



ASHLEY SANCHEZ of Fontana poses at a pop-up by e-commerce giant Shein at the Ontario Mills mall.

# Meet me at the mall: Gen Z sparks a revival

Consumers ages 16 to 26 want to shop — and hang — in person

By Ashley Ahn

Gen Z hasn't crossed over into the metaverse, just yet.

Retail experts say members of the age group have helped malls bounce back after the downturn brought on by the pandemic, in part because the digital space has turned them into shoppers who expect instant gratification. The immediacy of touching, trying out and buying products may be the thing driving them to physical stores.

"This digitally savvy generation is used to having things immediately that they can download, access, watch," said Stephanie Tully, an assistant professor at USC Marshall School of Business. "And so from that perspective, the desire to get physical products immediately makes sense and would explain interest in brick-and-mortar."

Members of Gen Z — those ages 16 to 26 — prefer in-person as much as, if not more than, online shopping, according to a 2023 survey conducted by the International Council of Shopping

Centers. About 97% of respondents in that age group said they shop at brick-and-mortar stores; 95% said they shop online for the convenience.

"Gen Z shoppers are bringing back the mall shopping-center experience," said Kristin Grove, senior vice president of national retail leasing at the global real estate firm JLL. "They want a sense of community. They want to bridge the gap between the social media that they're doing, and meet and shop in person."

The trade group's survey didn't inquire about other generations' shopping habits. But a 2022 report by the marketing agency CM Group (now Marigold) and retail consulting group F'inn found that 47% of Gen Z respondents prefer to shop in-store over online — more than any other generation.

"Despite being the first digitally native generation, virtually all Gen Z customers shop in-store and prefer physical retail at similar rates to previous generations," Ali Esmailzadeh, executive vice president of Brookfield Properties, said about shoppers at the

company's Glendale Galleria.

There is good reason for malls to bank on Gen Z, which makes up 40% of global consumers, with spending power clocking in at \$360 billion.

For 23-year-old Nicole Tan of West Hollywood, online shopping is for browsing, while in-person shopping is for buying.

"I like to try things on," she said as a song from the K-pop group New Jeans played in the background at the Westfield Century City shopping center. "If I see ads on social media and there are sales online, I'd maybe buy stuff online, but I usually like to shop in-store."

Teens have long been the lifeblood of malls, depicted in films such as "Fast Times at Ridgemont High" and "Clueless" as beehives of excitement and activity. But the popularity of online shopping and recent economic turmoil took a toll, with many retail centers either closing, being converted into office space or apartments or taking on unconventional tenants such as grocery stores.

[See Malls, A7]

# UC sets mark for in-state enrollment

More California students claim seats in the competitive university system.

By Teresa Watanabe

The University of California enrolled a record number of California undergraduates in fall 2023, reducing the number of students from other states and countries as it met public and political demands to give more of the system's highly sought-after seats to state residents.

California undergraduate students climbed to 194,571, or 83.4% of the enrolled fall class last year, according to UC data released Friday. That included 42,058 first-year students, a 5% increase over fall 2022, with higher numbers at eight of the nine undergraduate campuses.

UC San Diego enrolled the largest number of California first-year students — 5,547 — while UC Irvine and UC Santa Cruz saw the biggest growth of state students, each adding more than 500 to their fall 2023

first-year class.

Out-of-state and international students fell to their smallest number since fall 2017, now making up 16.5% of undergraduates, compared with 17.4% the previous year.

UC increased the number of enrolled students across most ethnic and racial categories. Asian Americans made up 36.3% of undergraduates in fall 2023, followed by Latinos at 26.2%, white students at 20.3%, Black students at 4.6%, American Indians at 0.6% and Pacific Islanders at 0.2%. The U.S. Supreme Court ruling banning affirmative action in college admissions last year did not affect UC; California law has long prevented the use of race in public education, employment and contracting.

"We are as large as we've ever been; we've provided greater access across the board," said Pamela Brown, UC vice president of institutional research and academic planning. "It's helped us expand the diversity of our students."

UC began enrolling more nonresident students to help offset major state fund-

[See Enrollment, A7]



Alec Baldwin appears on the set of "Rust."

# New charge filed in 'Rust' shooting

Actor faces up to 18 months in prison after grand jury returns a felony indictment.

By Meg James

A New Mexico grand jury has charged actor Alec Baldwin with involuntary manslaughter for his role in the deadly shooting of a cinematographer during production of the ill-fated western movie "Rust."

The indictment, filed Friday, was signed by special prosecutor Kari T. Morrisey, who has been handling the case.

If convicted of the charge,

a fourth-degree felony, Baldwin could serve up to 18 months in prison, according to New Mexico law.

The high-stakes decision to charge the actor comes more than two years after Baldwin accidentally shot cinematographer Halyna Hutchins and director Joel Souza during an Oct. 21, 2021, rehearsal in an old western church at Bonanza Creek Ranch, a popular high desert movie location south of Santa Fe, N.M.

Hutchins died that afternoon, and Souza, who was shot in the shoulder, recovered.

"We look forward to our day in court," Baldwin's attorneys, Luke Nikas and

[See Baldwin, A10]

# A once-rising star's tragic fall

The future seemed bright for Kristin Jeannette-Meyers. Then it all unraveled.

By Harriet Ryan

Kristin Jeannette-Meyers made a career showing America the darkness behind its sunny facades.

As an anchor and reporter for Court TV and CBS News in the 1990s, she specialized in the legal sagas that transfixed the nation, from William Kennedy Smith, the Kennedy cousin acquitted of raping another bar patron in Palm Beach, Fla., to Lorena Bobbitt, a woman who, after what she said was prolonged domestic violence, severed her husband's penis.

With a law degree and blond good looks the camera loved, Jeannette-Meyers reached the pinnacle of her



JOURNALIST Kristin Jeannette-Meyers skyrocketed to fame covering the O.J. Simpson murder trial for Court TV.

success in Los Angeles in 1995 covering the biggest real-life film noir of all, the O.J. Simpson case.

"We felt like we were at the center of the universe," recalled ABC's chief legal affairs correspondent, Dan Abrams, a Court TV colleague who worked side-by-side with Jeannette-Meyers during the former NFL star's murder prosecution. By its stunning conclusion, he said, she was "a star. She was borderline a household name."

Then, within a few years, Jeannette-Meyers vanished from the airwaves and the lives of broadcasting colleagues who had marveled at her work ethic and ambition.

Last summer, she was found dead in Larchmont Village. A coroner's investigator who arrived in June at a dilapidated Spanish villa behind a high hedge and in view of the Hollywood sign

[See Star, A6]

## Israeli officials at odds over Gaza

A wartime Cabinet member says only a cease-fire will win the release of hostages. **WORLD, A3**

## Wall Street hits record heights

A recession seemed inevitable, but it hasn't arrived. Will the Federal Reserve cut interest rates? **BUSINESS, A8**

**Weather**  
Cloudy with some rain. L.A. Basin: 60/54. **B8**

## Atkins joins the race for governor

Democratic state senator is among those vying to succeed Newsom. **CALIFORNIA, B1**



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