

KHC NEWSLETTER

Official Newsletter of the Kellogg Honors College,
Cal Poly Pomona



Reaching for the Stars

BY DR. CLAUDIA GARCIA-DES LAURIERS
DIRECTOR, KHC



On February 15, 2024 we had the honor of hosting Katya Echazarreta, as our 20th anniversary distinguished speaker. She is an Electrical Engineer, Citizen Astronaut, Public Speaker, Activist, and Model. She began her career at NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory and has worked on 5 NASA missions. On June 4th, 2022, she became the first Mexican-born Woman in Space after being selected by Space for Humanity out of 7,000 applicants from over 120 countries for a mission to analyze the "Overview Effect". Katya has been very active in the fashion world and has been on the cover of Vogue, Glamour, and Cosmopolitan, among other publications.

Echazarreta's story is inspirational, and impactful, and moved us to not only celebrate what we have accomplished over the last 20 years at KHC but set the tone for some of the goals that we will pursue in the next decade and beyond at KHC. Her journey to space began at the age of 7, she always wanted to go to space and would stop at nothing to make it happen. With the support of her mother, and by overcoming several personal challenges, Echazarreta worked incredibly hard to make her dreams come true. What made her story all the more compelling is that she shared how important self-care, grit, resilience, determination, and courage were to her success. And despite that success, she has continued to have to break boundaries. **Cont. p. 8**



Katya Echazarreta (Right) speaking to CPP Students after her presentation

This Issue:

Reaching for the Stars

PAGE 01

Mt. Wilson Observatory hosts
Honors students

PAGE 02

"Fall" in Love with KHC
KHCC Club Events

PAGE 03

Honors Students in IGE 1020H
Presented at the PolyX Showcase!

PAGE 06

Día de Los Muertos 2023

PAGE 07

Student Spotlights

PAGE 09

Alumni Spotlights

PAGE 12

New KHC Team Members

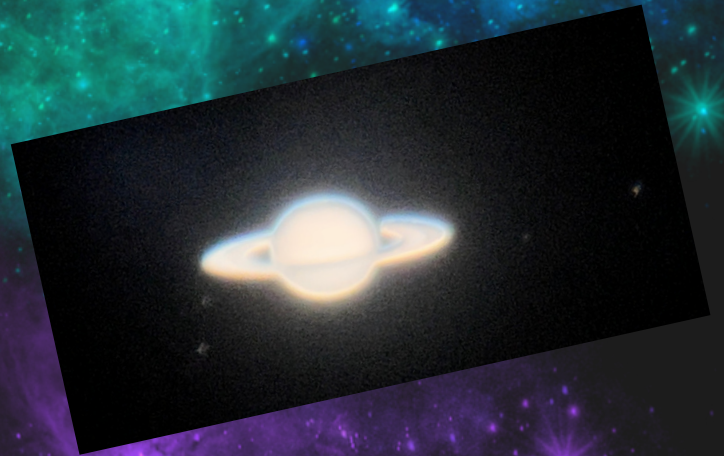
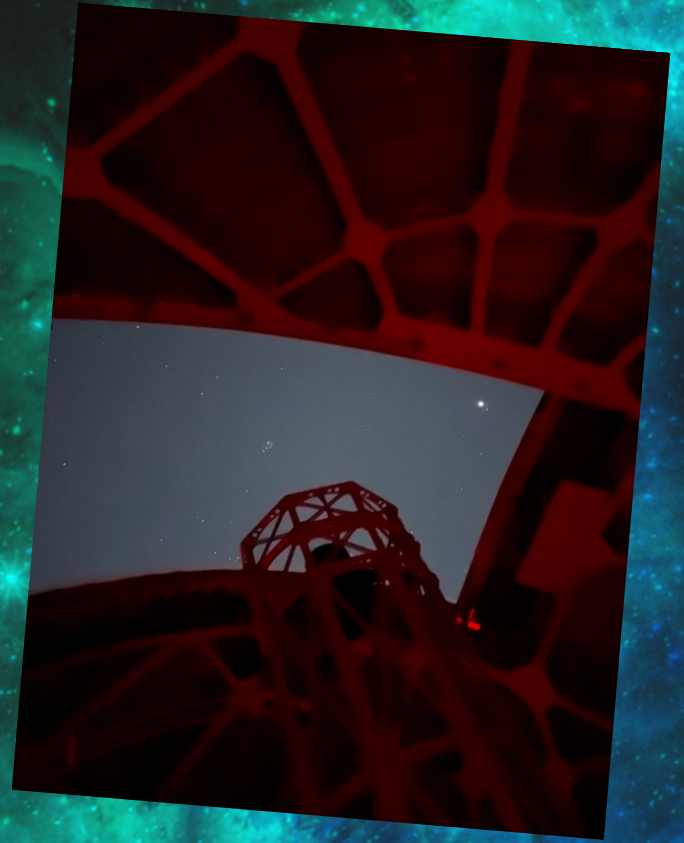
PAGE 15

Fall 2023 Student
Achievements

PAGE 16

KHC in the News

PAGE 17



Mt. Wilson Observatory Hosts Honors Students

By: Claudia Garcia-Des Lauriers
KHC, Director

KHC organized a field trip for Dr. Suketu Bhavsar's AST3240H honors course to Mt. Wilson Observatory where we spent the night looking at planets and constellations through the 60" telescope. Mt. Wilson Observatory was founded in 1904 and has played an important role in astronomical research during the early 20th Century. Advancements in solar research and understanding of our expanding universe were in part fueled by research at this important historical telescope facility.



“FALL” In Love with KHC



*Día de los Muertos Altar made by
ANT3790H*



Recruiting new honors students and Fall Preview



IGE 1020H

From crafts to culture to cultivating community, see how the faculty and students of the Kellogg Honors College made the most of the 2023 Fall Semester with fun events, meaningful experiences, and exciting opportunities.



Civic Engagement at INSAN

★ Spooky Season - Laser Tag



On October 27th, over 40 KHC students attended a special Halloween event at Laser Land in West Covina. Activities included face painting, costumes, trick or treating, arcade games, and of course, laser tag!



Special thanks to the KHCC (Honors College Club) E-board members who organized the event and made this turnout possible!

Cocoa n' Cram

12/1/23



KHC Students welcomed the winter season in the Honors Commons with hot cocoa, arts & crafts, snacks, and games--a much deserved break just in time for final's week.



KHC & PolyX

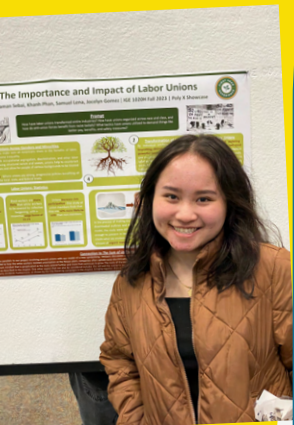
Presentations from honors students
at the 6th Annual PolyX Showcase



Honors Students in IGE 1020H Presented at the PolyX Showcase!

By: Dr. Hyeryung Hwang

The whole class of IGE1020H participated in the 6th annual PolyX Showcase on November 16th, from 11:30 A.M. to 1:30 P.M. at Ursa Major BSC. At the showcase, 5 groups of honors students taking Dr. Hyeryung Hwang's (IGE1020H): "Engaged Education: Integrating Knowledge, Learning, and Success" presented their signature PolyX group project. For the project, each group of students collaborated with the Maker Studio to create an art object that promotes anti-racism and represents the ethical teachings from the 2023-2024 Common Read, Heather McGhee's *The Sum of Us: What Racism Costs Everyone and How We Can Prosper Together*, using a 3D printer, laser cutter, sewing machine, letter press, or a vinyl cutter.



[CLICK HERE TO
LEARN MORE
ABOUT THE
POLYX SHOWCASE](#)





Día De Los Muertos 2023

KHC students from Dr. García-Des Lauriers' ANT3790H class collaborated with the Cesar E. Chávez Center for Higher Education on constructing the community altar for our campus celebration.

After her experience in space, which was profoundly life-changing, Echazarreta knew that she could not honestly encourage young Mexican children to reach for the stars when there were so many obstacles for them to accomplish this making it virtually impossible. So what would she do? Well her work in Mexico involved changing the constitution of the country to support, fund and establish a space industry--a feat she is very close to accomplishing. Echazarreta inspired us to not just reach for the stars, but to also create an equitable system that removes barriers for people to accomplish their dreams.

Echazarreta's story, her drive, her compassion, and her grit moved some CPP students to tears. She stayed well past the end of the program talking to students one-on-one, all of whom were in awe of her youth and her brilliance. Women in engineering found her especially compelling and shared stories of their challenges, not being taken seriously, being the only women at times in engineering classes.

I appreciate and echo the students' awe for this woman with whom I share some connections as a Mexican-born immigrant to this country, and her inspiration will help guide my future work as a model of determination in creating more equitable and supportive systems where all people can reach for the stars and beyond.



Katya Echazarreta speaking to students that joined us from Citrus College



KHC Students and Staff with Katya Echazarreta, Distinguished Speaker for the KHC 20th Anniversary Lecture



Student Spotlight

Shuting Chen

By: Won Choi, Academic Coordinator



Meet Shuting (shu-ting) Chen, a 3rd year **Food Science and Technology (FST) major**, who joined the Kellogg Honors College at the conclusion of her first year at CPP. Shuting was born in China and emigrated to the Los Angeles region during elementary school. In high school, Shuting combined her interests in science and cooking to explore food microbiology. She applied to colleges with an interest in studying food safety, specifically controlling and eliminating microorganisms grown in food. Shuting received admission offers from several UCs and CSUs. Cal Poly Pomona was her top choice for the food science program.

Although her first year at CPP was online due to the COVID-19 pandemic, Shuting did not let the remote experience hinder her involvement. She participated in workshops and tutoring from CPP's **Reading, Advising, & Mentoring Program (RAMP)**, and projects like Cultivate LA with Dr. Aaron Fox of the Huntley College of Agriculture. Her second year started by joining the KHC, which introduced her to conducting academic research through the **Achieve Scholars Program**. Shuting's third-year involvement expanded to the **McNair Scholars Program**, where she researched bacteria resistance in produce. Shuting was an inaugural **College Corps Fellow**, where she tutored at multiple elementary schools. During the summer after her third year, Shuting participated in a **Research Experience for Undergraduates (REU) at Washington University School of Medicine at St. Louis**. Currently in her final year, Shuting is researching polylysine preservatives to prevent bacteria growth in food via a grant from the **CSU Agricultural Research Institute**. Shuting will utilize the resources available to her as a **2023-2024 CSU Pre-Doctoral Program** to apply to Ph.D. and post-baccalaureate research programs. Her professional goals are to pursue a career in academia.

Shuting's Advice: get involved, take risks, apply to opportunities, regularly check your email, plan ahead, and join the KHC. She credits the KHC for expanding her network, community service experiences, and introducing her to resources and opportunities. Shuting recommends connecting with faculty for research opportunities. Shuting advises students to volunteer as research and/or teaching assistants to earn strong letters of recommendation from faculty.

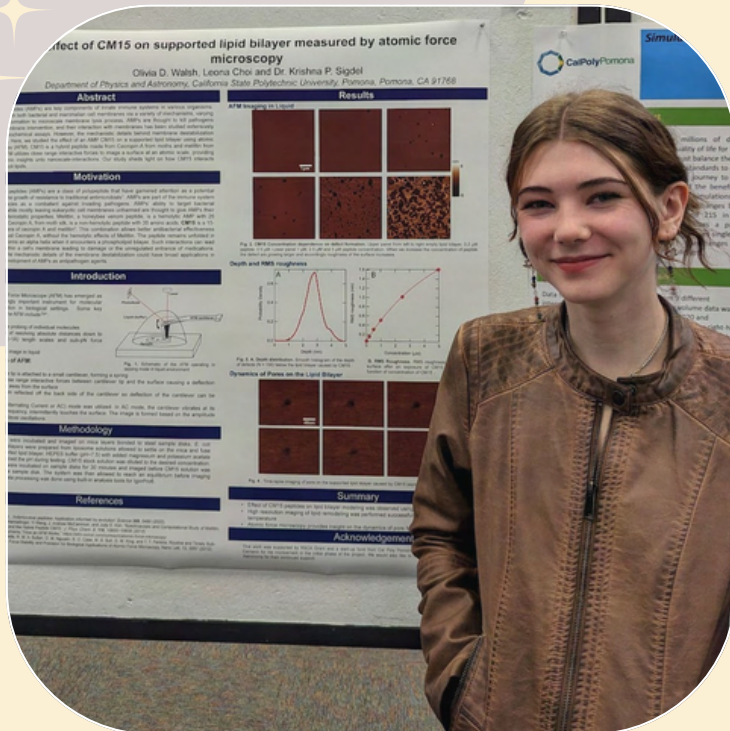
Click the **BOLD** text to learn more about the programs mentioned

Olivia Walsh

By: Won Choi, Academic Coordinator

Olivia Walsh is a 3rd-year physics (PHY) major who joined the KHC at the end of her freshman year. Growing up in Portland, Oregon, Olivia gained an appreciation for the outdoors and civic engagement. Olivia combined those influences with her passion for physics to pursue a career in climate change mitigation, particularly wind and solar energy. Olivia applied to only California universities as she received a nonresident tuition reduction from the Western Undergraduate Exchange. Admission offers came from several UCs and CSUs. Olivia chose Cal Poly Pomona for the affordability and small faculty-to-student ratio. Opportunities to connect with faculty were a priority.

Olivia's first year at CPP focused on establishing a strong foundation in introductory science courses. Olivia's campus involvement began with a job at the BRIC. In year two, Olivia significantly increased her involvement at CPP. Olivia joined the KHC, where she began honors classes, participated in community service events, and began conducting research in biophysics with Dr. Krishna Sigdel of the CPP PHY department. She became a learning assistant for PHY 1510 and 1520 and joined the Society of Physics Students club at CPP. Olivia applied to several Research Experiences for Undergraduates (REU) through the CPP Cal-Bridge program and received three offers, and accepted an offer from Stanford where she researched methane surveying methods of wetlands using long-path laser spectroscopy.



Olivia presented her research at the 2023 Research, Scholarship & Creative Activities Conference at CPP.



Olivia's is now a published scholar. The research she conducted with Dr. Sigdel appeared in the journal *Membranes*. Olivia is now Co-VP of the Physics Club and established the Women and Gender Minorities in Physics Community. Olivia is now working with Dr. Nina Abramzon in her physics plasma lab on a research project intended to address climate change. She is now working on securing funding through the Projects Hatchery. Olivia is working on applications for scholarships and graduate school. Her career goals is to become a researcher in a national laboratory working on climate change.

Olivia's Advice: be "actively involved" at CPP. She strongly recommends connecting with faculty and asking about participating in academic research. Take opportunities that seem intimidating; they will lead to growth and new opportunities. In regard to asking for letters of recommendation from faculty, Olivia advises providing ample time, draft of your application essay/statement, transcript, resume, and submission instructions.



Gina Lalli is a biology major in her final semester at CPP. As a child, Gina developed an interest in horses and began riding at age 12. After high school, Gina attended UC Davis to study equine veterinary medicine. Health reasons caused Gina to withdraw by the end of her first year. She lost interest in veterinary medicine but maintained a passion for equine science. A few years later Gina attended Pasadena City College for two years with a plan to become a genetic counselor, but cancelled that plan after researching the career field. Over the next ten years, Gina got married, raised a family, and worked in restaurant management. All the while Gina maintained a passion for horses. In 2017, Gina enrolled at Citrus College to fulfill her lifelong goal of working with horses. She began horse riding again, which she stopped to attend UC Davis, and began working at a stable. CPP was her goal and she transferred in 2021.

Gina started CPP looking to get involved immediately. Before her first semester began, she participated in the Kellogg Honors College and EOP Transfer Bridge. Later, she participated in Science Educational Enhancement Services, ARCHES, Pre-Optometry Club, Pre-Medical Student Association, and CPP Equestrian Team. Gina began CPP wanting to get involved in academic research.

She immediately contacted faculty in the biology department leading her to join the McNair Scholars Prep Program and was later accepted into McNair Scholars Program to conduct stem cell research with Dr. Ansel Zhao. Gina is currently doing veterinary research with Dr. Hyungchul Han, and she was selected as a 2023-2024 President's Scholar. Gina applied to PHD programs at Caltech, City of Hope, UCLA, and UCR, to study how epigenetics affects behavior in horses. She eventually wants to become a researcher and professor.

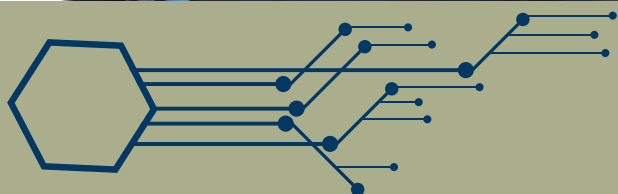


Gina's primary advice for students is to advocate for themselves. Gina said, "Don't allow things to happen to you." Express your needs and tell people what you need. Many resources are available at CPP that support students. Connect with faculty and build strong relationships. Follow your passions. Don't compromise on your dreams and goals. Blaze a trail for others who feel discouraged, alienated, and underrepresented. Gina stressed inputting the time and effort to succeed in school.

Alumni Spotlight

Mohamed Dandachi

By: Won Choi, Academic Coordinator



Mohamed has plenty of advice for students:

Get involved at CPP to make friends and discover career opportunities. Try different clubs to find your fit. Apply to scholarships and internships. Utilize Counseling and Psychological Services. Practice interviewing, as soft skills like confidence and personality, are more impactful than hard skills alone. Keep your resume up to date. Lastly, speak up to create your own career path. Mohamed cited an example of his first internship, where he created an IT role from his general office assistant position by advocating to his supervisor.

Meet Mohamed Dandachi, a Cal Poly Pomona and Kellogg Honors College alum who works in information technology (IT) compliance at a leading digital healthcare company. Mohamed grew up in Pomona. He is one of three siblings to graduate from CPP. In 2019, Mohamed earned a degree in computer information systems after starting CPP in computer science. Upon graduation Mohamed worked in IT auditing at PwC, then security compliance at Facebook (now Meta).

Mohamed's involvement at CPP included the Kellogg Honors College (KHC), Muslim Student Association, Forensics and Security Technology, and Students with an Interest in the Future of Technology. Mohamed's membership in the KHC led to a video production student assistant position at CPP's MediaVision. That position led to an internship with the Orange County Transportation Authority, which led to an internship at Beckman Coulter. It was at the second internship Mohamed discovered his career specialty of IT compliance.



Alumni Spotlight

Eliel Davis

By: Claudia Garcia-Des Lauriers, KHC Director

Recent graduate Eliel Davis received a BS in Psychology. He joined KHC as a Freshman through participating in the RISE program--a program that supports and mentors Black students to succeed in their college applications and transition to higher education. Eliel initially started as a Computer Science major, but he was always drawn to Psychology. He took AP Psych in high school and became interested in the field. As he began his college career, he worried that grad school would be hard and that getting a job in psychology could be challenging.

He had a job in database development and realized that computer science was not for him and decided to follow his dream of studying psychology. Eliel's goal is to become a therapist, researcher, and teacher. Participation in the McNair Program made a huge difference in his student life. He learned about the program in his junior year and he reached out to

Dr. Laurie Barker and Dr. Tatiana Pumakawa who encouraged him to apply.

His research project was mentored by Dr. Erica Morales and Dr. Tierra Ellis and focussed on the romantic experiences of Black women in college, which he presented in the Spring of 2023. He enjoyed being able to build his research project from the ground up. The research questions he focussed on centered on how race and gender play a role in dating. If possible he wants to continue research on romantic relationships in graduate school.

Eliel notes that his mentors were incredible in guiding him with the graduate school application process. KHC also played a big role in his journey by providing him with a community and connections when coming in. Also priority registration was helpful because he worked as an intern for Black Men of Excellence and participated in Shop Talk, a space centered around a barber shop where young men of color get a free hair cut and talk about issues affecting the Black community, mentorship, career development among other issues that support personal and professional growth. Eliel also referred flag football games.



Advice for New KHC Students

“Run your own race, honestly.” For the first years of your education, everyone is running the same race and moving at the same pace. There is a sense that we need to compare ourselves to other people, but the important thing is that you are moving forward. The pace can vary depending on the student. Be appreciative and make the most out of your time at KHC and CPP. There is no need to rush to work in the real world. Take it in and be appreciative.




Join the Kellogg Honors College



Join the Honors College to get access to:

- Honors courses
- Club Events
- Scholarships
- Inclusive Community
- Priority Registration
- Smaller Class Sizes
- Research Opportunities
- Community Service opportunities



For more
information visit the
KHC website or
scan the QR code:



Welcome new KHC team members!



Cynthia

**Cynthia Perez (she/her)
KHC Analyst**

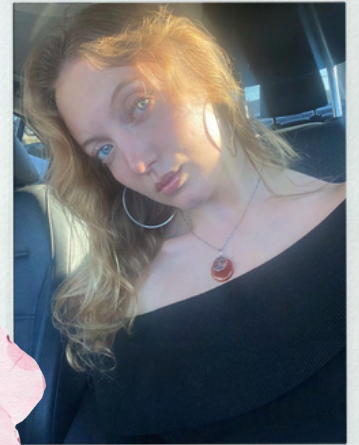
Loves the gym, reading, Disneyland, & spending time with her family

Message for students: Work hard, stay humble, be kind, and never stop dreaming

**Jenaveve Gregory (she/her)
KHC Student Assistant**

Undergraduate Anthropology Major
Loves thrifting, loud music, and collaging

Message for students: Good luck on your journey this year, wherever that may be!



Jenaveve



David

**David Vargas (he/him)
KHC Student Assistant
& KHC Scholar**

Undergraduate CS Major

Loves working out, watching movies, and listening to new music

Message for students: Go easy on yourself, you are doing the best you can/
People are the best books!

**Dr. Preeti Wadhwa (she/her)
KHC Faculty Fellow**

**Professor of Management &
Leadership at CBA**

Loves people, travel, photography, and most of all, witnessing positive transformations within CPP students

Message for students: Get out of your comfort zone as opportunities begin where it ends!



Dr. Preeti Wadhwa

KHC Student Achievements

By Won Choi

KHC Academic Coordinator

KHC students are always amazing us with their accomplishments. Here are a few highlights from the fall 2023 semester.

Aliki Bhakis (Kinesiology), has been accepted to multiple Doctor of Physical Therapy programs. We are excited to hear where she decides to attend.

Krista Zagarian (Computer Science) graduated with her BS in December 2023 and has accepted a position as an Associate Software Engineer-Pathways at Northrup Grumman.

Brayan Quevedo Ramos (Computer Science) has secured an internship for summer 2024 at the Los Angeles Air Force Base.

Ronin Yeh (Accounting) received two internships, one at KPMG Audit in Silicon Valley and HCVT Tax Internship in Irvine.

Sara Snyder (Geography) secured a GIS internship at Golden State Water Company for their Engineering and Planning Department. Also doing research in Dr. Granco's research lab.

Elliot Summers (Psychology) has been selected for the Western Psychological Association student council of representatives.



Karla Macedo-Sanchez (Nutrition and Dietetics) has been conducting research with the Nutrition and Food Science department.

Aakriti Adhikari (Political Science) worked as an intern at the Forum for Women, Law, and Development.

Chun Choi (Food Science) received the SCIFT Phil Bates Scholarship, IFT Feeding Tomorrow Scholarship, and was selected as a College Corp Fellow. He is also a Bake Mark R & D Intern.

Did we miss you? Current students and alumni click the icon to share your success and look out for us highlighting your achievements in upcoming issues of the KHC newsletter.



KHC in the News

Click on the icons on the left to read about some of the newsworthy activities that KHC students and staff participated in.



Track and field looks to top last season's record-setting performance, Poly Post
KHC student Jaelyn Thomas part of the CPP track team



Education Department will fix its \$1.8 billion FAFSA mistake, NPR
KHC student David Thorton contributed to this story



KHC Students win CPP Common Read Essay Contest
KHC students, Lucy Alexandre and Lindsay Lam



A Brief History of the Kellogg Honors College
CPP Magazine, Fall 2023, p. 2

Connect with Us



@kelloggshonorscollege



@khccpp



(909) 869 - 3944



Building: 1, Room 201
3801 West Temple Avenue
Pomona, CA 91768



honorscollege@cpp.edu



www.cpp.edu/honorscollege

Join the Bronco Mentoring Network!

The Cal Poly Pomona Bronco Mentoring Network is a career networking site specifically for Cal Poly Pomona students to gain access to hundreds of Alumni who have volunteered to mentor students like you! This is also a great opportunity to connect with KHC Alumni!

Learn more and sign up here: cpp.peoplegrove.com

The graphic features the Kellogg Honors College logo (20th Anniversary, Inclusive Academic Excellence, Established 2000) and a diagram with three numbered steps: 1. Networking, 2. Career Advancement, and 3. Community, all leading to an icon of three people.