

Winter Quarter 2013

"A writer only begins a book. A reader finishes it."  
—Samuel Johnson

## The CRSP Sun

...Bask in our news!



# COLLEGE READING SKILLS PROGRAM

A TRIO STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES PROGRAM LOCATED IN THE **LEARNING RESOURCE CENTER**

### Director's Message

The new year brought us a new addition to the CRSP family. Robert Matranga and his wife, Suzanne, welcomed Madeline Desiree on December 31st! Since Robert was on Christmas vacation when Madeline was born, he will take his "daddy" time off spring quarter. In Robert's absence, Casey Thompson will fill in as advisor. Casey worked with CRSP as a tutor December 2004 through June 2008 and is currently a graduate student in English.

Congratulations to CRSP tutors, Ricardo Clemente and Raymond Ng, who graduate this quarter. Ricardo will earn his degree in Electrical Engineering and Raymond in Geology. We wish them the best.

Enjoy reading about the various services and events that took place this quarter. I look forward to another quarter of great workshops and exciting events in the spring. We ask that past and current CRSP participants who graduate in winter, spring, or fall 2013 contact us so that we may include them in this year's Graduate Recognition Luncheon, which will take place in late May.



Madeline Desiree Matranga

### Book Club Corner

Book Club read *The Brief Wondrous Life of Oscar Wao* by Junot Diaz this past winter. Members enjoyed discussing the many layers of dialogue and narrative that intermingle with Dominican history during the Trujillo regime to tell the story of one Dominican family's confrontation with the *fukú*: a curse so ominous that it can plague a family for

generations. Maybe. Or perhaps theirs is the story of an immigrant family's grapple with the Dominican diaspora? Or a story of an obese adolescent "fanboy" who wants nothing more than to be loved and accepted? Diaz's debut, Pulitzer-Prize winning novel is all of these things and more, and members had a great time discussing the story and its very colorful characters and language.

Spring Book Club will be reading *World War Z: An Oral History of the Zombie War* by Max Brooks. Meetings are expected to be Thursdays of weeks 3, 5, and 7 during U-Hour. Please contact CRSP if you are interested in joining.

### Professional Mentor Meeting

The winter 2013 Professional Mentor Meeting featured Dr. Byron Howlett, interim director of the Office of Student Life and Cultural Centers. The meeting took place on Thursday, February 14 in the Bronco Student Center. Over 70 students piled into Ursa Major AB to hear Dr. Howlett's talk, and to enjoy the pizza supplied by the Learning Resource Center.

Dr. Howlett's speech focused on his background as a first-generation college student from a low-income family and his bumpy path to academic success. He urged students to join campus clubs and to consider studying abroad in order to experience other parts of the world. He also shared his experience with the Semester at Sea program, in which students sail around the world, earning credits and visiting many different countries and cultures.

Students who responded to a survey on the event reported feeling "motivated and inspired" by the talk. One said, "Just as I am about to finish my degree, I find myself in an extremely difficult and overwhelming quarter, and have begun to doubt if I can finish. He was realistic, passionate, believable and inspiring. I CAN finish." Dr. Howlett's focus on extracurricular engagement resonated with another: "I learned that college isn't always about studying and your major. You have to go out there and find yourself and enjoy yourself."

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## College Reading Skills Program In the LRC Library Rm. 2919

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### WINTER 2013

#### PEER TUTOR-MENTORS

HANNAH AMANTE  
RICHIE CLEMENTE  
RAYMOND NG  
VANESSA REYNAGA  
AMANDA RIGGLE  
LAUREN SUMABAT  
REINA VILLANUEVA  
CONNIE YEH  
MICHAEL ZHOU

#### PROGRAM HOURS

MON-THURS 8:00-5:00  
FRI 8:30-4:00

## Jekyll and Hyde Meet Song and Dance: CRSP Participants Travel to the Pantages Theatre

CRSP and ARCHES participants once again had the opportunity to visit the Pantages Theatre in Los Angeles to see *Jekyll and Hyde*. A powerful and thrilling musical, the play reinterprets the classic story of a scientist who is the subject of his own experiments seeking medical breakthroughs. Thirty-six students and five staff members departed on a chartered bus at 6:30 p.m. on Friday, February 22nd to head for Hollywood after being treated to a fabulous dinner experience at the Restaurant at Kellogg Ranch. After a tremendous evening of drama, song, and dance, they returned at 11:30 p.m. Many students who attended had never seen a professional theatre performance. The federal regulations authorizing CRSP's services permit the program to expose program participants to cultural events not usually available to them. One student's reflection on the event follows:

"I thoroughly enjoyed the evening, and am very thankful for being allowed to attend such an event. This is a wonderful program and opportunity. I hope there is funding to continue programs like this. It makes a difference in a person's life. It makes you feel special and builds up your self-esteem. We are so busy with trying to survive and doing well in classes that we don't take the time to smell the roses, or we financially cannot afford something like this. This outing broadens our views of the world around us."

--Rebecca Lomonaco

### Financial Literacy Workshops

CRSP continued its collaboration with ARCHES and the Educational Opportunity Program (EOP) in presenting students with opportunities to enhance their understanding of financial aid and general financial literacy.

The first of three events for the quarter provided information about scholarships. Marcia Starcher of the Office of Financial Aid and Scholarships led students through a PowerPoint presentation that highlighted the simplicity of the new General Scholarship application process. Patricia Duran, program

coordinator for ARCHES, provided suggestions and strategies for requesting letters of recommendations.

The second event featured Crystal Steele of the Office of Financial Aid and Scholarships. She shared important information regarding the FAFSA application and renewal. In addition to providing updates and reminders, Crystal answered specific questions from attendees. Over 50 students attended the workshop.

The final event featured Robert Matranga of the College Reading Skills Program. The topic was Online Budgeting Tools. The workshop took place in a computer lab, allowing students to interact with the websites that were discussed. Matranga encouraged attendees to use the simple and intuitive tools to track their expenses, set alerts and pay bills, establish budgets and financial goals, and learn more about where their money goes each month. Armed with better information about their spending habits, students can make smarter decisions and save money.

### Tutor-Mentor Spotlight: Connie Yeh

Connie Yeh joined CRSP as a participant in fall 2010. She was hired as a tutor-mentor in fall 2012. Having served as her advisor, Cindy Greco noted qualities that would make her a good candidate to work for the program and encouraged her to apply.

Connie is a Biology major. She chose the major because of its "versatility," and she has "always had a fascination with the natural world." She adds, "I am very interested in animals in particular." She anticipates graduating in spring 2015.

JK Rowling stands out as Connie's favorite author, though she found it difficult to choose. "I really enjoyed the Harry Potter series," she declares.

Connie states that her favorite thing about working for CRSP is "being able to tutor students and then see them excited or happy about understanding a new idea or concept. I also enjoy the company of the entire CRSP staff. We

are all fun and friendly people.”

When it comes time to satisfy hunger cravings, Connie makes tracks to Subway for an artfully crafted sandwich. She also ventures to the environs surrounding campus for nourishment, but there are “too many tasty places” for her to single out one as a favorite.

As previously stated, Connie enjoys animals. Thus, when asked for her thoughts on reptiles, she replied, “I love them. They are amazing and unique as well as cute and funny. I would buy a pet boa constrictor if they would only stay as small as they are when they are young.”

### ***Student Spotlight: Joy Chang***

Joy Chang has been a CRSP participant since fall 2009. Joy majors in Philosophy and Finance, Real Estate, and Law. She chose to pursue a degree in these areas because they are interesting and intellectually challenging. She explains, “Philosophy taught me how to analyze things from different perspectives and business law allows me to apply the skills I learn in philosophy to real life scenarios.”

Joy’s favorite aspect of being a student at Cal Poly is interaction with the people who work and study here. She finds the faculty, advisors, professors, mentors, and students to be friendly and considerate. According to Joy, the “teachings, advice, and help” of various people at Cal Poly helped her to achieve success in her studies. Further, the diversity of Cal Poly gives her an opportunity to meet people from different cultures and backgrounds.

Not content to focus on academics only, Joy has also been widely involved with campus organizations. She has served as an associate justice for ASI, as president for Alpha Lambda Delta Honor Society, and vice-president of communication for Golden Key Honor Society. She also participates in the Kellogg Honors College. These experiences have helped her develop “better organizational, management, communication, and leadership skills.” She has also met “a lot of awesome people and developed lasting friendships.” She urges fellow students to “take the opportunity to get to know the faculty and staff of Cal Poly because through time you will discover they are altruistic, benevolent, and passionate about what they do, and a little wisdom from them will go a long way.”

After she graduates, Joy hopes to study law at either USC or UCLA because they have excellent clinical law programs. A volunteer with the JusticeCorps, which provides free legal help to those in need, Joy hopes to use her legal education to work in a non-profit clinic that provides legal aid to those who cannot afford legal representation. Her desire to provide this service stems from “knowing what it feels like to need help.” Joy adds, “I remember the gratitude I felt when I received the help I needed, whether it was advice in life or help with my studies. I want to give back the kindness I received from others and bestow it on the community through philanthropy work in the legal field.”



*CRSP Tutor-Mentor,  
Connie Yeh*



*CRSP Participant, Joy Chang*



*Dr. Byron Howlett, Interim Director of the Office of Student Life & Cultural Centers, shares his experiences, wisdom, and enthusiasm with CRSP Professional Mentor Meeting attendees*



## *An Evening of Dinner and Theatre*



*CRSP Students, Valerie Camacho, Elizabeth Herrera, and Kimberly Herrera at RKR for dinner before departing for the Jekyll and Hyde play*



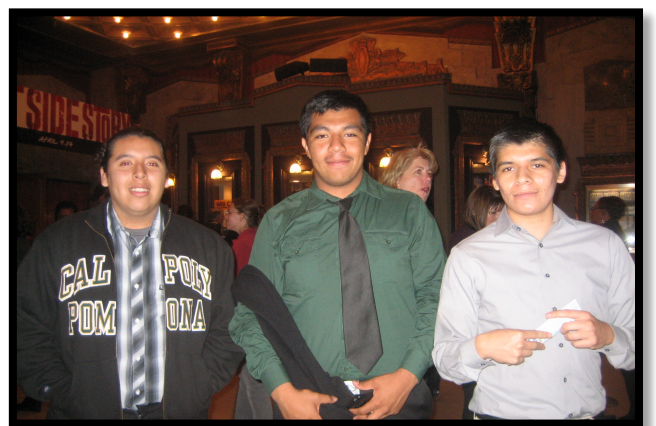
*Lawrence Pudlik, Arthi Basavaraj, Akash Vaidya, and Rochelle Raquel*



*Jekyll and Hyde attendees gather before departing on the bus*



*Participants and tutor-mentors pose outside the Pantages Theatre*



*Xavier Ruiz Pantoja, Geovany Jimenez, and Luis Cortes ready to enter the Pantages Theatre*