhythms, keeping the audience in tune to his next note.

His solo was strong with a mixture of high pitch strings that was smoothed out with low tones. It was amazing to see him play every note with such passion and concentration. His love for his work is apparent through the music and connection he has with his band members, Steve Culp (keyboards), Tony Contrera (bass), Bryne Donaldson (saxophone/percussion), and David Beldell (drums).

Soto is not only a talented guitarist, but also is a songwriter and a producer.

Raised in Phoenix, Arizona, as a young child he always had an ear for music and a passion for it. His work got him a spot on hit TV shows such as “Sex and the City” and “All About Us.”

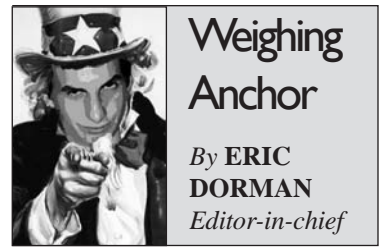
His second album grabbed the attention of the famous NuGroove Label. He then gained a renewal of recognition and was placed number two on national radio with a smash hit. As he was getting ready to finish the night, he played “Slammin’” making it the tenth song of the night.

He bowed and walked off stage, only to have the audience call them back on stage for an encore and play the last song on the program. He played for the remaining audience a song called “Diggin’ It.”



**Jay Soto is known for his Latin and classical-infused jazz.**

Although it was not a sold out concert, jazz fans found his music colorful. He stayed after the performance to sell his new CD “Mesmerized” and sign autographs.



**Weighing Anchor**

By **ERIC DORMAN**  
Editor-in-chief

## Changing our tune

We all know there’s nothing to be gained from reality TV. So it was a little surprising when last week, a reality show provided a glimpse into, well, reality.

Perhaps you’ve heard of Susan Boyle. If you haven’t, you’re in the minority. The frumpy, 47-year-old spinster from Scotland stunned the “Britain’s Got Talent” judges last week with a stirring performance of “I Dreamed A Dream,” prompting judge Piers Morgan to declare it “the biggest shock of my life.” And if 30 million YouTube views and 6 million Google hits are any indication, we’re pretty shocked as well.

But the interesting element of this saga doesn’t concern what Boyle is—a talented singer—so much as what she isn’t: young, good-looking or fashion-conscious. And when we see those two together, the real question is, why are we so surprised?

Had a blonde, designer jeans-clad, 30-years-younger Boyle delivered the same performance, would Morgan have delivered the same pronouncement? Of course not—because both in Britain and America, we’ve come to expect that talent, like Costco produce, comes in appropriately marked packaging. Never mind that there’s no correlation between the quality of the apple and the amount of plastic packaging that surrounds it, and never mind that grey hair and wrinkles have little detrimental effect on one’s vocal prowess. When it comes to people and produce, it’s easier to judge the book by its cover than take the time to read a couple chapters.

Dig under any ugly “ism” in the world today—racism, sexism, ageism—and you’ll find that at the root lie the same intellectual laziness and narrow-mindedness that cause us to discount the Susan Boyles of the world as soon as they walk on stage. Perhaps it’s deep-seated insecurity, perhaps it’s a desire for an illusory element of control over the world around us, but whatever the reason, we make a habit of automatically and unconsciously categorizing every one of the people we encounter every day into the narrow mold of cultural stereotypes. It’s harmless at first, but on a large scale, the consequences are devastating.

The judges (with the notable exception of Simon) have apologized for their initial close-mindedness. They’ve pledged to do better in the future, and it wouldn’t hurt us to do the same. Instead of maintaining the same assumptions you established on the first day of class (but never bothered to affirm with actually communication) about the green-haired, nose-pierced, corduroy-clad biker who sits next to you in math class, try talking to him. You might just be surprised.

# Proposal asks for green commitment

By **NAZIA MASTAN**  
Staff writer

The Newark campus may be “the greenest college in the world,” but it’s not green enough for college officials. And this time, they’re asking for students to help.

That way to help is through the “Ohlone Green Pledge,” an inter-collegiate memo that is to be signed by staff and students to pledge their support to make Ohlone an environmentally healthy institution. The pledge, part of Strategic Goal Number Five of a number of college goals outlined by President Gari Browning and the College Board of Trustees, is currently pending approval by the Board. Newark Campus Vice President Leta Stagnaro proposed the pledge at the March 16 College Council meeting.

This proposed goal is very similar to Ohlone College Goal Number 6, which aims to promote and maintain an accessible, clean, safe and healthy college environment through continuous engagement of students and college personnel in campus preparedness, wellness, beautification, universal design and environmental sustainability.

The Ohlone Green Pledge outlines numerous points that we can follow every day. The goals outlined include turning off computers and unplugging power cords when not in use, as well as using the “power save” mode on as many electronic devices as possible. By signing the pledge, students and faculty also agree to use

eco-friendly materials and recycle paint, light bulbs, plastics and paper, as well as recycle electronics properly so they return to the ecosystem and don’t harm the environment. In addition, it stresses the importance of putting papers such as syllabi and other documents frequently passed out by staff online as much as possible. Also, students and faculty should agree to use email as a form of communication rather than letters and use scratch paper for drafts, and personal memos instead of “clean” paper that we think is in abundance, but really is not.

Transportation is also touched on as something that we can improve in the Ohlone Green Pledge. Whenever possible we should “use more efficient commuting alternatives such as public transportation, carpooling, biking and walking.”

The pledge also identified some interesting and unexpected ways that students can improve the environmental health of Ohlone. It emphasized the need to “patronize business and services closest to Ohlone College,” in order to burn the least amount of fuel to reach one’s destination and reduce the amount of carbon emissions sent back into the environment. Students should use unbleached and/or chlorine-free paper products and use non-aerosol air fresheners and cleaning products for the same reason.

ASOC Vice President and Life Club President Kevin Feliciano proposed initially propagating the pledge through club e-mail lists. It is currently posted in the bookstore and on the library bulletin boards.

## Ohlone Green Pledge

A portion of the proposed Ohlone Green Pledge appears below:

### Whenever possible, I will:

- Turn off computers, other electronic equipment, and lights when leaving rooms and leaving campus
- Recycle paper, bottles, cans, and other reusable materials
- Print double sided when printing or copying
- Use at minimum 35 percent post-consumer recycled content paper when printing
- Use reusable cups and utensils
- Use more efficient commuting alternatives such as public transportation, carpooling, biking, or walking
- Conserve water in bathrooms and in the kitchen
- Use previously used paper for drafts, scratch paper, or internal memos
- Select products with the least packaging and made with environmentally friendly materials
- Don’t litter

# Cox throws weight behind propositions

By **NAZIA MASTAN**  
Staff writer

Ohlone Trustee Teresa Cox, a member of Alpha Kappa Alpha, a Sorority for African-American collegiate woman, paid a visit to Sacramento on Monday, April 20 for “AKA Day at the Capitol.” This event allowed the members, including Cox, to meet with California’s State Legislators as well as members of the state’s judiciary and speak to them about what they feel strongly about.

The issues that Cox chose to speak to the State Legislature about were regarding California’s budget set-backs and their effects on education throughout the state.

According to Cox, this budget reform will take place if propositions 1A-1F are passed at the May 19 Special Elections. She endorsed

all of them as being instrumental in balancing the state budget.

Propositions 1A and 1B would work together to repay some of the budget cuts that our state has been making in education in the recent past. Prop 1A raises tax revenues by \$16 billion roughly over the course of the next four years in order to provide a “long term reserve fund,” or rainy day account, to serve the purpose of guarding California’s many institutions from feeling the weight of the budget-cutting knife.

Prop 1A and 1B will add \$9.3 billion total, or \$1.5 billion yearly for approximately the next six years, to education. This money will go back to the state’s schools to allow the rehiring of teachers, reduction of class sizes and the purchase of up-to-date textbooks.

Cox also supports Proposition 1C, which “provides \$5 billion in

new revenues—without raising taxes—to help close the budget deficit. [It] guarantees that public schools will continue to receive the same amount of funding from the lottery they get now.” Although schools will be receiving the same amount of money, California is acquiring this money through borrowing from banks, but will be reimbursed when the lottery system is modernized, generating \$5 billion with which to pay back the banks. 1D outlines the utilization of unused funds from the increase in tobacco taxation and the redirection of funds from the California First 5 Commission, \$268 million annually for the next 5 years, to go to programs that will increase the development of children under the age of five.

Proposition 1E would redirect unused money from the Mental Health Services Act account to the

California’s Early and Periodic, Screening, Diagnosis and Treatment (EPSDT) program over the course of the next two years so that it can go toward children’s health programs.

The last proposition that Cox endorses is 1F, which will not allow the Governor or state legislators to have an increase in their salaries during all times that the state is running a budget deficit.

“It is imperative... that our communities actively participate at the local, state and federal government levels through learning about policies that impact their community,” said Cox. “Failing to pass these measures will cost California \$23 billion over the next four years and will result in even deeper cuts to education, children’s health care, public safety, and programs for seniors and the disabled.”