The Gift of Teaching:
Mathematics and Science Education Inspires the Next Generation
We live in an increasingly high-tech world. Understanding the complex relations between science, technology, and society is one of the most crucial tasks facing us today.

As an associate professor of English, I focus my research on cultural interconnections between science, literature, and media. I am fascinated by the ways in which the stories we tell ourselves as a society—whether in novels, or movies, or video games, or virtual worlds like Second Life—not only reflect, but also help to shape the impact of science and technology on our everyday lives. For example, I have investigated how the early history of nanotechnology research was strongly influenced by ideas coming out of science fiction, and how video games have informed recent developments in the molecular sciences, at both a social and a technical level.

I teach my students that, in order to be good citizens of this world, we must recognize that science is not separate from culture, but is intimately involved in culture. Science and innovation now play key roles in a bewildering number of issues that deeply affect our human values, our politics, our economies, and the conditions of life on this planet. To address these matters, we must be familiar with the forms of knowledge associated with the sciences, as well as the skills of critical analysis, historical inquiry, and cultural research associated with the humanities. In this way, armed with the best tools available in both the sciences and the humanities, we are able to act intelligently and effectively in a world that often seems to be accelerating into the future—a world that often seems to resemble the stuff of science fiction.
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ON THE COVER:

Annaliese Franz, an assistant professor of chemistry, consults with student Audrey Huang in the COSMOS program for high school students. More about the program can be found on page 16.

Credit: Robert Durell
CORRECTION: SPRING 2010 ISSUE

Donors Make the Difference, page 22, Estate Gift Establishes Professorship in Opera

The article discussing the late Jan and Beta Popper’s estate gift, which established a professorship in opera, mistakenly referred to Jan Popper as a “composer.” In fact, Jan was a well-known conductor, scholar and producer of opera. Together, Jan and Beta Popper are credited with offering the first West Coast production of Mozart’s Così fan tutte. They also presented operas in China, Japan, Taiwan, Iran, Belgium and Austria.

COMMENTS?

Comments and questions about this issue of College Currents can be sent to the editor at currentseditor@ucdavis.edu.

UPDATE YOUR INFORMATION

Update your information online at the College of Letters and Science website: www.ls.ucdavis.edu. If you would prefer not to receive this magazine, please email lsdevelopment@ucdavis.edu.

PARENTS

If your Letters and Science graduate has moved, please give us his or her new address so we can stay in touch! Please send email to lsdevelopment@ucdavis.edu.

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Many of our readers have contacted us to try to get in touch with the individuals that are written about in the magazine. To find someone at UC Davis, navigate to:

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THANK YOU

As we publish our Annual Report issue, we want to thank you for your continued support of the College of Letters and Science. It truly makes a difference.
Fall is upon us! In mid-September, students will arrive at UC Davis from across the state, the nation and the world for a new academic year. There is an excitement and energy in the air. Just take a walk across the Quad or bike through campus in this still very warm part of the year and you can feel the enthusiasm for new possibilities, whether they are in education, research or other exciting programs.

We are so pleased to mail you College Currents, now in its fifth year. This annual report issue of College Currents is always an important one for us. It is an opportunity to recognize all of the donors from the past fiscal year, and it provides a summary of how many of our friends, alumni, and parents—you—gave to the college’s departments and programs. We are pleased to announce we had our best year in fundraising for the college, thanks to all of you. As state funding continues to wane, we must count on your ongoing support to continue to make the College of Letters and Science one of the top-ranked colleges for public education and research in the country. Thank you for your support.

We hope you enjoy this issue, and always appreciate your feedback and letters. Thank you and keep them coming.

Until spring,

Winston Ko, Dean, Division of Mathematical and Physical Sciences

George R. Mangun, Dean, Division of Social Sciences

Jessie Ann Owens, Dean, Division of Humanities, Arts and Cultural Studies

Dean George R. Mangun, Dean Jessie Ann Owens, and Dean Winston Ko
IN THE B.A.G.

Plastic shopping bags are now recognized as a challenging environmental problem, but associate professor of design ANN SAVAGEAU has come up with an innovative, interactive project that addresses this excess: Bags Across the Globe (BAG), which has operated in locations as far-flung as Colombia, Estonia and India, works to bring attention to the problem of plastic bags and waste by using textile waste to make bags that can be exchanged as gifts and reused. Savageau and two students traveled to India this summer to work with Conserve India. The project employs the urban poor to collect discarded plastic bags and then refashions them into beautiful, layered designs to be made into bags and then sold internationally.

A TIGER MARKET? AND OTHER HOT TOPICS

While most analysts might think first of the effect of Tiger Woods’ affairs on Woods’ own earnings, UC Davis faculty explored the significant—indeed, much larger—ramifications for shareholders. Professors VICTOR STANGO and CHRISTOPHER KNITTEL looked at stock market returns for the 13 trading days between Tiger Woods’ scandal-revealing car crash and his announcement of his indefinite leave from professional golf, and found that shareholders in eight companies that sponsored Woods—including Nike and Gatorade—lost a collective $5 to $12 billion in the wake of the scandal. Their research is now widely quoted across the globe.

In even wider-ranging research, economist ROBERT FEENSTRA was recently cited in the Wall Street Journal, explaining that a portion of the recent gains in U.S. productivity could in fact be illusory, with the impression that the gains were from domestic workers but instead were from companies moving more production overseas.

Meanwhile, contrary to what many might assume, economist GIOVANNI PERI has recently shown that immigration boosts wages, rather than lowering them, as many anti-immigration politicians have assumed. Peri’s examination of five decades of immigration data—published as a National Bureau of Economic Research paper—shows that immigrants push native-born workers into better-paying positions, resulting in a wage bump of 0.5 percent for each percentage of the workforce that is foreign-born.

HUMAN RIGHTS MINOR A MAJOR STEP

Students at UC Davis now have the opportunity to formally study one of the most important concerns of our times: human rights. A new interdisciplinary minor, the product of faculty research and student interest, will ask students to approach the study of human rights from multiple perspectives: in litera-
ture, art, and music; in history; and as a problem for contemporary social policy. The minor, which draws on existing courses, is a joint effort of the religious studies, history, and Spanish and Portuguese departments and the Latin American and hemispheric studies program. It has already attracted enormous interest from students. Says KEITH WATENPAUGH, associate professor of religious studies: “UC Davis as a community of students and scholars has an important role to play in the understanding, promotion and protection of human rights.”

**TINY COLLISIONS, BIG RESULTS**

Crashes aren’t usually a good thing—but in physics, they’re revealing exciting new findings. Slamming gold atoms together at high speeds, for instance, doesn’t just sound strange: it creates something strange. When nine UC Davis physicists, working with others at the U.S. Department of Energy’s Brookhaven National Laboratory, did it, they created new particles in a “quark-gluon plasma” that’s similar to what existed just microseconds after the Big Bang. What resulted was an “antihypertriton,” a composed of antimatter and “strange” quarks. Being able to make these new antinuclei opens up a new field of nuclear physics, according to associate professor of physics MANUEL CALDERON DE LA BARCA SANchez.

The Large Hadron Collider in Switzerland, a project with which a number of UC Davis researchers have been involved (most working on the Compact Muon Solenoid or CMS experiment), had a notable collision of its own: In March, it began colliding particles at an energy of 7 Tera electron-volts, setting a new record. “This milestone clearly marks the beginning, at long last, of the first major physics run of the new accelerator,” wrote UC Davis physics professor JOHN CONWAY. Since then, it has been ramping up the intensity of the beams, creating billions of 7 Tera proton-proton collisions. This has enabled CMS to study a variety of known physics from the standard model, including the “re-discovery” of some particles, as well as to start to perform searches for new physics.

**GREAT GRANTS**

College of Letters and Science professors have also received a number of high-profile grants. Chemist ANNALIESE FRANZ received a $550,000 career grant from the National Science Foundation (NSF) for research into environmentally friendly chemistry. The NSF has also funded a project that geologist LOUISE KELLOGG heads, known as “Geoinformatics: Computational Infrastructure for Geodynamics (CIG).” The foundation funded it at more than $8M over five years. CIG brings together geoscientists and computational scientists to develop state-of-the-art computational methods for applications in seismology, dynamics of the Earth’s crust and mantle, magma migration, the geodynamo and other geophysics applications.

In other exciting grant news, two college faculty members have received prestigious Guggenheim fellowships: ZOILA MENDOZA, professor of Native American Studies, received the fellowship to support her physically demanding work studying a recurring pilgrimage taken by Quechua-speaking Peruvian highlanders through the Andes; PETR JANATA, researcher at the Center for Mind and Brain and associate professor in the Department of Psychology, has received both a Guggenheim fellowship and a Fulbright scholarship to support his interdisciplinary work on what the brain’s response to music reveals about the mind.
ALUMNI TAKE OFF

Recent achievements by some alumni from the College of Letters and Science are out of this world—literally, in the case of astronaut TRACY CALDWELL DYSON (Ph.D., Chemistry, ’97), who in April lifted off for a six-month stay on the International Space Station. During her mission—which has been her second space flight—she serves as flight engineer and is expected to make her first space walk and carry out several scientific experiments. She returns to Earth in September.

SUSAN DIX LYONS (M.A., Art History, ’05) is pioneering a very different field, founding a nonprofit organization called Clinica Verde that is building a prototype of an environmentally sustainable health clinic for poor women and children in Nicaragua. The clinic is expected to be completed in November 2010.

A mother-daughter team of alumnae, historians BONNIE FORD (Ph.D., History, ’85) and BRIDGET FORD (Ph.D., History, ’02), participated recently in a roundtable discussion of generations in history at Cal State University, East Bay. They commented on the way their family bond has nurtured their progress as historians. As Bridget Ford said in her remarks, “My path to becoming a historian was perhaps as circuitous as any other individual’s, although made much easier by my mom’s example and support, and in her hard work opening doors for me. In our case the ‘opening of doors’ is quite literal, since I also attended UC Davis to earn my Ph.D., beginning my graduate work just eight years after my mom had completed hers.”

Two alumni have published new books: KEVIN COCHRANE (M.A., Economics, ’92) has published a popular economic history of the world, seen through the lens of ceramics, called The Potter’s Keeper. And CHRISTINE COLON (Ph.D., English, ’00) is the co-author of Singled Out, which received an Award of Merit as part of the 2010 Christianity Today Book Awards.

Chemistry and art studio grad DAVE MULLER (B.A.S., Chemistry and Art Studio, ‘89) has achieved prominence as an artist in recent years—and one recent work has really hit the big time: a 100-foot-long mural commissioned for Cowboy Stadium in Dallas made its debut last season. Muller told the dallasnews.com (the online site for the Dallas Morning News): “For me it’s a big thrill to take a part of this, just on principle I think it’s very important that art is reestablished as something in society that is just as important as anything else.”

DOCUMENTING REGIONAL CHANGE

UC Davis’ Art of Regional Change (ARC) will get more regional exposure this fall when a 30-minute documentary produced by ARC is slated to air on KVIE, Sacramento’s PBS affiliate. The documentary, which ARC director jesikah maria ross undertook in partnership with KVIE, focuses on a project that brought together rural youth, community leaders, media artists, and university scholars to document efforts at community revitalization in the Blue Mountain region of the Sierra Nevada.
WHY WE PLAY FAIR

We’ve all heard cries of “That’s not fair!” on the playground. But how did cooperation, a concern with fairness, and punishments to enforce such norms evolve? A new study co-authored by UC Davis anthropologist RICHARD MCELREATH posits that the cooperative nature of societies depends in part on historical forces, such as religious beliefs and the growth of market transactions, and that the extent to which a society uses punishment to enforce norms increases and decreases with the number of people in a society. The research—which spanned three continents and was published in Science magazine—also looked at why communities often cooperate in diverse ways, from mutual defense to conservation, even though such communal acts may be individually costly.

GREEN LIGHTING GRANTS

The California Lighting Technology Center has been so successful and fast-moving that it has outgrown its original facility, moving into one twice as big last winter. And its innovations in energy-efficient lighting have attracted some $10 million in new grants to boot, including $5 million from the U.S. Department of Labor and the National Electrical Contractors Association to train contractors in advanced energy-efficient lighting and a total of $5.2 million from the California Energy Commission for lighting research and for commercial lighting retrofits.

GEOLOGY BREAKS NEW GROUND

Researchers from the geology department have been unearthing exciting and sometimes surprising new findings. A team that includes professor HOWARD SPERO mined a four-century-old cache of oyster shells, dumped in a well long ago at Jamestown, VA, to shed new light on the near-disappearance of the historic early American colony, finding that analysis of oxygen isotopes in the oyster shells pointed to a crippling drought as the culprit. Spero was a co-first author on the study, published by the journal Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences.

Detailed computer modeling by associate professor MAGALI BILLEN and graduate student MARGARET JADAMEC (now a postdoctoral researcher in Australia), published in May in the journal Nature, shows that the Earth’s mantle flows much faster around a sinking tectonic plate than previously thought, findings that could change how we think about plate tectonics and earthquakes. “Our model suggests that some parts of the mantle are moving at screaming speeds compared to what we can observe directly at the Earth’s surface,” said Billen.

While Billen’s work plumbs the Earth’s depths, another team of researchers that includes UC Davis researcher SARAH ROESKE and graduate student CASEY HUFF are looking to the peaks—of the Alaska Range, that is, which is geologically distinctive and still mysterious in origin. The researchers, together with colleagues from Syracuse University and the University of Alaska, Fairbanks, camped near Mount Deborah for the summer, collecting rocks that they hope will reveal when they emerged from the Earth’s crust.
But geologists don’t limit themselves to working on such ancient movements of the Earth: At the invitation of the United States Geological Survey, UC Davis researchers formed a rapid scientific response team to the devastating earthquake in Haiti last winter, with their work made possible by the W.M. Keck Foundation. The fast-moving project (which is described in part at http://haiti.geology.ucdavis.edu) hopes to map the history of the fault, in part to understand the risk of future earthquakes, and has an especially personal significance for one team member: Graduate student TONY BERNARDIN grew up in Haiti and was there during the tragic quake.

TECHNOLOGY IN—AND OUT OF—THE CLASSROOM

As new technologies develop, UC Davis finds new ways to use them to boost learning—and students themselves sometimes lead the way. Not only does UC Davis have its own iPhone app (UC Davis Mobile), but students are blogging for course credit, downloading course materials on iTunes, and using new software in the classroom. Thanks to new interactive, experimental software developed within the Department of Geology, geology students in courses taught by professors ERIC COWGILL and MICHAEL OSKIN are able to use interactive visualization and data analysis applications in computer lab sessions, letting them generate annotated maps and more.

Assistant professor of design history, theory and criticism JAMES HOUSEFIELD replaced notebook journals with student blogs last year, to enthusiastic response from students—and Housefield himself, who began blogging as a result. And students are creating content collaboratively, too, using the Wiki format; DELMAR LARSON, an assistant professor of chemistry, has created ChemWiki, with the intent of saving students money on expensive textbooks. Faculty members and graduate students review undergraduate contributions, ensuring accuracy.

And learning can be as close as a student’s—or any person’s—phone: UC Davis’ iTunes U store lets the public download free courses recorded by faculty members (at http://itunes.ucdavis.edu). In recent months, two English courses taught by professor TIMOTHY MORTON, have seen nearly 840,000 audio downloads; “Developmental Psychology,” from psychology lecturer Victoria Cross, attracted more than 250,000 audio downloads.

AGREEMENT WITH KOREAN UNIVERSITY EXPANDS GLOBAL COOPERATION

The Department of Chemistry at UC Davis and the Graduate School of Analytical Science and Technology in Chungnam National University, Korea, have created an agreement of academic cooperation, signed this summer by the two universities. It establishes activities such as student and faculty exchange, collaborative research projects, lectures, symposia, seminars, workshops, an exchange of academic information and materials and a collaboration in instructional and cultural programs. “South Korea’s serious investment in Analytical Science is paying off,” said Ko. “We are happy to work with them for the benefit of both societies.” Carlito Lebrilla, chair of the Department of Chemistry, added, “This agreement further strengthens our already extensive collaborations with Asian and specifically Korean Universities and National
Laboratories. The Department of Chemistry values these cooperations that enhances our reach and stature in the international scientific community.”

**TOE THE LINE**

New research from associate professor of psychology and researcher at the Center for Mind and Brain KRISTIN LAGATTUTA may not surprise parents who’ve ever tried to get a little one to put on dress-up clothes for a special occasion: Children as young as 4 to 7 will push back against rules that infringe on their “personal domain,” according to a study published in *Child Development* of which Lagattuta is the lead author. Kids at this age are starting to understand why rules matter—particularly those that provide moral guidance, like telling them not to lie—but they also want to understand what areas of their life they can control themselves. Areas where kids craved “personal jurisdiction”—and were itching to disobey limitations—included friends, hobbies, and clothes. Giving kids choices and control, the study authors conclude, is important for their mental health. The message? Set moral guidelines—but let your kindergartner pick out an outfit for him- or herself.

**40 (AND 50 AND 60!) AND FABULOUS**

Feeling good about yourself? If you’re in your middle years, the answer is probably yes: A long-term study, of which UC Davis psychology researcher RICHARD ROBINS is a co-author, reveals that self-esteem peaks in middle age. (It’s also tied to education, income, health and employment status.) Young adults, however, don’t have it so well: They had the lowest self-esteem in the survey, which tracked adults ranging in age from 25 to 104 over the period from 1986 to 2002. The results, which should encourage anyone heading for a milestone birthday, are reported in the *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*.

**MEDITATION AND MUSIC CAN BOOST MINDS**

If you’ve been meaning to spend more time meditating, here’s a great reason: A study from the Center for Mind and Brain suggests that intensive training in meditation can help people sustain attention and make fine visual distinctions. The results, the first paper to be published from the landmark scientific study of meditation the Shamatha Project, appear in the journal *Psychological Science*. Associate research scientist and project leader CLIFFORD SARON commented, “These results show for the first time that improved perception, often claimed to be an benefit of meditation practice, underlies improvement in sustained attention.”

Meanwhile, another study has shown that listening to music can improve memory even in late-stage Alzheimer’s patients. Familiar music, the study suggests, evokes “autobiographical memory retrieval,” leading researchers at the Center for Mind and Brain, led by PETR JANATA, to theorize that music and memories are associated in a hub in the brain.
NEW AGE ESTIMATE FOR AN OLD UNIVERSE

Determining the age of the universe is a cosmically complex undertaking, but new research from a team that includes associate professor of physics Chris Fassnacht may help. Astronomers are using a gravitational lens—a distant, light-bending clump of dark matter—to make a new estimate of the Hubble constant, which determines the universe’s size and age and which has previously been calculated by using NASA’s Hubble telescope to look at distant supernovae, as well as by measuring radiation left over from the Big Bang. According to Fassnacht, the new method—which relies on the difference in travel time of two light photons as they travel around the gravitational field—provides an independent check on the other two.

A NEAT CHANGE

The college’s Division of Mathematical and Physical Sciences (MPS) boasts a new asset: Nanomaterials in the Environment, Agriculture and Technology (NEAT) has moved from the Office of Research to MPS. According to director Alexandra Navrotsky, the mission of NEAT remains unchanged: to “catalyze and support fundamental interdisciplinary research, across departments and colleges, in materials applicable to many societal needs.”

UNDERSTANDING TOUGH TIMES

UC Davis faculty have been quoted recently commenting on the effects of the Great Recession, as families and homeowners feel the pinch. Sociology professor Fred Block contended in the New York Times that anger about a new federal program to help borrowers who owe more than their homes are worth should be directed not at these individuals, but at banks and the poor regulation that created the housing bubble. “We all believe that people should be rewarded for hard work and ideas,” Block said. “But bubbles, by their nature, are capricious in what they reward, and they violate the moral principles that most people believe in. That is why financial reform legislation is so important.”

Economics professor Ann Huff Stevens was recently cited in the Wall Street Journal, describing the painful effect of the recession on young adults, who may feel the pinch of tough times twice: Not only may these youth have lost their own jobs or earn less, but their parents, too, may have experienced a layoff or unemployment, making them less able to contribute to their children’s support. Stevens points out that such a “double whammy” may have long-term effects on families’ ability to recover.

CHEMISTS FUEL ALTERNATIVE ENERGY FINDINGS

Two recent findings from UC Davis chemistry researchers could give alternative energy sources a boost. Chemistry professor Mark Mascal, with postdoctoral researcher Edward Nikitin, has pioneered a new process that could improve yields of biodiesel from oilseed crops such as safflower by up to 24 percent. The process, described in a paper in the journal Energy & Fuels, converts carbohydrate portions of the plant into a type of ester, resulting in a better-performing fuel cocktail.
Solar energy, too, could become more accessible, thanks to research from professor R. DAVID BRITT and a team of UC Davis and MIT researchers. They are studying how a simple cobalt catalyst can split water molecules—a development that could someday be used to convert sunlight into fuel that can run domestic fuel cells. Eventually, catalysts based on abundant elements such as cobalt could make it economical to convert electricity from solar panels or other renewable sources into hydrogen fuel for storage or use.

WARM-BLOODED ... REPTILES? YES!

Reptiles are cold-blooded, right? Not so fast: A new article by paleontologist RYOSUKE MOTANI of Department of Geology describes how researchers can now measure the long-ago body temperature of extinct reptiles—and have found that ancient marine reptiles regulated their body temperature. The article, in the journal Science, accompanied research from colleagues at the Université Lyon in France that used oxygen isotope measurements in fossil teeth to show that dolphinfish-like ichthyosaurs, long-necked plesiosaurs and coastal mosasaurs regulated their body temperature. That information fits the profile of these animals as active and cruising, rather than lurking in shallows, and Motani hopes to use this new approach to better understand how marine reptiles evolved.

FALL READING

Looking to build your fall reading list? Look no further than recent publications by faculty in Letters and Science. AMY CLARKE, lecturer in the University Writing Program (UWP), has edited a volume of essays, *The Twilight Mystique: Critical Essays on the Novels and Films*, to be published in the fall; her book *Ursula K. LeGuin’s Journey to Post-Feminism* appeared in the spring.

Assistant professor of history JOHN SMOLENSKI looked at the culture of an earlier era in *Friends and Strangers: The Making of a Creole Culture in Colonial Pennsylvania*.

The longest-running prime-time TV series ever has been captured in a book UWP lecturer KARMA WALTONEN co-authored with DENISE DU VERNAY, *The Simpsons in the Classroom: Embiggening the Learning Experience with the Wisdom of Springfield*. Those who want to make a hit in live (rather than animated) entertainment can refer to theatre and dance professor BELLA MERLIN’s guide *Acting: The Basics*.

UC Davis history professor ERIC RAUCHWAY makes his debut as a novelist with *Banana Republican*, a reimagination of the later career of Tom Buchanan (from *The Great Gatsby*) participating in America’s 1920s intervention in Nicaragua.

Professor Emerita of English MARIJANE OSBORN explores a different sort of imaginary world in *Nine Medieval Romances of Magic*, a modern-English translation of the fairy legends of medieval Britain.

Physics professor JOHN TERNING is a co-author of *Extra Dimensions in Space and Time*, and mathematics professor emeritus SHERMAN STEIN has written *The Survival Guide for Outsiders: How to Protect Yourself from Politicians, Experts and Other Insiders*, which crunches the numbers to show how statistics are often misused or manipulated to push agendas.

American Studies professor CAROLYN DE LA PEÑA offers a cultural history of something we often take
for granted—sweeteners—with Empty Pleasures: The Story of Artificial Sweeteners from Saccharin to Splenda. And anthropology professor LI ZHANG looks at the boom in gated communities among the new Chinese middle class with In Search of Paradise: Middle-Class Living in a Chinese Metropolis.

**STUDENTS IN THE NEWS**

Students from the College of Letters and Science have been generating plenty of buzz, as well. Three classics majors took first place in four out of six prestigious national exams in ancient Greek and Latin, the best showing ever for the UC Davis chapter of Eta Sigma Phi, the honor society sponsoring the exams. ILAN GONZALEZ-HIRSHFIELD placed first in Intermediate Greek and Advanced Latin; and second in translation from English to Latin; ZOË STACHEL placed first in Advanced Greek and third in Koine Greek (a lingua franca, or shared language, in the Eastern Mediterranean after Alexander the Great and before the Arab conquest of the MidEast); CELSIANA WARWICK placed first in Koine Greek and second in Intermediate Greek. JOHN RUNDIN, a classics lecturer who has taught all three prize winners, said: “I can attest that they are gifted, dedicated and hard-working students, and wonderful people as well.”

Applied Mathematics Ph.D. candidate PAUL MACH competed in the Amgen Tour of California. Mach, a professional racer for the Bissel Pro Cycling Team, led the “King of the Mountain” competition after Stage 1, meaning he wore the King of the Mountain jersey, at the start in Davis, where the second stage began.

In a very different sort of competition, design student CHRISTINA JOHNSON was the runner-up in Project OR, a Project Runway–style competition at the Outdoor Retailer show in Salt Lake City, and was one of just five students chosen from across the U.S. to participate.

2010 grad FRANK SONG has also been a high achiever in his field even before completing his degree. The economics major ran a full-service real estate firm as well while attending UC Davis and, with his work, paid for his entire education and living expenses while attending full time; he spoke about his success last May in a talk at Cal State East Bay.

Physics student AUSTIN SENDEK, meanwhile, is also thinking big—hella big, as it were. Sendek is petitioning the International System of Units to designate the laid-back Northern California slang term for “lots,” “hella,” as the official prefix to designate 10 to the 27th power. (The next highest prefix, signifying 10 to the 24th, is “yotta.”) An official Facebook page for the effort doesn’t have quite that many fans, but as of summer 2010, it did have more than 60,000 and counting – Google has added its support to the effort.

Two chemistry graduate students were the recipients of highly competitive 2010-11 Achievement Rewards for College Scientists (ARCS) Foundation Awards. JOHN L. JACOBSEN and NGON TRAN were each awarded $8,500 through a campus selection process.

**FACULTY GARNER HONORS**

Faculty from the College of Letters and Sciences have been widely recognized for their work in recent months by the media and their peers and colleagues. • From the Department of English, Associate
Professor YIYUN LI was featured in the prestigious magazine The New Yorker’s June 14 fiction issue as one of 20 writers under age 40 whom the editors selected as the most promising and best of their generation. Li’s first novel, The Vagrants, appeared last year to enthusiastic reviews. • Political Science professor LARRY BERMAN, whose widely acclaimed research focuses on the Vietnam War and American presidency, has been honored by his faculty colleagues as the 2010 Faculty Research Lecturer; the award, from the Academic Senate, is the highest honor that UC Davis faculty bestow on their peers. • Last spring, professor of psychology GREGORY HEREK was honored by his colleagues in the California Psychological Association with the Distinguished Humanitarian Contribution Award, in recognition of his work on behalf of gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgendered individuals. • Geology research associate ROLAND VON HUENE has been awarded the Arthur Holmes Medal and Honorary Membership by the European Geosciences Union. • The Department of Physics has been in the news as well, with professor ANDREAS ALBRECHT featured on an episode of the Discovery Channel’s new series “Through the Wormhole”; Albrecht’s work was also featured in the April issue of Discover Magazine. • JOHN RUNDLE has co-organized a symposium on the hot topic of uncertainty and risk; the symposium, sponsored by the Santa Fe Institute, takes place in October 2010 at the world headquarters of Morgan Stanley. Rundle has also been noted as the ninth-most-cited scholar of the past decade in the field of earthquake research, based on an analysis by Essential Science Indicators; he was featured on ScienceWatch.com as a result. • Distinguished Professor ALEXANDRA NAVROTSKY, director of NEAT (the Nanomaterials in the Environment, Agriculture and Technology), traveled to Japan in August for a unique honor. She was chosen to speak with the Emperor and Empress of Japan when they attended the opening of the 2010 International Conference on Chemical Thermodynamics. • GEORGE ROUSSAS, a distinguished professor of statistics, was elected a Corresponding Member of the Academy of Athens, Greece, in the field of Mathematical Statistics. In electing him a fellow, the society cited Roussas’ fundamental contributions to the field of statistical inference in stochastic processes and also his significant contributions to his university and profession. • Three professors have received fellowships from the American Council of Learned Societies. Professor of History CATHERINE KUDLICK will be researching “Disability and the Hidden History of Smallpox in France, 1700–1900.” Distinguished Professor of English DAVID SIMPSON will spend the year writing a book on “Romanticism and the Stranger,” a study of Romantic responses to the foreign, the strange and the uncanny. Associate Professor of English CLAIRE WATERS will be working on a book about the role of status and expertise in medieval ideas of lay education, especially after the Fourth Lateran Council of 1215. • WAYNE THIEBAUD, an internationally acclaimed artist and professor emeritus of art at UC Davis, is one of 14 Californians being inducted this year into the California Hall of Fame. Thiebaud will be honored at the Crocker Art Museum with “Homecoming,” an exhibition of 75 paintings and drawings opening October 10.
When we think of science and mathematics at UC Davis, we might picture gleaming instruments and top-level research into everything from nanotechnology to cosmology, statistical algorithms to quantum information. College of Letters and Science faculty, after all, have recently received grants for such research projects as the search for more efficient fuels for nuclear reactors and for designing the world’s largest neutrino detector; spent months researching dry lakes in Antarctica to better understand ancient rock formation; and collaborated on the celebrated Large Hadron Collider. Such research by the faculty at the college’s Division of Mathematical and Physical Sciences (MPS) contributes in countless ways to our understanding of our universe.

But for all of this extraordinarily important, high-profile work, there is another, seemingly quieter, but no less important side to mathematics and the science at UC Davis: Teaching, training and mentoring the leaders of the next generation. For faculty in MPS, an essential part of their mission is to spark interest in the sciences in students of all ages that will lead them to make discoveries not yet imagined. It’s a commitment that naturally plays out in undergraduate classrooms, where UC Davis has implemented innovative programs like Physics 7, an inquiry-based approach to teaching physics. This outreach on behalf of math and science education goes well beyond the everyday, as MPS faculty and students alike have worked with California high-school students and even entered grade-school classrooms and founded science outreach and mentoring programs like SEED (Summer Educational Experience for the Economically Disadvantaged), COSMOS (a month-long summer residential program for high school students who are high achieving in math and science) and Explore Math (a program for youths interested in math.) After all, before young students can become mathematicians, physicists or chemists, their interest in math and science has to be piqued—and that’s an area in which UC Davis excels, no less than in research.

UC Davis’ leadership in educating and inspiring young students to pursue math and science is clear, and is exemplified by a number of programs within the Division of Mathematical and Physical Sciences. Some programs are undertaken to fulfill statewide and national imperatives to improve math and science education. In recent years, Presidents Bush and Obama have affirmed America’s commitment to STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) education in the wake of a well-known National Academy of Sciences study, Rising Above the Gathering Storm, that underscored the need for better education in these areas. And California Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger has also implemented a statewide initiative to produce more math and science teachers.

UC Davis has responded by supplying the highest number of graduates who go on to become math and science teachers of any university in California, says Winston Ko, Dean of the Division of Mathematical and Physical Sciences. (These graduates, who leave UC Davis with a B.S. degree, go on to earn a teaching credential prior to entering the classroom.) “Science teaching in the schools is really a national priority,” says Dean Ko. “We have responded to the call of the science and math initiative to interest math and science students in teaching.”
Training Tomorrow's Teachers: Mathematics and Science Teaching

Key to these efforts is UC Davis’ highly successful MAST (Mathematics and Science Teaching) Program, part of the UC-wide California Teach (Cal Teach) initiative. Founded in 2005, MAST—which has grown in enrollment from 22 students in 2006 to more than 400 in the 2009-10 academic year—offers students hands-on experience in the classroom, at all levels of teaching. The progression of the program’s three courses begins with giving students two hours per week in seminar, and two hours teaching in an elementary school, then middle and high school; a fourth course, currently in development, would give students additional experience in either a college or a high-school classroom.

MAST aims to give students real-world pedagogical experience and prepare them for a fifth-year credential program, says program director Howard Day, a professor of geology, who runs the program in conjunction with academic coordinator Mary-Betty Stevenson, a lecturer with 27 years of experience of teaching math to students at all levels. “As the students go through the progression of these courses, they take increasing responsibility for teaching,” Day explains. “In the high school course, we hope that they will actually present an entire lesson in the classroom. In the elementary level, where we mostly have our own freshmen or sophomore students, they’re working mostly one on one and with small groups with elementary school students. But working with students is the core of the program experience.”

The program has attracted its ever-increasing enrollment from the full gamut of math and science disciplines, Day says, thanks to short presentations in introductory courses for math and science majors. “The faculty are incredibly supportive,” Day says. “Going into the classrooms has made the program a lot more visible not only to the students, but equally importantly to the faculty. The faculty advisors are aware of this option and can recommend it to their students, and we always get positive feedback from the instructors supporting the need for good teachers.”

Students, too, appreciate the program. “An important aspect of our program is that we’re using experienced high-school teachers to deliver these courses,” he says. “It’s important that they get this introduction to teaching from people who know, not from people who think about educational policy in the abstract rather than what it takes to deliver an education to kids.”

Training teachers who can deliver that education in science and do it well, Day notes, is of ever-increasing importance to our society. “There’s an incredible need in this country to make sure that our students are scientifically literate,” Day says. “We’re not a very sophisticated society scientifically, despite the fact that our livelihood depends on it. Changing that all begins with teachers and our willingness to support the science and math education our students need.”

By encouraging UC Davis’ rigorously trained science and math undergraduates to enter teaching—and, even more importantly, giving them the practical tools to do so—the MAST program is contributing to that change. Dean Ko commends the program both for the way in which it provides hands-on experience and for its fresh approach to science pedagogy: “MAST gives students a taste of what science teaching is.
like, and it’s important that they are science majors,” he says. “In schools nowadays, there are many science teachers who didn’t receive a degree in science. But it’s not just that you learn more science; it’s also that the students learn how science is taught.” That includes, Dean Ko notes, innovative methods that eschew the traditional lecture-and-labs structure for a more participatory, engaging approach—another area in which UC Davis has been a leader, with the development of the Physics 7 course.

ENGAGING STUDENTS IN LEARNING: PHYSICS 7

Physics 7 is a large-enrollment introductory physics series for bio-science majors, now in its 14th year, taking a novel inquiry-based approach to teaching science. At the core of the one-year series, originally developed by Wendell Potter, senior physics lecturer emeritus, is student interaction in small groups and a strong emphasis on teaching the basic principles of physics, rather than memorizing equations.

This approach follows recent educational research about effective pedagogical models, says David Webb, a senior lecturer in physics who teaches Physics 7B, and gives them the tools they need to approach problems: “The principles of physics are a small set of ideas,” Webb says. “They tie together a lot of things, and they might be conceptually difficult sometimes, but there are not too many of them. Learning physics is not a memorization issue, but students sometimes take physics as a memorization issue, because they are tested on their ability to work calculations and equations. But all the education research I’ve seen says that it’s better to have an understanding of the principles first.”

While Physics 7 includes a lecture each week, students spend much more time in discussion lab sections, broken into smaller groups. “We give students activities to work on,” Webb says. “We write prompts where we ask them to think about particular principles or concepts of physics to try to make sense of them in simple and more complex situations. The prompts get them to start talking, and the TAs and instructors are there when groups stumble over something, to provide Socratic questions that help the students get a better understanding of the issue that’s tripping them up.”

The lab sections, Webb explains, also provide students with a more traditional experience with lab equipment—“partly so that they see that all these concepts are real, and not just words that they’re using, and sometimes actually so that they get some practice making measurements. But everything is aimed at keeping students discussing things with each other for more than two hours, twice a week.”

The back-and-forth that emerges among the students is illuminating, Webb notes, giving an example from a recent class in which about half of the students had reached a different conclusion from the other half on a homework problem concerning magnetic induction. “I thought that when it came time to have the whole-class discussion, we’d have a good give and take,” Webb says. “But a funny thing happened: after about ten minutes of small-group discussion, they had all straightened everything out without any help from me. And that’s the point of the class: to have students discussing things with each other.”

These enlightening discussions lead not only to in-class breakthroughs, but also to measurable results like improved MCAT scores for students who have gone through the program (particularly female students). Strikingly, the gains come not only on physics-specifics portions of the exam, but also in other areas—suggesting, perhaps, that the model of understanding basic principles and applying them to specific problems works. This model may be part of why the course was chosen as an “exemplary practice” by the College Board Advanced Placement Best Practices Course Study project in 2007; Physics 7A and 7B were two of the five college courses, out of 150 nationwide, chosen as models for the reform of the Advanced Placement high-school physics course.

If this teaching model were to reach high schools, Webb says, that might be a boon: “I would almost say I wish every one of our students coming in here had taken a course that was like our Physics 7,” he says. “It’s about thinking about physics and using

“There’s an incredible need in this country to make sure that our students are scientifically literate,” Howard Day says.
the ideas in complicated situations where it may not be so easy to
do a calculation, but you can still in words explain what’s going
on. By my way of thinking, that’s exactly what an advanced place-
ment or introductory physics course should be.”

Indeed, Webb speculates that some of UC Davis’ strength as a
source of California science teachers may be partly attributable to
Physics 7. “I can’t help thinking that our Physics 7 is part of that [strength],” he says. “Every bioscience major comes through the
course, so they get a very different view of what it means to learn
science and to help others learn science than students at many
other places do.” And, Webb adds, when UC Davis graduates
enter the teaching force, they are naturally poised to lead: “We
have very good and intellectually strong students here. If they
enter teaching, they will be leaders in the field.”

While Physics 7 serves non-majors, the physics department and
Physics 7 in particular also foster science education and encour-
geage teaching for majors. Physics undergraduates who are inter-
ested in teaching are being given the opportunity to earn credit
by serving as learning assistants for the course; while in the past
a few students a year have shown interest, says Webb, this fall a
National Science Foundation-funded grant will make it possible
to expand the program, in conjunction with the MAST program.
“Along with that, we’re hiring a mentor/teacher in residence,
someone with high-school physics teaching experience, to work
with these learning assistants,” says Webb. “One way or another,
we’ll probably be introducing a teaching track in our physics ma-
jor for students who are interested in focusing on what they need
to do to get a teaching credential.”

**REACHING TOMORROW’S STUDENTS: MENTORING HIGH-SCHOOL STUDENTS**

While such programs as MAST and Physics 7 help engage cur-
cent UC Davis students in their education and encourage them
to enter education after graduation, a number of programs led
by Division of Mathematical and Physical Sciences faculty reach
out directly to high-school students. This expansion of UC Davis’
educational mission is a natural fit, according to chemistry professor Susan Kauzlarich, the recipient of a 2009 Presidential Award
for Excellence in Science, Mathematics and Engineering Mentoring and the new Faculty Assistant to Dean Ko: “I really believe that UC
Davis is at the forefront of many of the things that are anticipated
by the federal government,” she says. “There’s a lot of recognition
at UC Davis for diversity outreach and mentoring. There’s a lot of
support for faculty who want to do this.”

Kauzlarich herself, known on campus as an outstanding men-
tor, has been instrumental in bringing high-school students to
campus through her longtime work with SEED; sponsored by
the American Chemical Society, the program specifically targets
economically disadvantaged high-school students. “The program
brings students into the lab for an eight-week period, full time,”
Kauzlarich explains. “They work with graduate students, and the
student has a project of his or her own, but it’s usually a part of
a project that we’re all interested in, in my lab. There’s a lot of
discussion back and forth, and they experiment and try to inter-
pret the data. Going through that process interactively with other
people, for many students, is a great experience, especially if at
the end they can say, ‘I’ve achieved something that no one else
has ever done before.’” Providing that kind of inspirational expe-
rience to students who may not have had it before offers them the
sort of “a-ha!” moment that may inspire disadvantaged youth to
continue in the sciences.

Even if such students don’t enter a scientific career, however,
Kauzlarich feels that her approach to mentoring—which empha-
sizes, she says, the transition points from high school to college,
or college to grad school—can create something positive for
the sciences. “My focus has been on women and minorities and
trying to keep them in the pipeline, trying to encourage them to
stay in science,” she says. “It doesn’t matter to me if they become,
ultimately, faculty at a university or a high school teacher or an
elementary school teacher. But I like to help encourage them to
stay in science. If they don’t, however, I want them to get a posi-
tive view of science so that whatever field they enter, they become
advocates for science.”

Kauzlarich seeks to engage students by sharing “the excitement
of discovery, of learning,” she says. To demonstrate that excite-
ment and evoke that enthusiasm, she uses visual examples from
her own research on nanomaterials: “A lot of what we’re doing in
basic research has now translated into teaching moments in the
classroom,” she explains. “Nanomaterials are in the news every
day. Being able to talk in general chemistry about why there are color changes in gold nano-particles of different sizes translates directly into using some of their foundation in optical spectroscopy and electronic structure and explaining why these things have color.”

Making concepts that might seem abstract into a sparkling, fascinating reality might seem to be an even greater challenge for mathematicians, but it’s one to which Professor of Mathematics Jesus De Loera has risen. Among many mentorship activities, he has reached out to younger students by running an annual Math Fest for high school students as well as by serving as the faculty coordinator for Explore Math, a program through which UC Davis mathematics graduate students meet with high-school students interested in math.

“Explore Math was founded and conceived by the graduate students in the department,” De Loera explains; he coordinated NSF grant money to support the project. “Every week, they meet with young kids from the high school level who want to advance more and know the depths of mathematics, and they train them to solve problems and prepare them for mathematical competitions.” The students in the program have worked on such real-world problems as doing a modeling of the absorbency of various diapers. For De Loera, supporting the program directly supports the university’s educational mission. “That’s our purpose: to make sure the graduate students that we educate become extraordinary advocates for mathematics, and that they really bring it to the younger generation. They do a wonderful job.”

The annual Math Fest that De Loera runs (also sponsored by an NSF grant) also reaches out directly to youth; in the past it has been held at UC Davis, but in the future, he says, it will be on the campus of a lower-income high school in Sacramento, in order to reach more low-income students. The festival offers students insights into the real-world applications of math, both serious and fun.

De Loera considers it crucial to reach out to younger students as well, to ensure that the next generations of students are prepared to consider mathematics and science as careers. “If we don’t have enough 20-year-olds, the university will not exist,” he says. “What is happening with mathematics and science is a tragedy in this country.” De Loera considers it particularly important to reach out to minorities and encourage them to enter STEM fields as these sectors of the population grow: “Imagine that in the future, all these Latino and minority kids move away from mathematics. In 20 or 50 years, then this country will be pulled down to the bottom, because there’s nobody doing science. There’s no science, no technology that we can sell.”

Encouraging the best and the brightest to pursue math and science is also the role of the COSMOS program, which brings high-school students to UC Davis for a residential summer program. (It’s one of four such UC programs, but the one at UC Davis is the largest.) The students work closely with faculty, high-school teachers and “Cluster Assistants”—CalTeach students, who are required to have training in inquiry-based learning such as that offered by the Physics 7 series.

Such an example of synergy between efforts to engage high-school students and those to teach undergraduates exemplify the diverse ways in which UC Davis is making a difference in math and science education at all levels.

In the end, it comes down to the university’s strong commitment to teaching, mentoring and engaging students—a commitment that in turn may inspire many of them to teach science to the next generation. It’s an outcome that is deeply fulfilling for many faculty members in the Division of Mathematical and Physical Sciences.

As Susan Kauzlarich says: “At the end of the year, my desk is littered with cards from students thanking me. My kids at home say, ‘Wow, Mom, how come you bring home all these things?’ And I say, ‘Because I’m a teacher, and teachers always get a lot of gifts from their students.’ But watching them succeed is the true gift.” Thanks to the efforts of the Division of Mathematical and Physical Sciences, more and more UC Davis graduates will receive and share the gifts of great teaching.
A decade-long friendship between Pulitzer Prize-winning poet Gary Snyder (photographed here) and the late alumnus Charlie Soderquist will be memorialized with a new endowed faculty position.

The Gary Snyder Endowed Chair in Science and Humanities is supported by a $1 million endowment from the estate of Soderquist, a UC Davis-educated philanthropist, conservationist and entrepreneur who died in 2004.

“Endowed chairs and professorships strengthen a university’s most important resource: its excellent faculty,” Chancellor Linda Katehi said. “They help the faculty excel in learning, discovery and engagement with the broader community for generations to come. We are grateful to the donors who have given so generously to establish these new endowed positions.”

Jessie Ann Owens, dean of the Division of Humanities, Arts and Cultural Studies, lauded Soderquist for setting an example of “involved scholarship” that created a “real connection with the people of Northern California.”

“It is especially fitting that the new Gary Snyder Endowed Chair in Science and Humanities, which represents the distinctive brand of humanities at UC Davis, bears the name of one of our most distinguished faculty,” Owens said. “It celebrates our university-wide focus on collaboration, and our commitment to a kind of humanities that engages with the pressing issues of our time.”

The latest Soderquist gifts bring the total amount to $5.7 million that his estate has given to UC Davis. Former Chancellor Larry Vanderhoef designated $1 million for the Snyder chair in the College of Letters and Science. “The common denominator for Soderquist and Snyder was simple enough – Charlie loved the exceptional intellect,” Vanderhoef said.

Snyder, a professor emeritus in the Department of English, met Soderquist in the mid-1990’s at an end-of-the-year gathering on campus. Soderquist was a UC Regent at the time. They became friends over the next decade, with shared interests in conservation and Tibetan Buddhism, among other subjects. Soderquist also was an author, having published Sturgeon Tales: Stories of the Delta. The book’s listing on Amazon.com still carries a review from Snyder. “These stories from the Sacramento River Delta are the kind of creative and scientific myth-making that gives a whole place life,” Snyder wrote. “A set of river-system fish-as-people tales for grown-ups, it’s a rich mix. Geologic and oceanic lore becomes sturgeon oral histories; Sacramento Valley history blends with catalogs of river-rat bars and sexy fish-spawning scenes.”

The two enjoyed many wide-ranging conversations in which Soderquist displayed an interest and curiosity “in some of the less-ordinary lines of thought that I had been pursuing over the years,” Snyder recalled in an interview. “He was a very far-thinking and astute guy,” Snyder said. “He understood and appreciated what humanism was all about, what a humanistic education was good for.”

With other chairs from Soderquist’s estate gift in environmental toxicology and the Graduate School of Management, Snyder said the chair in science and humanities completes a portrait of a complex man.

“In a way, it really reflects who Charlie was,” he said. “The businessman, the scientist and, by putting me in the mix, his broad curiosity, his awareness of history, literature and philosophy is also acknowledged. I think it’s very appropriate.”

Dean Owens said the Snyder chair will be awarded to a scholar whose work is at the intersection of humanities and science. The first recipient will be selected from current faculty in the Division of Humanities, Arts and Cultural Studies.

Appointment to an endowed chair or professorship is one of the highest honors a university can bestow upon a faculty member. Created through funds that are permanently invested to provide...
annual income in perpetuity, these endowments support stellar teaching and research while, at the same time, ensuring the advancement of knowledge for generations to come.

**INTERNS RECEIVE FIRST SUBSIDIES FROM GIFT**

Three UC Davis students received grants this spring that will allow them to participate in unpaid internships. The grants are funded by the March Family Foundation, which gave $100,000 to establish the endowment supporting unpaid internships for students in the Department of Economics. This endowment is the first of its kind for UC Davis. Alumnus Roy March (B.A., Economics, ’78), one of the officers of the foundation, felt it was important to give students the “real-world” experience before graduating. He told College Currents last spring, “The intern program was probably the most important opportunity in determining my career path. I wanted to give back specifically to an area that had that kind of impact on me.”

**LARGE HADRON COLLIDER INTERPRETED**

Marianne Ryan, a longtime supporter of the arts at UC Davis and an artist herself, has donated two works of her 22-piece suite of paintings titled “New Nation Under God Particle.” The collection was created after she visited the Large Hadron Collider (LHC) project in CERN, Switzerland, currently the world’s largest and highest-energy particle accelerator. She gave the works to the dean’s office in the Division of Mathematical and Physical Sciences, in recognition of the many physicists from UC Davis who have worked for more than 15 years on the Large Hadron Collider project.

The two pieces created by Ryan in 2008, titled NW and before, are on watercolor paper, with acrylic paint, pastels, colored pencil, string and pencil shavings. Of her gift, Ryan said, “The LHC represents super human accomplishment. Harmony among many nations has occurred, thanks to this project. The assembly of mankind’s most beautiful and far-reaching equipment has been completed and the detection process has begun. The universal language of physics serves as the vehicle for better understanding among nations. Hallelujah!”

Ryan will give a talk and exhibit her LHC works at the Commonwealth Club in San Francisco next May. The exhibition will also include photographs by Richard Breedon, a physicist at UC Davis who has also worked on the project.

**AGILENT GIVES $400,000 EQUIPMENT FOR HEALTH**

Agilent Technologies, Inc. recently made in-kind gifts, including a mass spectrometer that can measure the elemental composition of molecules, valued at more than $400,000, to the Department of Chemistry. The instrument, which was on loan and now gifted to the college this year, has helped chemistry professor and researcher Carlito Lebrilla launch the Foods for Health Initiative, which investigates how the foods we eat help our health. In 2008, his work with the equipment helped investigate the components of breast milk to reveal how it nourishes infants and protects them from disease.
MEMORY OF LOVED ONE CREATES OPPORTUNITIES FOR STUDENTS

Ryan Couch was a graduate student in physics at UC Davis when he passed away, greatly missed by his family, Willard (Bill) and Carol Couch, his parents, and his brother. The Couch family decided to honor him with a second memorial endowment, one that would further support graduate students by helping them balance the pursuit of a rigorous physics degree with the financial strain of graduate study.

The Couch family established the Ryan Couch Memorial Fund, shortly after Ryan’s death in 1995. Ryan received a B.S. in Physics from UC Davis, an M.S. in Computer Science from Long Beach State, and was to receive a Ph.D. in physics from UC Davis in 1995-96. This memorial endowment has helped provide well over a dozen travel awards to physics graduate students to present papers in their field at major conferences all across the globe.

This year, the family created a second endowment, the Ryan Couch Memorial Fellowship with a generous $100,000 gift, which includes a deferred portion connected to Bill and Carol’s estate. This gift, once fully realized, will support one or more graduate students in the physics department in perpetuity with a minimum of $4,000 a year during their time at UC Davis.

“We are delighted to honor the memory of our son and brother through the creation of this new graduate fellowship – advancing graduate study in physics for generations of students to come,” said Bill Couch on behalf of his family.

ESTATE GIFT ESTABLISHES FIRST ENDOWMENT FUND

The founding chair of the Department of Psychology, William F. Dukes, left a portion of his estate to UC Davis when he passed away at the age of 90 in 2008. Dukes was chair of psychology from 1953 to 1960, and to recognize and honor his legacy and his efforts to establish the discipline of psychology at the university, the department has used the proceeds from the estate gift to create the William F. Dukes Fund in Psychology. It is the first endowed fund in the department’s history. The fund will support activities that further the academic excellence of the department, including supporting visiting speakers and scholars, academic conferences and lectures, graduate fellowships, and undergraduate awards.

“We are so grateful that the Dukes gift was directed to the Department of Psychology and are using it towards areas of undergraduate education that can truly make a difference,” said Debra Long, chair of the Department of Psychology. “We plan to offer travel awards to undergraduates for paper and poster presentations and professional conferences, and will expand our annual Psychology Conference by adding a poster session for undergraduate projects, with a cash prize for the best poster. In the future, it will support special events for undergraduates in collaboration with our honor society.”

Dukes, a professor of psychology at UC Davis, had a successful career that spanned more than 40 years, 20 of which were at UC Davis. He was not only the Department of Psychology’s first chair, but also served as an associate dean in the College of Letters and Science for seven years, an acting dean in the college for a year, and as Vice Chancellor of Academic Affairs for three years.

Ron Mangun, dean of the Division of Social Sciences, says this kind of gift is vital to UC Davis’ future success. “The endowment from Professor Dukes is an important gift that can provide transformational opportunities for student and faculty scholarship,” he said. “As state funding decreases, such gifts will be increasingly important for UC Davis to continue its mission of providing first-rate educational opportunities for our students, as well as to advance human knowledge through research and scholarship in the public interest.”
Andréa Bowie

Andréa Bowie, a sociology major, received a posthumous B.A. degree at this spring’s commencement for the College of Letters and Science. Andréa passed away in 2007 from a longtime illness. In life, her illness didn’t deter her from her goal of receiving a college degree, and she had hoped to go on to graduate school. She went to Sierra College and completed her lower division work while receiving loving care from her family, then transferred to UC Davis. She succumbed to her disease in her last quarter at UC Davis. A proud Aggie, she enjoyed the Causeway Classic football games with her father, an alumnus of Sacramento State University.

Arthur Bowie, Andréa’s father, wrote of the importance of receiving the degree. “My wife and I are very proud of our daughter’s accomplishments and are extremely pleased to know she was associated with, graduated from, and will always be an alumna of one of the best institutions in the world of higher learning.”

Paul Dempsey

Paul Dempsey, a clinical psychologist who became UC Davis’ second psychology faculty member in 1956, passed away in December at his home in Davis at age 92. He graduated with an English Literature major from Amherst College in 1939, and was drafted into the U.S. Navy during World War II, where he spent the war years teaching officers to target and fire large naval guns. As the war neared its end, Dempsey was transferred to Naval Intelligence and was sent to the University of Colorado at Boulder to study Chinese.

Dempsey married his wife Irene in 1945 and they were married 64 years. In 1949, he completed his master’s degree in psychology, and moved to UC Berkeley where he completed his Ph.D. in 1951. He spent some time at Cornell University, then joined the UC Davis faculty in 1956. He served as chair of the nascent psychology department during 1960–62. In 1963, he joined the faculty at California State University, Sacramento, where he taught and conducted research until his retirement in 1993. One of his most enduring passions was tennis, which he continued playing well into his 80s.

Dempsey is survived by his wife, Irene, his sons Ajax and Jed, and his daughter-in-law Diana.

Donald McQuarrie

Donald A. McQuarrie, an emeritus professor of chemistry, passed away in July 2009. He earned a B.S. in chemistry from Lowell Technological Institute in 1958, an M.A. in chemistry from Johns Hopkins University in 1960 and a Ph.D. in physical chemistry under Terrell L. Hill from the University of Oregon in 1962. McQuarrie began his career as an assistant professor at Michigan State University before going to work for North American Aviation from 1964 to 1978. He was a professor at Indiana University, Bloomington from 1968 to 1978, receiving a Guggenheim Fellowship in 1975.

McQuarrie joined UC Davis’ chemistry department, serving as a professor until he retired in 1994. He was awarded the Academic Senate’s Distinguished Teaching Award while at UC Davis, and wrote textbooks both during his tenure at UC Davis and after his retirement from the university. He was author/co-author of ten textbooks, including Chemistry: A Molecular Approach with John D. Simon and the introductory text General Chemistry with Peter A. Rock, who was a professor of chemistry at UC Davis and a former dean in the Division of Mathematical and Physical Sciences.

McQuarrie is survived by Carole, his wife of 50 years, and his children, Allan and Dawn.
On April 30, the UC Davis Center for the Study of Human Rights in the Americas organized an event, *Guantánamo: A conversation this side of the wire*, to mark the fifth anniversary of its Guantánamo Testimonials Project (see [http://human-rights.ucdavis.edu/projects/the-guantanamo-testimonials-project/index](http://human-rights.ucdavis.edu/projects/the-guantanamo-testimonials-project/index) for details). More than 420 individuals packed a lecture hall to attend. The event enabled a public conversation between a former Guantánamo prisoner (Omar Deghayes) and a former Guantánamo guard (Terry Holdbrooks). It was facilitated by award-winning journalist and *Democracy Now* producer Amy Goodman, and was hosted by Almerindo Ojeda, founding director of the Center for the Study of Human Rights in the Americas, and principal investigator for the Guantánamo Testimonials Project. Holdbrooks, Goodman and Ojeda participated in person; Deghayes was videoconferencing from Brighton, England. Ojeda, who is also a professor of linguistics, said the event was very successful in opening further conversation about a difficult chapter in history. “I am very pleased with the success of the event, especially considering the challenges involved. It represented the first time a former Guantánamo prisoner and former Guantánamo guard spoke face-to-face before an American audience.”

**Lighting the Future**

Students in UC Davis Professor Michael Siminovitch’s Winter 2010 Lighting Design studio course have worked at the exciting intersection of energy-efficiency technology development and sustainable design practice. Students in this unique class taught at the California Lighting Technology Center (CLTC) designed and developed prototypes for fully working light emitting diode (LED) lighting fixtures.

On March 11, the classroom was set aglow with 26 fixture designs ready for evaluation. Industry representatives listened to presentations, then deliberated before awarding the top prizes. Each luminaire, the industry term for light fixture, was evaluated on the creative use of LED technology and whether the student provided a viable solution for the market niche they proposed to reach.

This year, the top three designs included a downlight, a garden luminaire, and a wall sconce designed for wayfinding around corners. Although the prototypes for the class were required to be made of nothing more than matte board and glue, the results were impressive. Sometimes, as with energy-efficient light sources like LEDs, working with less can result in much more than expected.

CLTC collaborates with lighting industry partners to provide the necessary components to build functional prototypes. The project...
enables the students to work through technical challenges from the first day of class and provides valuable practice with a technology that is poised for tremendous growth in the lighting industry. This year, the course is sponsored by an industry collaborative of Tyco, Electronic, Cree, Inc., Exclara, Lightech, and Watt Stopper / Legrand.

“Design education is more than the evaluation of the end result as learning occurs through the creative process. Our lighting industry sponsors fuel the imaginative potential of tomorrow's lighting designers with their support and collaboration,” Siminovitch said.

**UPCOMING EVENTS, FALL 2010–WINTER 2011**

**TOOL SHED**

When: July 8 – December 19  
Where: Nelson Gallery  

The Nelson’s collection manager, Robin Bernhard, organized Tool Shed after noticing, during her routine cataloguing, an assortment of skillfully handmade wood work that was a small and neglected treasure in the Nelson Collection. Made roughly at the same time—in the 1970s—by Bruce Guttin, Allan Adams and C. Darcy Olsen, the works are in the realist tradition, not unlike the late Marilyn Levine’s ceramic trompe l’oeil wallets and purses of the same era. All three artists were born between 1948 and 1952 and all are alumni of the UC Davis MFA studio art program.

**CHANCELLOR’S COLLOQUIUM**

When: Fall - Spring  
Where: TBD  

The Chancellor’s Colloquium Distinguished Speaker Series kicked off last spring with talks by Arden Bement, director of the National Science Foundation, and Jim Leach, chairman of the National Endowment for the Humanities. Reflecting Chancellor Katehi’s commitment to encouraging dialogue from diverse perspectives and across disciplines, the series continues this year with five public talks by distinguished scholars and leaders of government and industry who promise to bring intellectual spark and enriching engagement within our academic community. The schedule of speakers for 2010-11 will be announced in early fall. More information can be found at the UC Davis Humanities Institute website: http://dhi.ucdavis.edu.

**HALLOWEEN COSTUME SALE: THE ENCHANTED CELLAR**

When: October 18 – 22, 3 – 7pm, October 23, 11am – 5pm, October 25 – 29, 3 – 7pm, October 30, 11am – 5pm  
Where: Department of Theatre and Dance, by appointment.  

Just in time for Halloween, the Department of Theatre and Dance will rent and sell costumes from its extensive collection of productions. The Enchanted Cellar is open year-round, but is very popular during the Halloween season. New costumes in rentals this year include Dorothy from *The Wizard of Oz*, The Duchess daydress, Last Airbender look-alikes and a Maroon Fairy Queen. Also back will be Matrix men. By appointment only; appointments can be booked starting October 1. More information can be found at: http://theatredance.ucdavis.edu/
THE 25TH ANNUAL PUTNAM COUNTY SPELLING BEE

When: September 16–18, 23–25, 8pm; Sept 19 & 26, 9pm
Where: Main Theatre

If you like “Glee,” you’ll love this Tony Award-winning Broadway musical where six teens battle for glory in the annual county spelling bee. The competition is hilariously out of control, with supernatural trances, magic body parts, ulterior motives and peer and parental pressure. Presented by the Department of Theatre and Dance. Music and lyrics by William Finn; book by Rachel Sheinkin. Directed by Mindy Cooper. Tickets $18/22 General; $15–20 Stu, Child, Senior. http://theatredance.ucdavis.edu/season/

specifically incorporate the use of Kodachrome film in homage to the pending demise of this medium and its place within the history of photography. McNeil and Mehner come from Dakl’aweidi Kéet Gooshi Hit, the Killerwhale Fin House in Klukwan, Alaska, which is one of the oldest traditional longhouses on the Northwest Coast. McNeil is Mehner’s maternal uncle, which carries a special significance in the Tlingit culture.

ASIAN AMERICAN AND PACIFIC ISLANDER (AAPI) COMMUNITY FALL WELCOME

When: September 20, 2010 5–7pm
Where: Hart Hall Courtyard

A kickoff event celebrating the 2010–11 academic year at the Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) community. Expect to find student clubs and campus departments tabling, entertainment, music, skits, raffle prizes and more! Find out ways to get involved with the Asian American and Pacific Islander community at UC Davis.

DAKL’AWEIDI KÉET GOOSHI HÍT, DU KAAK, KEILK - YEE WDUWA EEX’ / (KILLERWHALE FIN HOUSE, UNCLE, NEPHEW - YOU ARE INVITED)

When: September 28 – December 5
Where: C.N. Gorman Museum

Featuring the art of Larry McNeil and Da-ka-xeen Mehner, whose respective art explores ideas that inform our times from their ancestral and personal histories to global climate change. McNeil and Mehner both use photography at the core of their art, alongside sculpture, lithography and video and will

WONDERERS

When: October 7 – December 12,
Where: Nelson Gallery

“Wonderers” are individuals travelling via train-hopping or mobile home, living in utopian communities, gathering at outdoor festivals, dwelling in communal housing projects and forming fellowships over brief and extended periods of time. They are driven by an urge to explore and experience the wonders of the world outside of the mainstream culture. The photographs included in this exhibition are filled with a sense of adventure, risk, freedom and raw creativity and beauty. We are invited to meet these wonderers to catch a glimpse of their unconventional lifestyles and countercultural values. Artists in this exhibitions are: Abby Banks, Mike Brodie, Cutter Collective, Richard Gilles, Justine Kurland, Joel Sternfeld and Kyer Wiltshire.

VANISHING TRADITIONS: TEXTILES AND TREASURES FROM SOUTHWEST CHINA

When: October 10 – December 5; Opening reception and curator’s talk: October 17, 1:30 to 3:30pm
Where: Design Museum

By showcasing wearable textiles and ornaments, this exhibition displays the life, culture, and continuing loss of
adornment skills of the minority people who live in Southwest China. Guest curator and collector Bea Roberts shares her passion for this visual feast from the collection acquired during her early visits to the region when the villages were primarily intact in their cultural identity before the traditions vanish in today’s globalization race.

**GALLETHEA**

When: November 11–13, 18–20, 8pm; November 14, 2pm  
Where: Main Theatre

Written by John Lyly, directed by Peter Lichtenfels. This Elizabethan play, set in modern day, is dominated by Diana, Venus and Cupid. It asks the question of what it is like to portray a woman’s society. Peter Lichtenfels is a Department of Theatre & Dance professor and professional theatre director. http://theatredance.ucdavis.edu/season/

**COMMENCEMENT**

When: December 11, 10am  
Where: ARC Pavilion

UC Davis will hold its winter commencement on December 11. More details at www.ls.ucdavis.edu.

**OPENING OF RICHARD L. NELSON GALLERY AND FINE ARTS COLLECTION AT NEW LOCATION**

When: January 14, time TBD  
Where: University Club

See the new location for the Richard L. Nelson Gallery and Fine Arts collection, which moves from the Art Building to the University Club over the summer and fall. For more information, visit: http://nelsongallery.ucdavis.edu/

**BODY OF KNOWLEDGE BY KARL FROST**

When: February 11–12, 18–19, 8pm; February 13 & 20, 2pm  
Where: Vanderhoef Studio Theatre

Original choreography by graduating MFA candidate Karl Frost. This new work sits in the territory between somatic psychology, experimental theater and human ecology. The audience wanders the stage with the performers as they explore the relationship of their bodies and minds to the environment and each other. Tickets $17/19 General; $12-14 Stu, Child, Senior. http://theatredance.ucdavis.edu/season/

**THE FLOOD (WORKING TITLE)**

When: March 3–5, 11–12, 8pm; March 6, 13, 2pm  
Where: Wyatt Pavilion Theatre

This work by world-renowned Granada Artist-in-Residence Dominique Serrand (co-founder, Theatre de la Jeune Lune) explores the epic forces of a flood. Key elements of William Faulkner’s Old Man form the point of departure: two convicts set free by the rising of the river, a young pregnant woman marooned in a tree, a riverboat full of refugees, a deer swimming for its life, the birth of a child, the bursting of the levees, and the reconciliation of the river meeting the sea. Tickets $15/17 Gen; $11/13 Stu/Child/Senior. http://theatredance.ucdavis.edu/season/

**BAGS ACROSS THE GLOBE**

When: January 18 – March 11, 2011  
Where: Design Museum

Since 2008, artist and Design Professor Ann Savageau has conducted a global collaboration, Bags Across the Globe (BAG). This project has involved over 200 people from 60 countries on every continent. It has called attention to the environmental damage caused by the most ubiquitous consumer product in history: the estimated 4–5 trillion plastic shopping bags used and discarded annually. (See page 6 in this issue.)
The University of California’s satellite teaching, research and public service center near the state Capitol, suspended last year, will be restored and operated for the entire 10-campus system by UC Davis.

The move will preserve the popular public policy and public affairs journalism programs that offered UC students from throughout the system an opportunity to learn through internships in and around the Capitol. The center also will provide a forum for public policy researchers from all UC campuses to address key issues facing the state.

Many students who went through the programs are now employed by state lawmakers, the Legislature’s policy committees and numerous state agencies.

“We are excited by the opportunity to lead the UC Center Sacramento on behalf of the University of California,” said UC Davis Chancellor Linda Katehi, who made the center a top priority shortly after arriving in Davis last summer.

“UC Davis is in a wonderful position due to location and the strength of our programs to lead this center,” Katehi said. “Our mission is to provide the best possible internship opportunities and an environment where scholars from all UC campuses can come together to provide important analyses on critical state issues.”

UC Provost Lawrence Pitts also welcomed the resumption of classes at the center, which he said serves state government as well as students from all the UC campuses.

“Our students look forward to expanded access to a broad academic experience both in Sacramento and on the UC Davis campus, and to hands-on experience in the executive and legislative work of the state,” Pitts said. “UC is committed as the state’s research university to supporting the government in its complex activities, and involving our students in these fascinating tasks.”

The center has operated since 2004 as a unit funded by the UC Office of the President. It is located and will remain in a UC-owned office building at 12th and K streets, one block north of the state Capitol.

More than 600 UC students — an average of 120 a year — have enrolled in UC Center classes. But, in the face of a sharp reduction in state funding, the president’s office concluded that the university could no longer afford the center’s nearly $1 million annual budget.

Under an agreement between UC President Mark Yudof and UC Davis, the president’s office will continue to provide transitional funding as the Davis campus attempts to make the center self-supporting with restructuring and a portion of existing student fees.
“We’re not just trying to do the same thing on a smaller budget. We’d like to do more,” said Ron Mangun, dean of the Division of Social Sciences, which assumes responsibility for the center. “It’s not just saving money; it’s advancing the mission of the UC system on behalf of the people of California.”

The center resumed summer journalism classes and internships in June. Public policy classes followed in September. UC faculty also plan to launch a variety of research projects, including studies of climate change, water issues and economic challenges facing the state.

A much leaner $400,000 budget will be financed in part by redirecting a portion of the fees associated with students who enroll in classes to the center. In the past, the students’ home campuses received all of their fees.

“It creates this opportunity to not only have an important organization for our own campus, but to get involved in an organization that’s going to pull all of the campuses together,” said Robert Huckfeldt, distinguished professor of political science as well as former chair of the department, who is also the director of the Institute for Governmental Affairs and will be the director of the UC Center Sacramento.

Under the agreement with the UC Office of the President, UC Davis will take responsibility for the continued operation of a reconfigured center that pursues three primary goals:

• Connecting UC research scholars, including collaborative efforts among all the campuses, with state policymakers in the Governor’s Office, the Legislature and state agencies.

• Creating a public policy research center focused on significant state and national issues.

• Maintaining an academic public policy program, which includes internships, as well as continuing a collaborative relationship with UC Berkeley to sponsor the summer journalism program.

In addition to Huckfeldt’s role as the center’s director, the Institute of Governmental Affairs will provide administrative support for the operation. UC Davis faculty members also will teach a seminar for the public policy students and oversee the academic internships.

The center’s leadership will work with faculty and administrators on all of the campuses to create an ongoing series of lectures, seminars, workshops and conferences that address pressing public policy issues as well as aid in the development of collaborative research.

Over the years, the center has drawn strong reviews from students, such as UC Davis Spanish and communications major Ignacio Torres, who interned in the Sacramento bureau of the Spanish-language newspaper La Opinion last summer. Torres said he was assigned important stories that had to be reported and written quickly for the Los Angeles-based newspaper.

“I think it’s rare to find that in an internship,” he said, “where you’re given that much responsibility, where you have to go to the governor’s press conference, where you have to talk to the speaker.

“That’s what made it different from any other internship that I had, in the sense that it was valuable work that I was doing for them and for myself as well.”
inside the classroom:  HISTORY 2011

A GLIMPSE OF A DAY IN THE CLASSROOM THROUGH THE EYES OF A STUDENT

By Marisa Swain, senior at UC Davis majoring in sociology and American studies

It's a typical Tuesday, 4pm, in the middle of spring quarter. Students scuffle their way to late afternoon lectures. They know what to expect from their classes at this point—sitting in lecture for an hour or two, surrounded by many similarly-majored peers, and probably some discussion of class and homework before and after the lecture.

This weekday is especially significant, however, for one professor and graduate students who meet at this time once a week to discuss history.

As they enter the room, they immediately begin discussing the subject of the week, their conversation speckled with accounts of their weekend activities and accounts of sleeplessness. This is History 201I: Transnational Histories of the Americas.

Instead of a lecture, history professor Victoria Langland centers this class on discussion. Each week, students read a book and an article and come to class prepared to discuss them. Today's book is about the elite class and its role in Latin American history.

Langland’s first question: “So, did you like this book?” Several students reply enthusiastically, all with something to say about how well they think the information is presented. One student, Takashi, has prepared questions to facilitate discussion, asking the others to think about several matters in particular. They continue until a short break.

Unlike larger lectures, this class does not have a specific structure. “There is no ‘Q & A,’” as Langland says. “We have daily goals and material that are discussed somewhere during each weekly three-hour session.”

Being able to converse with the students seems to make the class more stimulating, as Langland reported that she often considers her graduate students as peers. “They are teachers in training. Teaching is more like facilitating a discussion, not directly instructing. It’s a collective endeavor. Where I step in is teaching them how to get to the argument.” Because getting into graduate school can often be difficult anyway, only the most interested and motivated students are selected. Discussions are lively and insightful.

“There is a common misconception that learning history is learning a list of facts from the past but actually it’s what makes societies tick, what causes groups to change the world and then tolerate problematic situations,” Langland said.

Langland is also a popular undergraduate teacher. She provides her undergraduates with multiple viewpoints from which they can form their own interpretations of what really happened. “Undergraduate classes are fun to teach because you get to see students learn something brand new.”

After a break, Professor Langland re-enters the room carrying a stack of books. “I looked up that question you had, Jessica, and actually…” Langland launches into a discussion with her students again. Although sometimes getting off-track with anecdotes about current events and the students’ ambitions, the group continues “tearing apart the book,” laughing periodically about several ironic similarities between then and now. After all, according to Langland, “History is what people make of it. We see people across the centuries trying to change the world.”
The College of Letters and Science received $8.1 million in charitable contributions for the fiscal year 2009-10, which ended June 30. The total was up from the previous year’s $5 million, and surpassed the college’s historic high of $7.8 million raised in 2007-08. The funds provide much-needed support for students and faculty, as well as research programs and capital projects such as the planned UC Davis Museum of Art and UC Davis Music Performance Building and Recital Hall.

The number of donors and number of gifts increased as well. A total of 2,700 donors gave 2,075 gifts, up from 2008-09 when 2,369 donors gave 1,796 gifts.

“We are just so grateful,” said Maureen Miller, assistant dean for College Relations and Development. “This year people seemed to really understand the challenges facing students and teachers, and they responded with gifts large and small. They knew their gifts would have a tremendous impact – perhaps more than ever before.”

A number of gifts and pledges of over $400,000 were made to the college, with the highest amount being a $2 million pledge from Napa Valley’s Margrit Mondavi to support plans for a new UC Davis Museum of Art. Other gifts included $669,857 from the John E. Fetzer Institute, Inc., which supported three research projects in psychology, particularly the Shamatha Project on meditation and the mind; $430,916 from the Elizabeth Popper Estate for the Department of Music (see article in the spring 2009 issue of College Currents), and $408,470 from Agilent Technologies for mass spectrometry equipment (see the article on page 22).

“Path-breaking gifts, such as the generous pledge from Margrit Mondavi,” said Miller, “are examples of how the university can work in partnership with the community to address significant needs and societal problems through research and new facilities.”

One area that is essential to the College of Letters and Science is the college’s Annual Fund. This year, the program raised $69,471, nearly $15,000 more than last year. Each year, alumni credit their UC Davis education with their success, and they want to give those opportunities to students today. 1,004 alumni made pledges; 755 were from alumni who had not previously given to the college. The college’s Annual Fund provides unrestricted support to the college’s deans, which translates into new programs and opportunities for the college’s graduate and undergraduate students.

“Annual support from alumni and friends is critical to the success of the college,” said Colleen Schulman, associate director of development for the College of Letters and Science. “These gifts strengthen academic programs and initiatives, directly benefiting those who need it most – the college’s more than 11,000 students.”

The Herbert A. Young Society, the giving club for donors who give $1,000 or more in unrestricted funds to the college’s three deans to use in the areas most needed, had 93 members this year. This is up from the previous year’s 89, and with contributions at nearly $135,000, up from last year’s $122,000. The funds will be directed to the deans, and a report to members will be mailed in the fall.
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On Location: Graduate Students Awarded Travel Grants

The Hemispheric Institute on the Americas (HIA) at UC Davis is an interdisciplinary group made up of faculty and graduate students focusing on the social, cultural and economic interconnections of the Western Hemisphere. For the past three years, HIA has received financial support through the Herbert A. Young Society, providing graduate travel grants for summer research. Three of the students who received grants last year shared their experience with College Currents.

A Chance Meeting with History

A second year Ph.D. history student, Lily Balloffet studies Middle Eastern immigration to Argentina and Brazil during the early 20th century. Her HIA grant enabled her to travel to Buenos Aires and Sao Paulo for six weeks. While researching in the library, she stumbled upon a travel diary written by an Arab cinematographer who emigrated in 1928-9. The first-hand account consisted of a series of nine letters to a local newspaper entitled “Impressions of my Journey to Brazil.” Lily began to incorporate her findings into her dissertation work. Originally from Argentina, Lily was proud to be able to share her experience with her father. Wearing rubber gloves, he would turn the pages of newspapers while she photographed them, a memory she will treasure. Lily has since applied for and accepted a Foreign Language and Area Study (FLAS) fellowship through UC Berkeley, which is enabling her to travel to Morocco for research this summer.

Progressive Movements and Hip Hop Rhythms

Magalí Rabasa is a fourth year Ph.D. student in cultural studies, focusing on networks of alternative publishers in Latin America. Her HIA grant allowed her to travel to Mexico City, where she had the opportunity to map the movement of printed material from the “Turn Left” progressive movements that contribute to the current “turn to the left” in Latin America. She met with proponents of the contemporary political movements, including scholars from the National Autonomous University in Mexico and the poet, writer, activist and hip-hop artist Bocafloja. By interacting with him and his collective, Magalí was able to get a sense of his young target audience as he pioneers political and independent thinking through hip-hop. But the best part of her experience? “The face to face connections,” says Magalí. This year, she has been awarded a Social Science Research Council dissertation research award which will enable her to split her time this year between Mexico, Bolivia, Argentina and Lima, Peru.

Mitigating the Friction over Genetic Property

A fourth year Ph.D. student in anthropology, Carlos Andres Barragan conducted ethnographic work in Colombia and Brazil with his HIA grant. Carlos interviewed geneticists and ethnic minorities leaders, exploring how ideas of race and ethnicity are being reshaped as science and technology innovates. Human tissue had previously been collected from indigenous peoples without an explanation of how it was going to be used. Now, there are issues concerning access to the tissue, the creation of biological resources as capital and a surplus trading in genetic information. That’s where Carlos comes in. Using his anthropological training, he hopes to be able to facilitate a dialogue and foster understanding between the two groups. Of HIA, he says it is an “invaluable hub for sharing and disseminating information.” It is “important that each campus has something similar” so that students have the opportunity to “integrate, network, share experiences, provide and receive feedback.”

Future Funding

Many students who receive HIA grants go on to obtain national grants that allow them to continue their research. Funding provided by the Herbert A. Young Society has enabled the program to build a positive outcome needed to compete for funding outside of UC Davis. This year, HIA was awarded a competitive Tinker Foundation grant of $20,000 – an accomplishment attributed to the fact that UC Davis is raising its profile as a campus with a Latin American specialization.
SO WHAT’S IT LIKE TO DRIVE A BUS? Marisa Swain, an undergraduate student in American Studies and sociology, can tell you all about it. “I applied because I thought that it would be the only job I’d want to do on campus,” she said. “It’s fun, social, and different from minute to minute. After getting my license to drive buses, I started driving and was daunted by all the quick thinking and multi-tasking I have to do. But now I love it. I get to meet people and learn something I never thought I would. Plus I think of myself as a professional driver!”

Marisa drives the famous red Unitrans buses in Davis. Unitrans is the city’s bus system, operated by the Associated Students of UC Davis (ASUCD). Unitrans was founded in 1968 as the University Transport System, when ASUCD purchased two vintage London double-decker buses to operate two routes. (The buses can still be seen around town today.) In 1972, Unitrans was opened to the general public, with partial funding from the City of Davis. Unitrans now provides public transportation service to the city with 49 buses on 14 routes, carrying more than 3 million passengers per year.