



# THE VOICE

*Vanguard University of Southern California  
Student Newspaper*

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A brilliant sunset over Scott Academic Center, Vanguard University.  
Photo by Vanguard University.

### **About Us**

The Voice is the student newspaper of Vanguard University. Managed under the auspices of the English Department, The Voice is a student-run publication that functions with the assistance of a faculty advisor. The Voice provides campus news, information about students, programs and faculty, as well as a public forum for student opinion. The Voice is an online, and now a hard copy publication.

### **Mission Statement**

The Voice is a forum for student expression that engages, informs and entertains the university community. The Voice strives to be a credible, knowledgeable and thoughtful resource for news and opinion.

## Samson's Career Pop-Up

By: *Kayla Limon*

The Living Well Community Resource Center and Career Services teamed up to make Samson's Career Pop-Up Closet. Vanguard University has not only supported its students by opening up a food pantry, but also a career closet, Samson's Career Pop-Up Closet. Samson's Career Pop-Up Closet is credited to a handful of students and professors who opened up the career closet in December of 2020.

Amanda Lebrecht, the Associate Dean of Students Success, has worked hand-in-hand with Samson's Career Pop-Up Closet and said, "The career closet provides Vanguard students with professional attire and resources such as headshots for their interviews, career fairs, and/or networking events."

Lebrecht shared how they were inspired by other institutions who paved the way. According to Lebrecht, Cal Poly Pomona and the University of California Riverside worked closely with them in setting up the career closet.

Lebrecht also credits Working Wardrobes and stated, "Working Wardrobes was also an incredible partner to us." When asking Lebrecht about the location of Samson's Career Pop-Up Closet, Lebrecht stated, "The Career Closet is permanent but the location in the former Samson's Coffee Shop is not yet permanent. We're hopeful we'll get to keep the location though."

Samson's Career Pop-Up Closet cannot be credited to simply one individual. Some individuals who deserve credit for coming up with the idea are alumni Ecstassy Mendoza, Adrian Delgado Garcia, Sonya Morris, and Kimberly Alcalá. While these individuals may not be attending Vanguard anymore, they've undoubtedly left an impact.

Samson's Career Pop-Up Closet has received coverage from the local Orange County Register as well as the Daily Pilot. Labrecht said, "Due to the television and newspaper coverage, our donations come from within Vanguard and local communities."

Kimberly Pena Mendez, a senior majoring in Psychology and student worker at Samson's Career Pop-Up Closet, shares, "We enjoy providing that additional support to students and also appreciate those who also donate to us."

Hannah Navarro, a senior Vanguard student shared how Samson's Career Pop-Up Closet helped her put together the perfect outfit for her internship interview. She went on to state, "I was lucky enough to have been helped by Kimberly Pena Mendez. She was so kind and patient with me throughout the entire process".

So Vanguard students, if you are interested in checking out Samson's Career Pop-Up Closet, be sure to make an appointment with Career Services. To learn more about Samson's Career Pop-Up Closet, check them out at <https://www.vanguard.edu/resources/academic-resource-center/samsons-career-pop-up-closet>.



VU Student Government President, Joe Contreras helps Mason Fernandez with his tie at Samson's Career Pop-Up. Photo by Paul Bersebach

## Into the Mind of a Student Worker

By: *Jared Rhone*

Last Sunday, Oscar Salas senior, Business Administration major completed his third haircut of the day, capping off another productive week from his at-home barbershop studio Salas Cuts in Santa Ana, California.

Understanding the life of a student worker is far from simple. They balance work, coursework, social lives and extracurriculars. However, analyzing their lives and individual journeys can provide a true story behind a nameless face.

This past week, Oscar Salas gave his firsthand insight to the structure of the student worker experience. The Business Administration major runs his own barbershop business, an idea he formulated while in high school.

“I chose it because I realized it was something I truly wanted to do,” says Salas. “I had friends who wanted to look good and have clean haircuts and I thought to myself. I could do that.”

**LAST SUNDAY, OSCAR SALAS SENIOR, BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION MAJOR COMPLETED HIS THIRD HAIRCUT OF THE DAY, CAPPING OFF ANOTHER PRODUCTIVE WEEK FROM HIS AT-HOME BARBERSHOP STUDIO SALAS CUTS IN SANTA ANA, CALIFORNIA.**

As a freshman in college, Salas got a job at the local OC fair and used the money he saved to buy barbering equipment and tools, and Salas Cuts was born. The barbershop operates from his home backyard and continues to expand thanks to its social media presence on Instagram @Salascuts and through word of mouth.

Despite barbering being among the least common jobs for college students, Salas finds joy in the unconventional. He cuts hair for the passion of it.

As Salas stated, “I just enjoy cutting hair. You see someone coming in and then you see them leaving as a different person. I like seeing the transformation.” Salas’s passion was not only the driving force of why he cuts hair, it was also the catalyst that steered him to being a self-made barber.

“I learned to cut off YouTube, completely self-taught, Salas explains, “I had a barber who I went to for advice if I was stuck, but learning how to do fades and cut hair was something I taught myself.”

He would also use every opportunity he could to practice on his brother, who was willing to act as his guinea pig. Salas’s eagerness to learn helped him develop his skills quickly and laid the foundation for his successful business that has been running over the past three years.

OSCAR SALAS

**"IT'S NOT ALWAYS ABOUT WHERE YOU'RE STARTING OFF OR HOW MUCH SKILL YOU HAVE, IT'S ABOUT SHOWING YOUR PROGRESS."**



Oscar Salas, photographed in his 'BARBERology' apron.  
Photo by Jesse González

His time as a student worker has exposed him to the highs and lows of the adventure. One of the benefits he finds as a student worker is the individuality he has been able to create.

"I feel like as a student worker, you still have a sense of liberty because you're not fully involved with bills and other responsibilities."

Salas believes the most restricting side of being a student worker is the inability to work long hours. He speaks to the difficulties of juggling all his various school related responsibilities, such as classes, athletics, and extracurriculars.

"For my work schedule, I have to just go week by week. Because of sports and things being inconsistent/changing so often I can't have a set weekly timetable."

Countless student workers continue to struggle maintaining a harmonious balance between their jobs and school: their other job. Salas provides his input on what he's learned from the student worker experience, and how he's applied it to sustaining success.

For him the experience has taught him time management. "That's a big one. It's also helped me get out of my comfort zone and get better at talking to people," Salas continues to say, "I've learned that when it's your own business. You're in charge of your own money. I've had to learn to manage my finances and think long term with my money as well."

Salas additionally claims that despite all of the knowledge he's obtained, one of the keys to making it as a student worker is a strong support system. His stable and consistent support from friends and family has enabled him to branch out and be more confident in advocating for himself in the work landscape.

While Salas does not wish to open a large-scale barbershop in the future, he still plans to expand his barbering prowess. He hopes to partner with large barbershop brands later in his career and awaits the opportunity to flourish on the barbering scene.

As Salas said, "It's not always about where you're starting off or how much skill you have, it's about showing your progress."

## ARTS &amp; ENTERTAINMENT COLUMN

## What You Need to Know About VU's Synecdoche

By *Isabella Perez*

Vanguard University's Chair of English Warren Doody, and 2020 English Major Alumni Ashley Collins, give the inside scoop on the university's literary journal; Synecdoche.

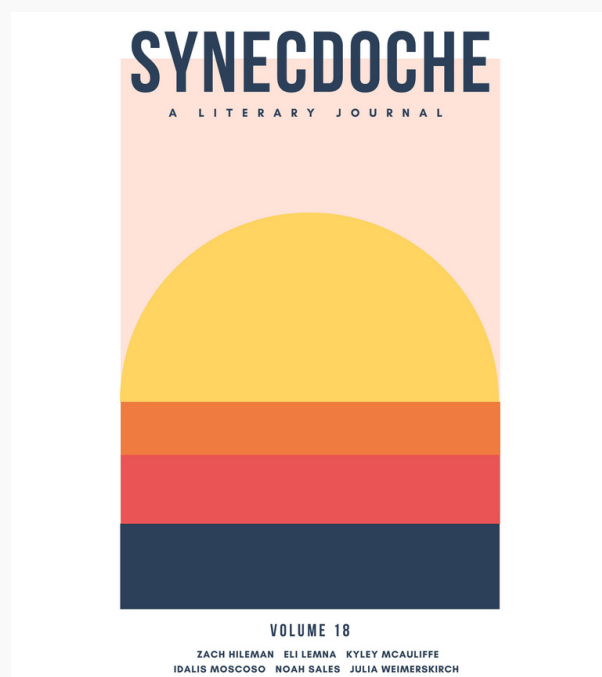
Synecdoche is a figure of speech that is defined by a part representing the whole. The journal was birthed in the year 2004 originating with a creative writing class and later led by the graduating seniors' in the capstone' requirement course.

As elected facilitator of Synecdoche, Professor Doody tells about his roles of setting deadlines and keeping Synecdoche students on track saying "It's really difficult to put this [synecdoche journal] together in one semester." He also adds "The journal itself is entirely student run, there's something really cool about that."

Professor Doody goes on to express the impact of Synecdoche and the way it acts as a bridge into the next phase of a student's journey after graduating college. It allows for students to build their publication as well as their confidence in their scholarly and creative work including short fiction, poetry, short plays, literary nonfiction, scholarly works, and photographs.

Vanguard University's very own 2020 graduate, current 2nd year grad student at Northern Arizona University, and former Synecdoche editor-in-chief, Ashley Collins tells about her experience with Synecdoche while attending Vanguard.

Ashley Collins played a large role in pioneering the school's literary journal into what it is today; an outlet for students to be courageous in sharing their creative work with the world.



In an interview with Collins, she talks about her experience with submitting non-fiction pieces her freshman and sophomore year, and not getting published until her third year when her non-fiction piece 'Square Tables' was published. She stated, "Rejection is good, it makes you stronger as an individual, whether you are a writer or not."

Collins goes on to encourage Vanguard students to submit creative work in confidence that it is going to be read anonymously upon consideration for being published. She said, "No matter what, your work is being read anonymously. It is being read not based on your character, not you, but just on the work that you submit."

Collins shared advice for students wanting to submit their creative work to Synecdoche, "What's college if you're not doing something new and exciting? It's a big boost of confidence when you get published.. To know that someone thought that your work was cool.. Or that your work has the potential to impact someone else."

**Synecdoche begins accepting submissions every spring semester at their email [synecdoche@vanguard.edu](mailto:synecdoche@vanguard.edu).**

## The Difference Between a Band of Christians vs. a Christian Band

By: Michael Robles

When we hear the phrase “Christian Rock”, many Christians often associate it with bands such as Skillet, Casting Crowns, or Switchfoot. Although, what exactly does Christian rock mean? Is it rock music made by Christians? If that was so, any music made by a Christian could be considered Christian music. However, that is not the case, as Christian music is different from secular music made by someone who calls themselves a Christian. So, the question sparks: what truly differentiates a Christian band from a band of Christians?

In reality, there are many musicians who are Christian, but make secular music. One would never immediately assume Ozzy Osbourne, frontman of heavy metal band Black Sabbath, was a Christian. But, in a 1986 interview with Spin Magazine, he revealed he was.

“I’m a Christian,” Ozzy told Spin Magazine. “I was christened as a Christian. I went to Sunday school.”

When I first read this, I was surprised. Black Sabbath was one of the founding fathers of heavy metal, and had been associated with Satanic symbolism by fans since their upbringing. So, it never really occurred to me that Ozzy Osbourne, the “Prince of Darkness”, even believed in transcendence, the existence in spirituality. But, reading into Black Sabbath’s song, “War Pigs”, it started to make sense.

In the final verse, Osbourne sings, “Day of judgement, God is calling / On their knees the war pigs crawling / Begging mercy for their sins / Satan’s laughing, spread his wings / Oh lord, yeah!”



Ozzy Osbourne, photo by Mick Hutson/Redferns

While the anti-war song does contain imagery of Satan, it also expresses God being the one to judge warmongers. Does this make Black Sabbath the most hardcore Christian band ever? Of course not. It exemplifies how Osbourne may believe in transcendence and judgement. This is a common trope in other musicians who believe in it. Some would argue Black Sabbath could believe in transcendence, but praise the other end: Satanism. However, none of their music express such a concept, and that is apparent in a lot of secular art made by Christians. Even U2 is suspect of making subtle nods to transcendence and faith into their music.

Minister and theology professor Gary Tyra teaches the importance of Christianity in a practical application. He says that the majority of Christian art focuses on four categories: creation, fall, redemption, and restoration.

Tyra stated, “Christian art tends to focus on the redemption aspect. Christians who make art focus on realities of life and existence. They talk about experiences, life, and reality that ring true for others.”

When asked if the form of music Christians play influences their message, he said, “I do want to ask any artist “what’s your motive?” I think we all have a motive. Maybe it’s a will to influence, so if your motive is to inspire, I’m okay.”

## OPINION COLUMN MICHAEL'S CORNER

One of Christian rock band Skillet's most popular streamed songs is "Awake and Alive", which outwardly conveys how God has saved the speakers' lives and redeemed them in a dark time. The first verse states, "It's getting harder to stay awake / And my strength is fading fast / You breathe into me at last."

This represents how God has saved the speaker, and has given them a new purpose to move forward in life. The majority of Skillet's music is based around these subjects. Compare this to Kings of Leon, a very popular band in the mid-2000s. One of their most popular songs of all time is "Sex on Fire," a song explicitly about the speaker having sex with a woman. The lyrics focus heavily on how passionate the speaker feels about the act with her, and, for lack of better words, how good it feels. When I was doing research for this story, I found out that three out of four of the members of Kings of Leon were Christians. Members Caleb, Nathan, and Jared Followill are brothers raised Pentecostal. So, evidently enough, they fall into the "band of Christians" category, as most of their music is secular.

Professor Tyra also feels that art as a whole can be used to indirectly express transcendentalism and spirituality. "The guy who directed "The Exorcism of Emily Rose. It was a horror movie, but the guy who directed it was a Biola grad (a well-known Christian university in California). He made the movie to question whether Emily Rose was mentally ill or truly possessed by evil. It made people question the idea of transcendence."

So, according to Tyra, art by a Christian does not have to strictly convey Biblical doctrine. Christians are taught that their number one calling in life is to praise God in our talents and skills.

I asked him if he felt musicians who are Christian defy that by not incorporating their faith into their art.

He responded, "Not necessarily. If that band of Christians write and make music with the honor of God without ever mentioning his name, I think that's great. I don't think our lifestyle [as Christians] should be all about words, but I do think there needs to be some words to say 'hey, I'm not just a great guy, I'm a Christian.'"

When it comes to music, the difference between what makes music Christian music and music made by someone who is Christian is the intention. If the intention is to be senile or depressive, that can be, as Professor Tyra stated, "theologically problematic."

Professor Tyra stated, "It's not just about actions. It's our actions and words that go hand in hand." As he said before, it is what you outwardly say about your intentions that differentiate the two. If one outwardly states that they are a Christian band, and are making music to spread God's word, then they are a Christian band. If they make music more for worldly ideas (love, drugs, addiction, etc.), but state they are a Christian, then they'll fall into the "band of Christians" category.

A major difference between a Christian band and a band of Christians is what the lyrics convey. The message the group sends is the gateway to what the audience will interpret. If a band releases music mainly about political propaganda like Rage Against the Machine, they will associate that band with political activism. The same will go for love, mental illness, Christian faith, and more. Lyrics and the sound used to convey them are the keys to any band's relationship with their audience.

## OPINION COLUMN MICHAEL'S CORNER

Kyle Durham, English professor and director of Vanguard University's Writing Center, was the guitarist and lyricist for a metal band when he was in college.

When asked about the background of his band, Durham stated, "I knew that I wanted to be in a hardcore metal band one way or the other, and I knew that I didn't want to be a standard template. At that stage [2008 to 2009], people were starting to get fed up with obvious hardcore and obvious metal... so we really wanted to try something different."

Durham is also a Christian, and so his faith affected the music he played and wrote. "I felt an overwhelming desire to say what I wanted to say but have that formed with the value structure I was raised with. So, it was either vaguely or loosely Christian, or it was a story." While in the band, he got a lot of pressure to make it a Christian band, or make it a non-Christian, purely metal band.

He was inspired by the band Thrice, who he feels flowed back and forth from a Christian band and a band of Christians. Dustin Kensrue, their lead singer, was a worship leader at the Mars Hill Church in Orange County. Durham said, "If that guy [Kensrue] can do it, so can I. I don't have to go full on Air1 Rock, and I also didn't have to go and pretend I'm not a Christian or deny something I don't feel like I need to deny."

While some Christians are comfortable with expressing their faith in their art, others may feel like it is more of a responsibility, and might try to stray away from doing so. Durham feels as though Christian artists don't have a responsibility to spread the word of God through their art.

Durham said, "We should be spreading the gospel without guilt, mandate, or anybody else telling us what to do. If we do it because we want somebody else to be happy, how is that different than storing up your crowns in heaven? We should use our gifts for God, but we should do so organically and because we want to, not because we feel we ought to."

All in all, Durham felt the major difference between a band of Christians and a Christian band tailored specifically to music boils down to the industry. "In terms of wanting to be in a band and their mission being to spread the word of God, and wanting to be in a band and spread the word of God, but wanting to also write songs about girls dumping them, I think both are completely doable."

Durham finished by saying, "I do think there is a difference, but I don't think there has to be."

When it comes down to it, Christian music compared to music made by Christians fall down to the actions, and the words for those actions. A Christian song can represent having faith in God and urging others to follow in Him. A secular song made by a Christian can express the pain they felt during their heartbreak. The intention is what matters. Is it to inspire? To express their faith? Or to express their emotions? People, including Christians, write music on countless subjects. It's the words, actions, and interpretation that count.

**"We should use our  
gifts for God,**

**but we should do so  
organically and because  
we want to, not because  
we feel we ought to."**

Kyle Durham



## Vanguard's First virtual ticket launch

*By: Michele Acosta*

On Monday, Aug. 16, 2021, Vanguard University launched its very first virtual ticketing system. Vanguard decided to launch virtual ticketing for a safer environment because of COVID.

Athletic Director, Jeff Bussell, stated, “About a year we have been in communication about virtual tickets since COVID took away all of our fans last year. That’s really when HomeTown ticketing came up.”

Vanguard tested HomeTown virtual ticket system by running an event at the school for the baseball playoffs. Bussell said it was very efficient, awesome, and worked well. “People can get their tickets ahead of time and they can get season passes at a discounted rate,” stated Bussell.

Buying tickets is easy with how advanced the system’s technology is.

Bussell states, “There is a QR code to access the tickets and we have people scan that code. Then it brings them to our homepage to buy tickets, so they scan it.”

Men's soccer coach, Randy Dodge believes the biggest issue with paperless tickets is the lack of real social interaction.

Dodge states, “Our society is starting to lack that personal touch and again it just comes down to the social media of everything that we do, that you can do everything on your phone and you don’t have to communicate with people.”



Heath Academic Center, photo by Jenna Kallal

**“People can get their tickets ahead of time and they can get season passes at a discounted rate,”**

**Jeff Bussell**

“So instead of walking up, asking for a ticket, showing a ticket, and saying hey how are you, you go up and show your phone and walk-in.”

Vanguard does not see the university going back to paper tickets because of COVID. Especially with how efficient everything has been within the first few weeks of using the new system.

**For more information about paperless tickets, you can check out Vanguard's athletic website, <https://www.vanguardlions.com/>**

## SPORTS COLUMN

## VU's Fitness Center

By: Isabella Perez

**After the original grand opening of the Fitness Center in Feb. of 2020, the Fitness Center was closed after 2 weeks leading up to the spike of COVID-19 cases in Orange County.**

In an interview, Vanguard University's Assistant Director of Campus Recreation, Kyle Kinney, said he wants to ensure a safe environment for students, faculty, and staff.

After the original grand opening of the Fitness Center in Feb. of 2020, the Fitness Center was closed after 2 weeks leading up to the spike of COVID-19 cases in Orange County.

On Sept. 9, 2021, during an interview, Kinney explains that he is confident with the plan that has been set in place this semester. He states, "In the first two days of being reopened, we had 200 students use the fitness center. Some students more than once. That's about 100 students per day."

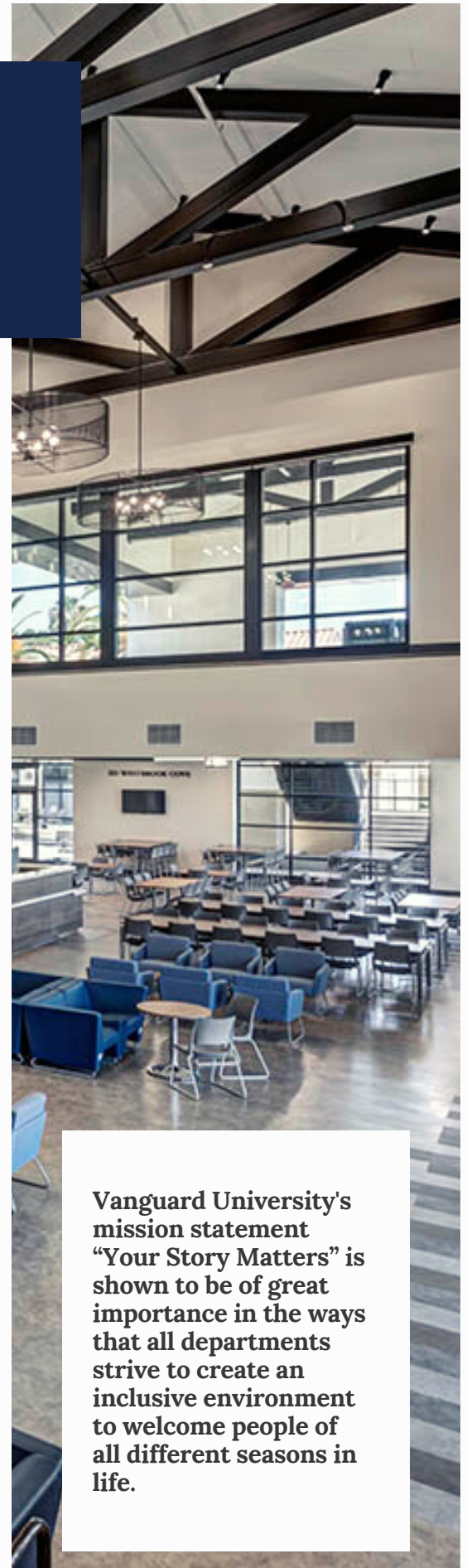
Kinney approximates about 400 students utilized the fitness center in just the first week of being reopened.

The reopening of the Fitness Center comes with new updates regarding appointment making, mask mandates, and more. Kinney tells about the new process of 'reserving a time slot' to workout in the Fitness Center.

"Students can reserve a time slot through the link [imleagues.com/vanguard](https://imleagues.com/vanguard), this is where students and staff can schedule their workout dates and times in advance."

He also introduces a new service that will be made available on campus in the coming months, which will include group workout classes such as Yoga, HIIT, and more. Kinney encourages students and staff of all stages of life and fitness to take advantage of the services that are available on campus to maintain a healthy lifestyle in an environment where all are welcomed.

Apart from the university's on-campus gym, campus recreation also provides a wide range of services to students such as sports rentals, outdoor equipment, and even meal deliveries to students who are in quarantine.



**Vanguard University's mission statement "Your Story Matters" is shown to be of great importance in the ways that all departments strive to create an inclusive environment to welcome people of all different seasons in life.**

VU Fitness Center, photo by Vanguard University

## Meet The Staff



Michael Robles (far left), Jenna Kalal (left), Emily Dodge (middle), Andrea Velasquez-Mejia (right), Kayla Limón (far right). Isabella, Michele and Megan (not shown). Photo by Amanda White

### **Michele Acosta**, Staff Writer & Editor

Michele Acosta is a 3rd year transfer student, studying in English with a minor in journalism. Her career goal is to become a copywriter or go into broadcast journalism. Her favorite things to write about are breaking news in politics, sports, and crime.

### **Emily Dodge**, Editor-in-Chief

Emily Dodge is a Senior English major minoring in journalism and part of the VU Scholars program. She hopes to go into copy editing and creative nonfiction writing. She loves reading, writing, caffeine, and pestering her fiancé to get a cat.

### **Jenna Kallal**, Staff Writer & Editor

Jenna Kallal is a Communications major with an emphasis in emerging media and technology as well as a journalism minor. She is also currently the social media intern for the Global Education and Outreach department. She enjoys writing, playing sports, and getting coffee with friends.

### **Kayla Limón**, Staff Writer & Social Media Manager

Kayla Limón is a Communications Public Relations Major minoring in Journalism. She is the Co-President of the Public Relations Student Society of America Chapter at VU & Social Media Manager for VU's The Voice Newspaper!

### **Megan Luebbberman**, Staff Writer

Megan Luebbberman is a Junior English major, studying creative writing in hopes of writing her own books one day. She loves reading, writing her own short stories, spending time with her friends, and playing with her cat.

### **Isabella Perez**, Staff Writer

Isabella Perez is a Communications major here emphasizing in Tech/ Emerging Media and minoring in Journalism. She enjoys writing, being in nature, cooking, and spending quality time with friends, family, and Jesus!

### **Michael Robles**, Staff Writer

Michael Robles is very passionate about writing and music. He is an aspiring writer and has a major interest in showing Vanguard the concepts and opinions we don't always tend to see.

### **Andrea Velasquez-Mejia**, Staff Writer

Andrea Velasquez-Mejia is a senior English major, minoring in Journalism. She has a passion for creating a positive change on campus which is why she decided to take on the role of being Department lead for the Intercultural Student Programs.

To join our student newspaper, **The Voice**, please reach out to us via our email, [thevoice@vanguard.edu](mailto:thevoice@vanguard.edu)

## Letter From the Editor

By *Emily Dodge*



Emily Dodge in front of the Mahlon E. Layne Bldg, Vanguard University. Photo by Amanda White

This November issue of The Vanguard Voice's newspaper is a very important one to our journalism department at Vanguard University. Over the past few years, the newspaper at Vanguard has dwindled into obscurity. Most students, and even professors, do not know that we exist despite our earliest issue being published in March of 1948. This is our first physical issue since an attempt in March of 2020, over 73 years since Vanguard's newspaper began.

When we attempted to publish our physical issue over a year and a half ago, our goal was to become more known to the Vanguard community. We were successful for a short period of time, but we published our physical issues on Tuesday March 10, 2020. Exactly one week later, the Tuesday of Spring Break, all on-campus residents were told to go home, and campus was shut down.

Over half of the current student body was not here when we published our March issue, and effects of our published issue were short lived. With this current issue, and with physical issues moving forward, our goal is to firmly establish the newspaper as part of campus life.

I have been Editor-in-Chief of the Vanguard University Voice newspaper for over a year, and this semester of news writing has been the most productive and exciting semester I have experienced while being here at Vanguard. The pieces published here are a testimony to the hard work our staff writers have done so far this semester. Many of our writers this semester have not had previous experience in a newspaper or journalism setting, and despite this they have grown exponentially in their writing and in their abilities to find some worth writing about and something worth reading.

**We are accepting guest writers, photographers, and videographers. If you are interested, please reach out to us via our email, the [voice@vanguard.edu](mailto:voice@vanguard.edu) or our submissions form on the Voice Newspaper, <https://vanguarduniversityvoice.com/submit-to-the-voice-newspaper/>**



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