

A BRONCO FOREVER

SANDI DAVIS

Arrived as a Student in 1968 and Worked at the University for 46 Years



By Melanie Johnson

Sandi Davis (72, office management) still dreams about Cal Poly Pomona.

Most of those dreams take place in Building 1, which once housed the President's Office where she worked for decades.

"I wake up in a cold sweat thinking that I haven't gotten something for a trustee, or the chancellor is coming and I don't have his itinerary," Davis says.

Davis called the university home for 46 years – starting as an incoming freshman and student assistant in the College of Business Administration in 1968 to working in the President's Office until 2014 – so it makes sense to her that Cal Poly Pomona would be as much a part of her dreams as it was in reality.

It's that deep connection with Cal Poly Pomona that has kept her giving back. With 32 years of consecutive giving, Davis, who is also the mother of two alumni sons, is the university's longest-giving alumni donor.

"I would give to the athletic program or wherever it's needed most," Davis says of

her contributions. "I can't give a whole lot, but I give what I can."

Davis understands that every gift can make an impact on students.

"When they call me for the Annual Fund, I say, 'Sign me up,'" she says. "I am so proud of the university and its accomplishments."

That Bronco pride started in 1967 when Davis visited the campus as a wide-eyed Upland High School senior who had never heard of Cal Poly Pomona. The university hosted an open house, Poly Vue, for students from high schools in the area. Each college put on a different exhibit or event. Davis, who could type 120 words per minute on a manual typewriter back then, competed in the typing and shorthand contest staged by the College of Business Administration.

"When I came on campus for that Poly Vue and saw all the balloons, the kids and the excitement, I thought this is where I want to come to school," she says.

Davis, then known as Sandi Beletrutti, didn't just attend Cal Poly Pomona. She became

part of the fabric of life in the campus community, joining the Lambda Chi sorority, serving as the recording secretary for Associated Students Inc. and earning the Poly Vue queen crown in 1970.

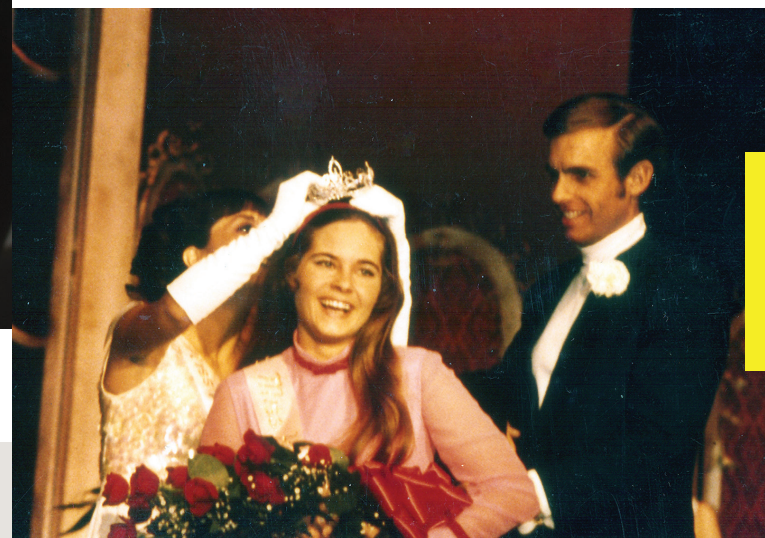
"Being named the Poly Vue queen was the highlight of my academic career," Davis says.

In 1972, she earned a bachelor of science degree in business management from the College of Business Administration, with an option in secretarial science. Davis received the Business Management Student of the Year award. That same year, she began working full time as the department secretary at the College of Business Administration.

Davis planned to work on campus only until she found "a real job," but the years just kept rolling along. Two years later, she joined the staff of the President's Office.

Her career includes working for four Cal Poly Pomona presidents: Robert Kramer, whom she describes as "a large, terrifying man, especially for a newbie";

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Sandi Beletrutti (Davis) is crowned the 1970 Poly Vue Queen by outgoing queen Barbara Di George and Ron Simons at the Fourth Annual Queen's Pageant.



Established in 1971, Ink & Clay is a national competition that features works that incorporate "any variety of ink or clay as a material."

THE ART OF GIVING

Bruce Jewett feels at home when he's at Cal Poly Pomona, especially when it's time for the annual Ink & Clay art exhibition.

His partner, the late Lt. Col. James "Jim" H. Jones ('51, citrus fruit production), funded an endowment in 1971 for the initial Ink & Clay exhibitions. Jones was a U.S. Air Force officer who was stationed at posts across the Middle East during the Cold War.

"Every time Jim changed stations, he would buy some new art to decorate his quarters," Jewett says. "When he changed stations on several tours, he would take all the old artwork to Cal Poly Pomona and started a collection."

Jewett's own passion for art blossomed through association. "I hadn't really been into visual art until sort of by osmosis from

Jim's interest and activities," recalls Jewett, who also is a devotee of the performing arts.

Jewett has seen the exhibition grow from a small show of works by art department faculty members to a regional showcase to a juried competition that attracts artists from across the nation. He began providing support to the exhibition after witnessing

the passion of those who have made the show a success year after year.

"I was really impressed by the staff and faculty. Everyone seemed to be enjoying their job," says Jewett. "The whole atmosphere at Cal Poly Pomona is like a family. They enjoy what they are doing."

Affirming his belief in the university, Jewett has issued a bequest to Cal Poly Pomona. He gives annually to Ink & Clay and the James H. Jones Memorial Purchase for the exhibition, and has supported other art-related programs in the College of Environmental Design.

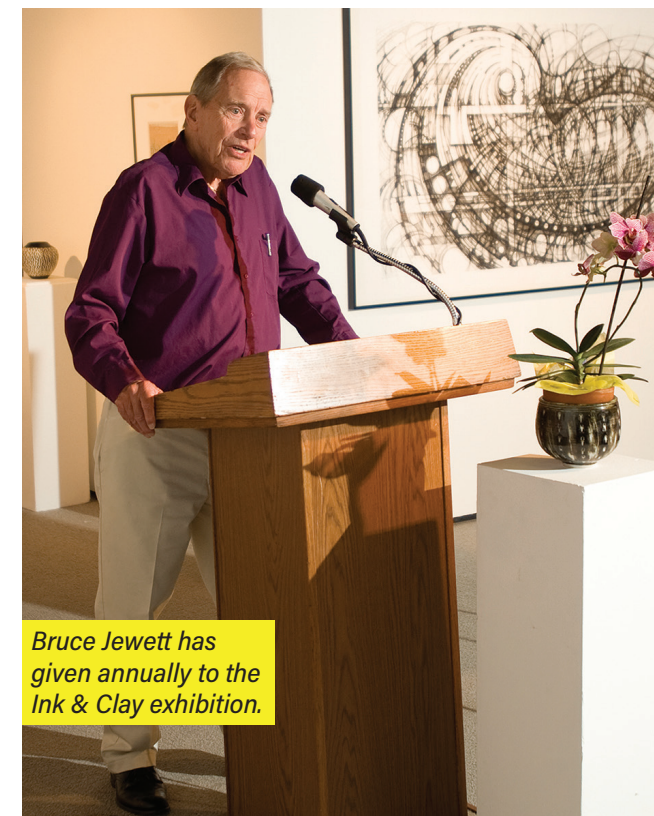
"Bruce Jewett's generous support is essential to the running of Ink & Clay. His contributions, as well as the endowments set up by himself

and the late great Col. James Jones, make this campus tradition happen," says Michele Cairella Fillmore, curator of the W. Keith and Janet Kellogg University Art Gallery and the Huntley Art Gallery. "Ink & Clay gives national recognition and notoriety to Cal Poly Pomona."

Aside from being a showcase for intriguing art, the Ink & Clay exhibition and other forms of art offer a different yet equally valuable dimension to academics.

"It is very important to support the arts," Jewett says. "Anything students can do outside of their specific major makes them a broader person."

Gary Fong is a senior communications specialist in the Office of Public Affairs.



Bruce Jewett has given annually to the Ink & Clay exhibition.

Sandi Davis ('72, office management) and Ron Simons ('64, agronomy; '69, food, marketing and agribusiness management) re-enact the 1970 Poly Vue Queen crowning at her retirement in 2014.



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Hugh La Bounty, who gave her sage advice and taught her how to develop as a staff member; Bob Suzuki, whom she calls "brilliant, kind and caring"; and Michael Ortiz, the "amazing, cool, awesome boss" who treated her and everyone on campus like family.

Ortiz describes Davis as "positive" and a "joy to work with." Her dedication to Cal Poly Pomona is part of her "lifelong mission."

"We had a conversation once where Sandi said that when she left home to go to work, she felt like she was leaving home to go home," he says. "It became such a part of her life."

After more than four decades on campus, Davis has collected fond memories, like the time La Bounty disbanded the football program and some of the players demanded to see him. When the president's assistant blocked their path, "they just picked her up and put her to the side," Davis recalls.

Then there was the time when students demonstrated in President Suzuki's office.

"The students got food out of our kitchen and started eating it," Davis says. "I told one guy that he was eating my lunch. He said that he thought the state paid for it, so the kids took up a collection and gave us money for our food!"

Although no longer working on campus, the university always will remain a part of her.

"I loved being on a college campus with so many bright, engaging and dedicated students. It kept me young. I miss my many friends and colleagues since my retirement, but I visit often and continue to keep up to date on the changing campus landscape and new and exciting activities. I will be a Cal Poly Pomona Bronco forever."

Melanie Johnson ('97, English) is a communications specialist in the Office of Public Affairs.