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News

Community briefs: Atherton tree lighting, toy drive and open spots on the Portola Valley planning commission

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Twin brothers, Gianluca and Gianpaolo, 5, decorate a gingerbread house at Atherton's tree lighting ceremony at Holbrook-Palmer Park on Dec. 5, 2019. Photo by Magali Gauthier.

Atherton tree lighting ceremony

The town of Atherton and the Atherton Library will host a tree lighting ceremony on Thursday, Dec. 1, in the civic center at 80 Fair Oaks Lane, from 3:30 to 5 p.m.

The event will feature gingerbread houses, hot cocoa, apple cider, ornaments to decorate and a chance to take photos with Santa Claus.

Find out more [here](#).

Adelante Selby Lane School toy drive

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The Atherton Police Department's Police Activities League and Police Officers' Association are hosting an annual toy drive for students at Adelante Selby Spanish Immersion School in Atherton.

Donors have until Monday, Dec. 19 to drop off an unwrapped toy for children age 5 to 10 at the Police Station, 80 Fair Oaks Lane.

Suggested gifts include art supplies, Legos, science project kits, Hot Wheels, blankets, warm clothes, beads and jewelry making kits, dolls, action figures, and basketball or soccer balls.

Openings on Portola Valley Planning Commission

The Portola Valley Town Council is seeking two volunteers to serve on the town's Planning Commission. One of the terms expires in December 2023 and the other expires in December 2024, according to a town announcement.

The Planning Commission consists of five members appointed by the Town Council, and meetings are held on the first and third Wednesdays of the month. The commission provides recommendations to the Town Council on legislative actions such as amendments to the zoning code and the general plan.

To apply, submit a letter of interest to the Town Council at towncenter@portolavalley.net by 5 p.m. on Monday, Dec. 19. The Town Council will conduct interviews at a meeting on Jan. 4 from 2 to 5 p.m. This time is subject to change, dependent on the number of interviews to be conducted. For more information, contact the Town Clerk Melissa Thurman at towncenter@portolavalley.net.

TeacherUp to launch in 2023

Two local nonprofits are teaming up on an initiative to help address the severe shortage of early childhood educators across the Bay Area by providing academic and career support for adult immigrants.

The program, dubbed TeacherUp, will be run by [Upward Scholars](#) and [Community Equity Collaborative](#). Upward Scholars offers financial, academic and career development support to adults struggling with economic hardship so they can transition from adult schools to community colleges and attend college part-time. Community Equity Collaborative, a Menlo Park-based nonprofit, was formed in 2017 to help solve educational inequities.

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"Early childhood educators are an essential ingredient in the human infrastructure that supports healthy families and strong, local economies," said Community Equity Collaborative (CEC) Executive Director Dayna Chung in a statement. "Unfortunately, COVID-19 revealed and exacerbated systemic inequities, including poverty wages that drive the early educator shortage and force roughly one in three parents to take time off or leave their jobs."

The program builds on the Teacher Pipeline Project, formed in 2018 by CEC to assist community members to enroll in early childhood teaching programs and provided them with stipends, employer connections and webinars.

Latina educators represent one of the largest ECE workforce demographics in the Bay Area yet are among the lowest paid, according to a joint press release from the organizations.

TeacherUp will also complement NannyUp, a joint venture between Upward Scholars and The Institute for Families and Nannies.

— Angela Swartz

Angela Swartz joined The Almanac in 2018 and covers education and small towns. She has a background covering education, city politics and business. [Read more](#)

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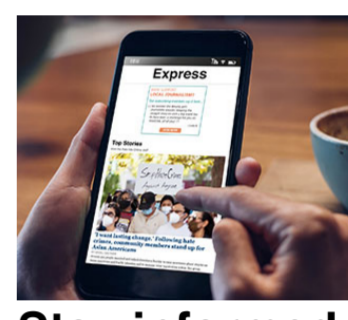
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