



Beyond the Board  
community matters

BRIANNA

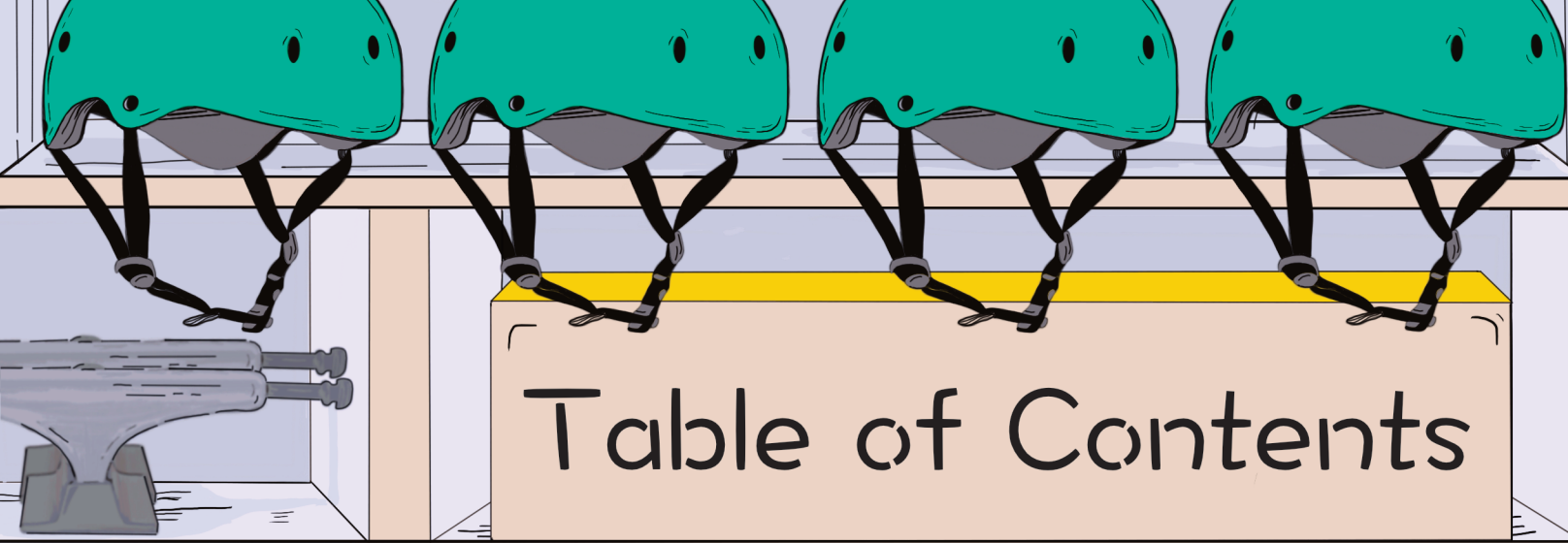
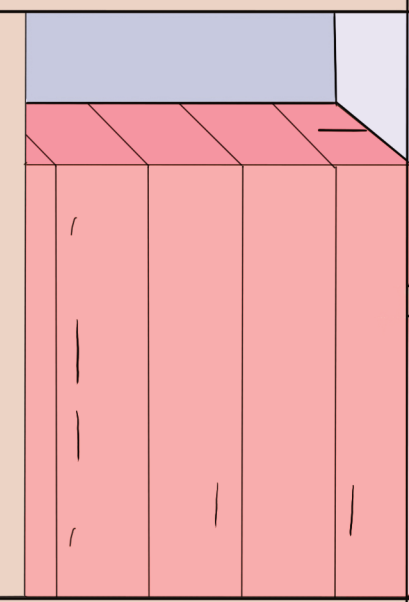
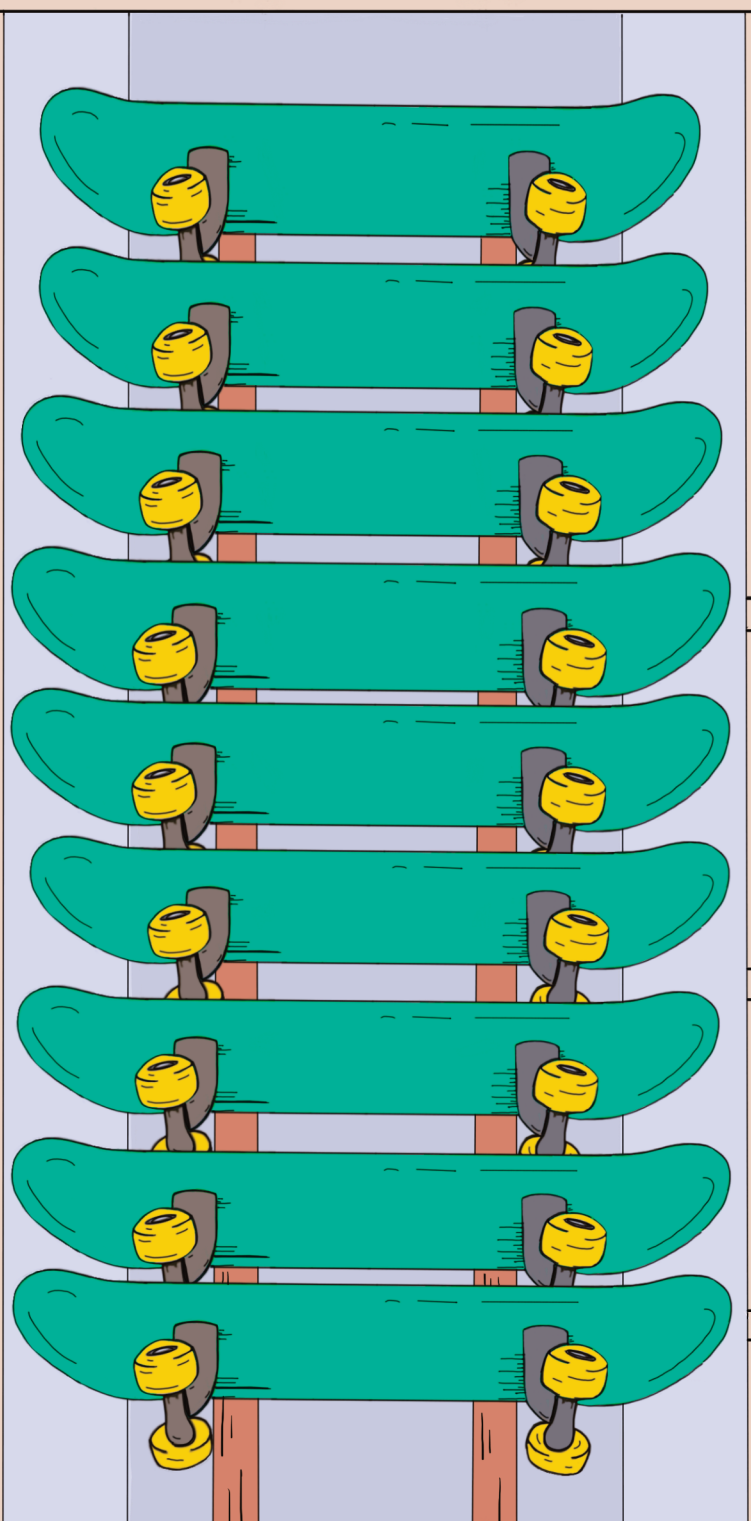


Table of Contents

Participant Quotes



Overview + Findings

Participant Quote



Community Matters



Participant Quotes

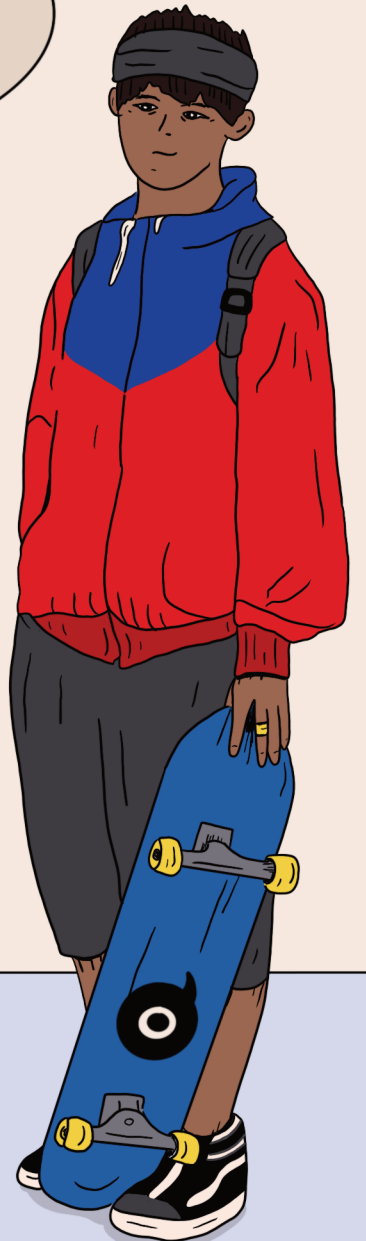
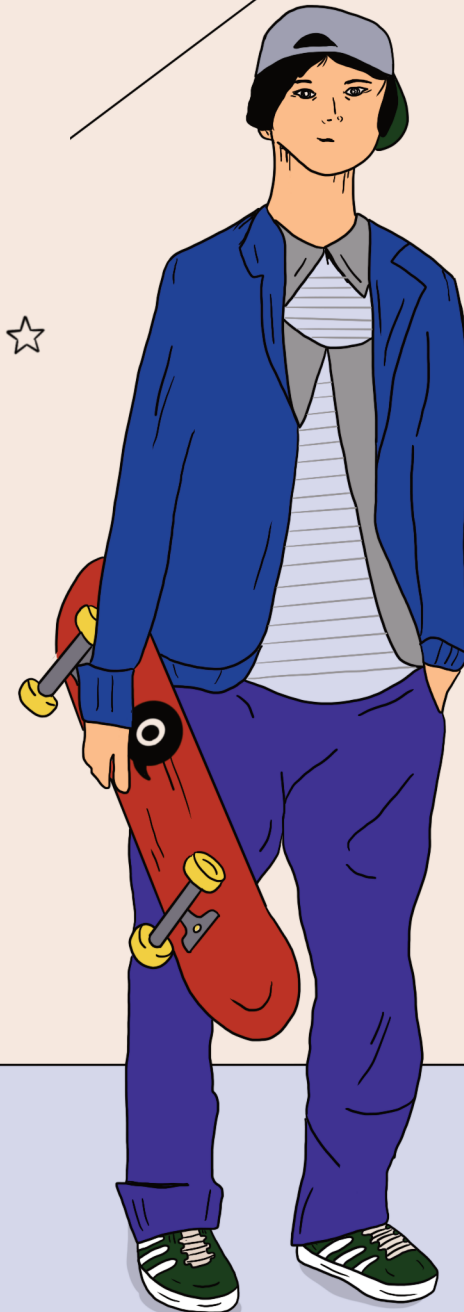
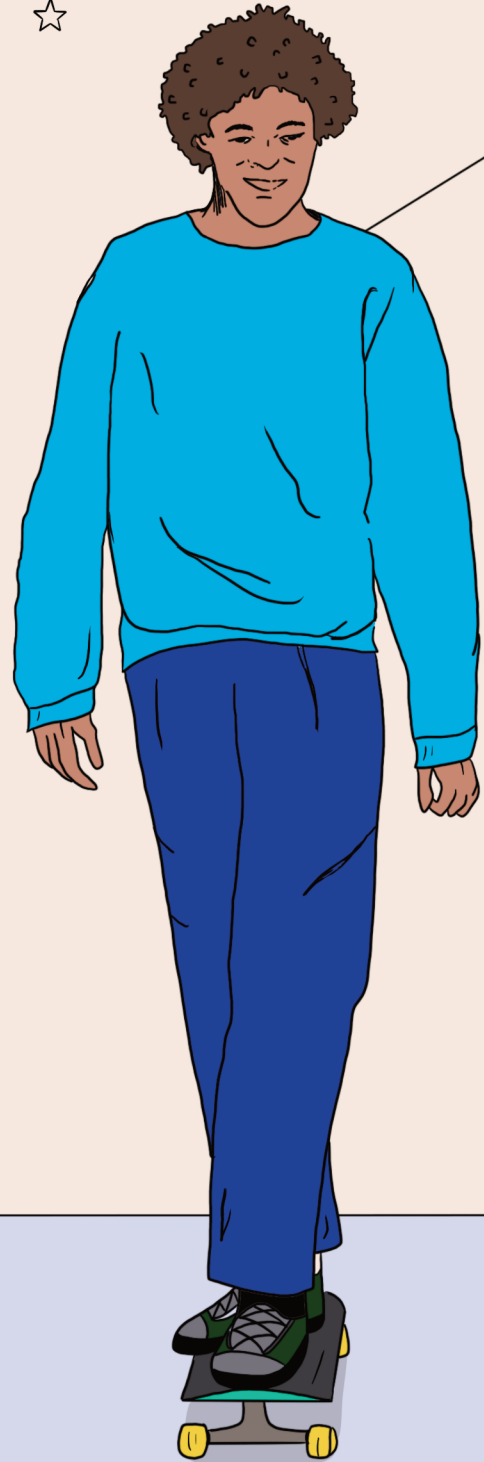


"Every place you go that has anything to do with skateboarding... when you hear a skateboarder on the street that just might be my friend or that could potentially be my friend."

"As I've gotten older I try to be the person that I wanted to see. Like the older person that I would love to have met."

"On the surface skateboarding might just look like a sport or an activity that we're trying to be good at or trying to do as much as you can, or be better than your friend or whatever it is. But I think there's a lot of creativity in skateboarding and it taps that creative aspect of your brain."

"In skateboarding, age really doesn't matter because it's just about your skills and how you are with other people."





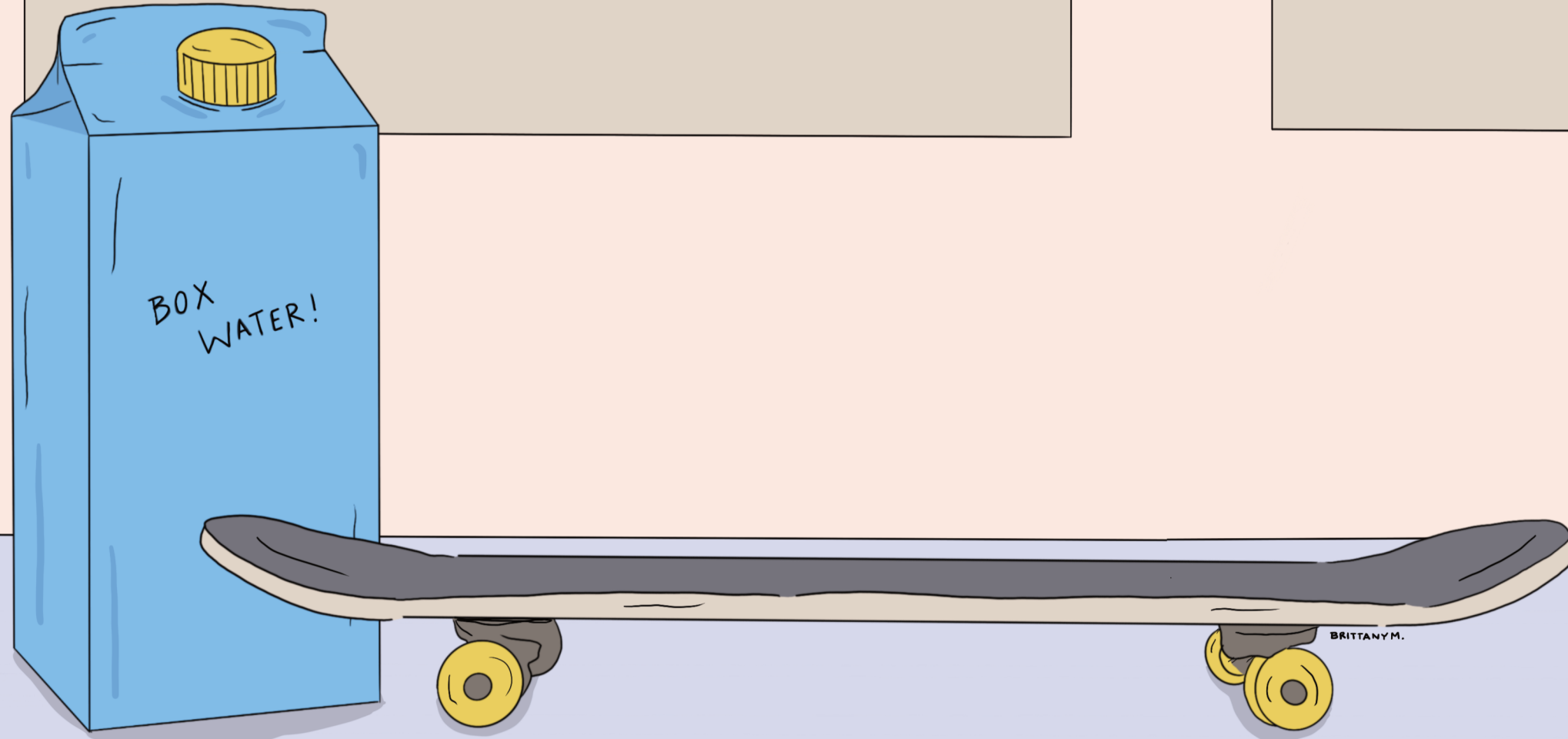
## Overview:

The Beyond the Board study focuses on everyday skaters from minoritized and/or low-income backgrounds.

A team of researchers from the University of Southern California designed the study to answer the following questions:

- How does skateboarding identity affect the way skaters interact with each other? With schools? And with society?
- What challenges do skaters face as individuals? As part of a skateboarding community? As part of a broader community?
- What resources or opportunities exist for and/or elude skaters from low-income and/or minoritized backgrounds?

**FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT THE STUDY, VISIT [HTTP://PULLIAS.USC.EDU/SKATE/](http://pullias.usc.edu/skate/)**



## Findings:

After surveying over 2,400 skateboarders (ages 13-25) and interviewing 120 skateboarders and community members -and by using an assets-based approach to analyze data- we learned that:

1. Skateboarding has strong ties to mental and physical health.
2. Skate parks don't exist in a vacuum. Context matters. Race & gender matter.
3. Skateboarding facilitates community.
4. Skateboarders and non-skaters are unclear about how skills learned from skateboarding translate into educational career opportunities

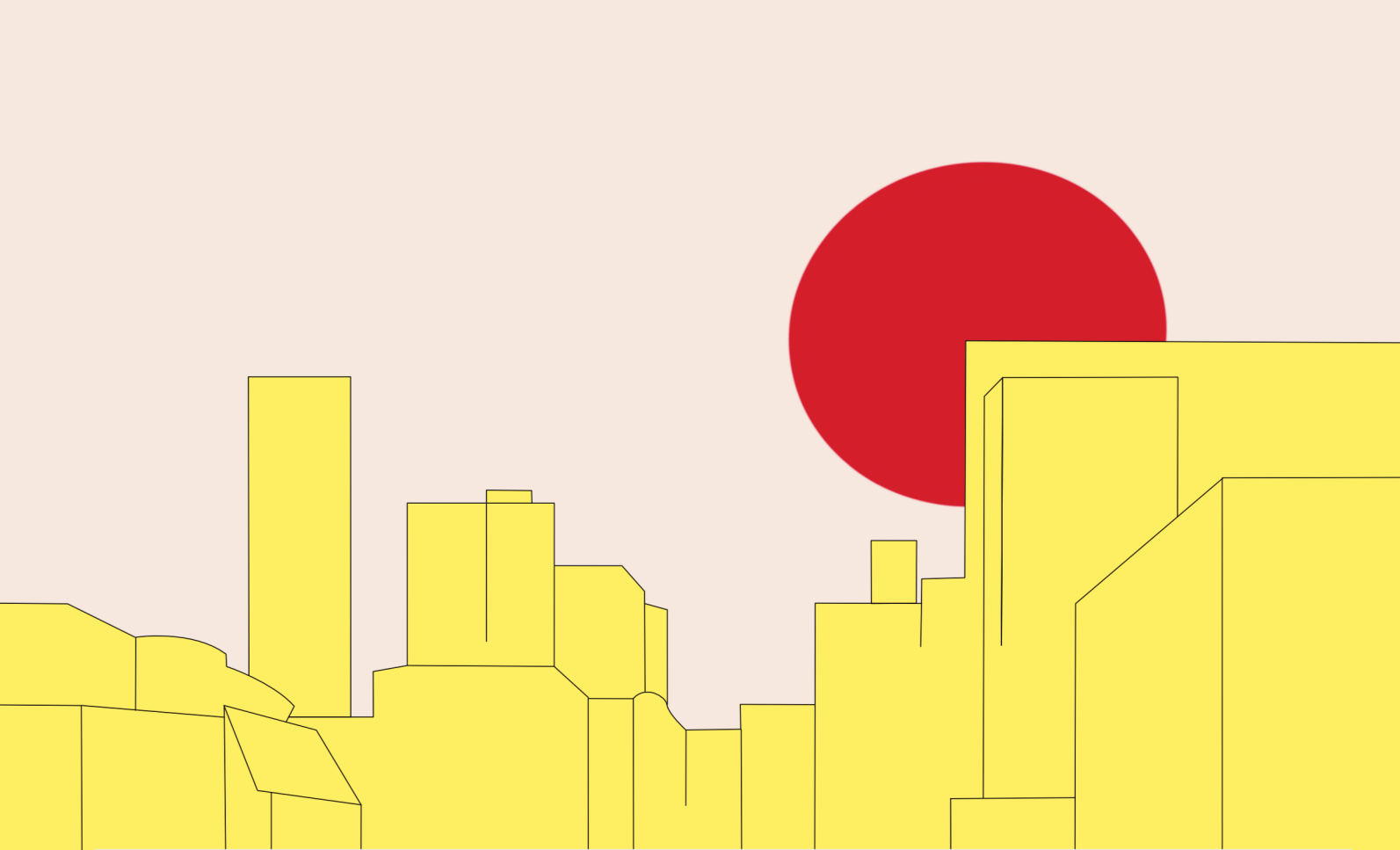
**IN THESE PAGES, WE HIGHLIGHT FINDING #3: COMMUNITY MATTERS.  
ALL THE QUOTES ARE REAL, COLLECTED FROM SKATERS ACROSS THE U.S.**







"I think it's more of like a love for me, and it's almost like an addiction in a sense, too, but it's more of a love. For me -- I've been doing it for so long that it's the only thing that truly comforts me. For me it's pretty much comfort, you know, and community. The thing I like about it is community. Everywhere you go, if you skate, it's like there's always somebody there you can talk to because you skate. There's always that connection. And another thing I like about it is the freedom. You don't have anybody telling you what to do. There's no one way to do it, and everybody's special in their own way, you know? There's no right way, this way, that way, it's however you want to do it. It's like pick up a pencil, you can draw whatever you want. It's exactly what skateboarding can do. Pick up a skateboard and you can do anything you want to do. Whatever you set your mind to do, whatever you can see in your mind, you can do it, and so I think the freedom for me is what I love about it."

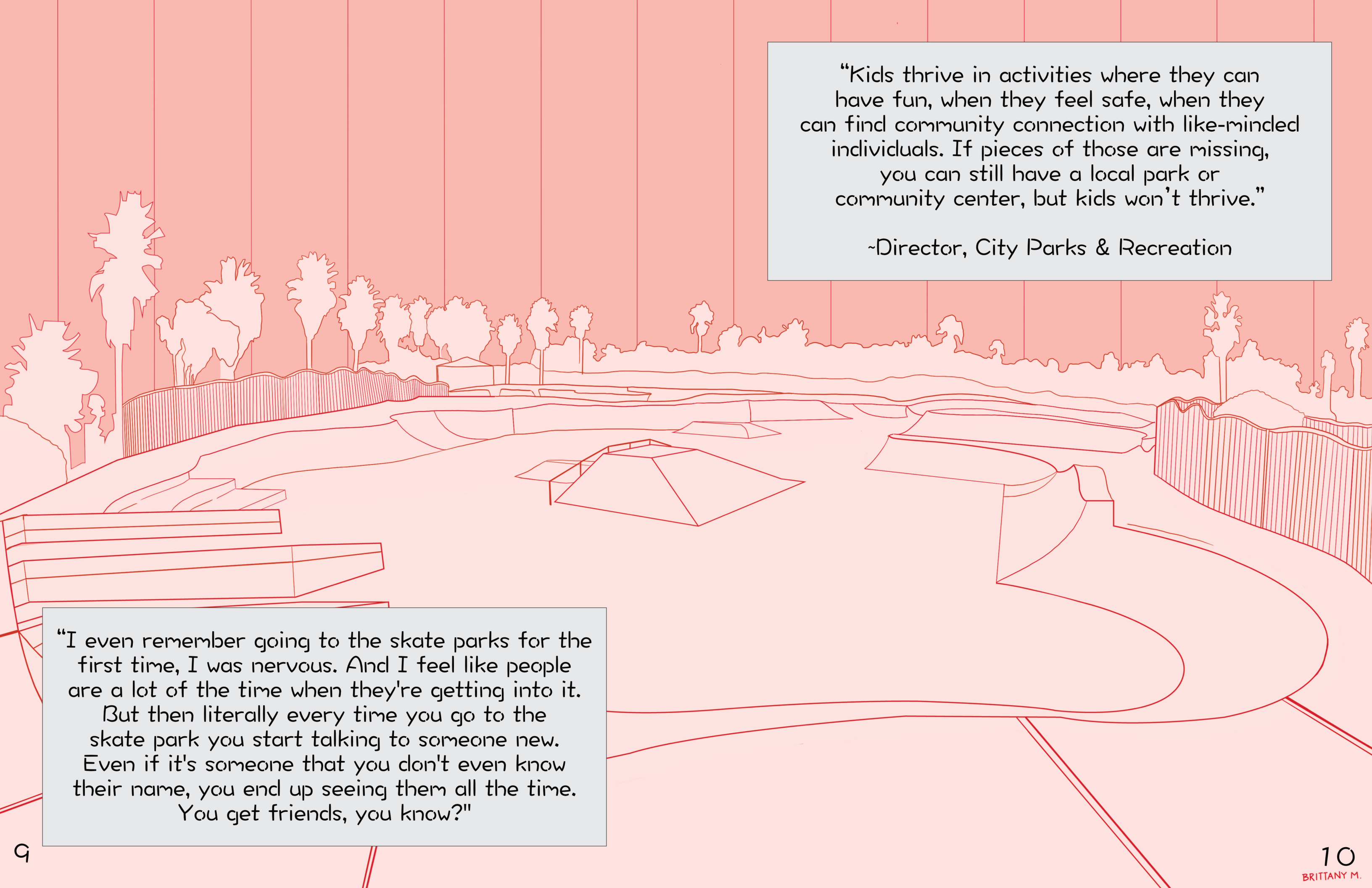
A stylized illustration of a city skyline with various yellow buildings of different heights and shapes. A large, solid red circle representing the sun is positioned in the upper center, partially behind the buildings. The background is a light yellow color.

"In skateboarding, you can always ask your friends. Like, say if I'm struggling with a trick, I can ask one of my friends who knows how to do it. "Hey, can you teach me how to do this?" And it's that same mentality, you can ask for help, like skateboarding and school, and whatever, in life... And you're good, if you're not scared to ask for help, you can learn a lot."

A key study finding was that skateboarding played a vital role for young people in developing relationships across racial, cultural, gender and generational divides. The informal nature of skateboarding created a sense of 'camaraderie' rather than competition among participants. Skate spaces acted as 'open' learning environments where skaters drew upon the expertise of others to gain a deeper knowledge of skateboarding tricks, norms, and values. Skaters frequently referred to their skateboarding friends as 'family' and discussed how the 'familial' space allowed them to thrive. Skaters continued the tradition of welcoming new skaters through a practice of sharing, caring, and creating with other skaters throughout their lives.

**[CHECK OUT THE REPORT FOR MORE INFO]**



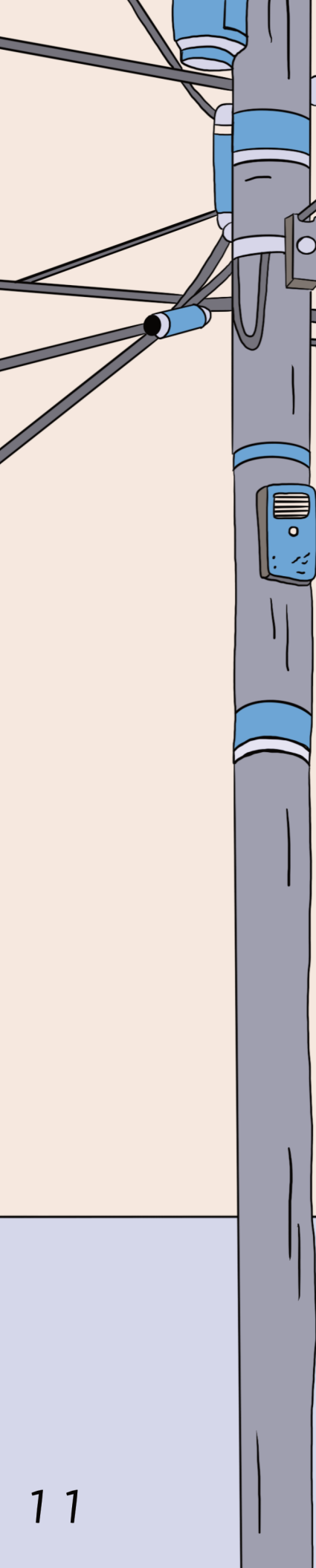


“Kids thrive in activities where they can have fun, when they feel safe, when they can find community connection with like-minded individuals. If pieces of those are missing, you can still have a local park or community center, but kids won’t thrive.”

~Director, City Parks & Recreation

“I even remember going to the skate parks for the first time, I was nervous. And I feel like people are a lot of the time when they're getting into it. But then literally every time you go to the skate park you start talking to someone new. Even if it's someone that you don't even know their name, you end up seeing them all the time. You get friends, you know?”





"It's very good on transportation... It brings a sense of community for teenagers because if you see another person riding their skateboard you're like, 'yo! What up? wanna ride around with me? I got nothing else to do, you busy?'"



"People care so much, so I feel like with skateboarding, you don't care. It's just you, your friends, and your board, and I feel like that's what matters the most."



"Not everything in skateboarding can always be healthy... but you really find authentic connections and authentic community. It's interesting because a lot of people talk. A lot of communities exist like that, but I feel like, around skateboarding, it really does mean something."

**SUGGESTED CITATION:  
CORWIN, Z.B., WILLIAMS, N. & MIN, B. (2020).  
BEYOND THE BOARD: A ZINE ABOUT COMMUNITY MATTERS.  
LOS ANGELES, PULLIAS CENTER FOR HIGHER EDUCATION.**

**[PULLIAS.USC.EDU/SKATE](https://pullias.usc.edu/skate)**

**[@USCSKATESTUDY](https://www.instagram.com/uscskatestudy)**



**THE SKATEPARK PROJECT™**

**RESEARCH FOR THE CONTENT OF THE ZINE WAS SUPPORTED BY A GRANT  
FROM THE SKATEPARK PROJECT (FORMERLY TONY HAWK FOUNDATION).  
THE DESIGN OF THE ZINE WAS SUPPORTED BY A GRANT FROM USC'S  
UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH ASSOCIATES PROGRAM.**

**THE RESEARCH TEAM FOR THIS PROJECT INCLUDED:  
ZOE CORWIN, TATTIYA MARUCO, ROBERT REICHARDT, CHRISTINE ROCHA,  
MARIA ROMERO-MORALES & NEFTALIE WILLIAMS**

**GRAPHICS WERE DESIGNED BY:  
BRITTANY MIN [[@BRIT.OF.WORK](https://www.instagram.com/brit.of.work)/[BRIT.JKM@GMAIL.COM](mailto:brit.jkm@gmail.com)]**