



January/February 2024

Message from the Dean

Dear Colleagues,

It's hard to believe that it was 4 years ago that news stories about a mysterious flu virus began to circulate. Our current freshmen were just barely into the social training ground of high school when social distancing and isolation began. While some memories of the pandemic have begun to fade or take on the patina of surrealness (zoom happy hours?), our social networks have not fully recovered. Four years later, we still must work with intention to rebuild our social bonds and relationships. As a newcomer to CPP, I brought that intention into each of my interactions. Seven months into my time here at CPP, I'm grateful for faces that are now familiar, voices I recognize in the hallway, and everyday rituals that bring a smile and a shared laugh. There have been unanticipated challenges, and there have been rewarding and reassuring friendships that have help me find ways to meet these challenges.

As we hit the stride of the spring semester, I ask you to join me in working with intention to strengthen our shared space. We have shared responsibility for our shared experience. As we read through the list of events below, I ask everyone to attend one event that is not for their department. I ask everyone to send one quick email congratulating someone that they do not know well. I ask everyone to show up for someone else. There is so much to celebrate and appreciate, please join me applauding our colleagues and students.

Kind regards,
Cami

Save the Date!

CLASS Event Calendar – Faculty and Staff have been added to the CLASS Event calendar on Outlook! Use this calendar to view dates and details for happenings across CLASS this semester.

Student RSCA Conference: March 2, 2024

The Cal Poly Pomona [Student Research, Scholarship & Creative Activities Conference](#) provides an opportunity for our undergraduate and graduate students from all departments to share their original research, scholarly and creative activities. Come see their work.

Désirée Lim, Immigration and Social Equality | March 18, 2024

Author Meets Critics for [Désirée Lim's](#) new book, [Immigration and Social Equality](#), which provides a distinctive social egalitarian critique of existing immigration practices More information [here](#).

Golden Leaves Author Award Nominations | March 15, 2024

It's that time of the year again! In April, the University Library will recognize all campus members who have recently authored or edited a book with the [Gold Leaves Author Award](#). Complete a nomination form and email it to library@cpp.edu before March 15, 2024.

Sethia Lecture | March 22, 2024

The Ahimsa Center is hosting their second annual Sethia Lecture featuring Rajeev Bhargava discussing "Retrieving Indian Religiosities, Reimagining Secularism on March 22 from 4:30pm to 6:30pm in Kellogg West. [RSVP by March 15 here](#).

Psychological and Structural Approaches to Combating Misinformation | April 11, 2024 SSB

This interdisciplinary panel will share cutting-edge strategies about how best to combat misinformation, both to help individuals recognize it when they see it, and to help redesign our institutions to stop its spread. More information [here](#).

Major Exploration Day | April 11, 2024

Inspire future CLASS majors by showcasing the passion and expertise you have for your programs at **Major Exploration Day!** Don't miss the opportunity to connect with continuing and undeclared students on **April 11th from 11am - 2pm in Ursa Minor!**

Bronco Bound (Spring Open House) | Saturday, April 13, 2024

We're looking for CLASS Ambassadors (students, faculty, staff, and alumni) to volunteer at **Spring Open House**. This will be a chance to meet & greet prospective students and their supporters to tell them how CLASS will play a pivotal role in their educational journey! Sign up to volunteer [here](#)!

Music Performances | March 6 – May 10, 2024

Come see our faculty and student ensemble performances, including jazz, orchestra, piano, brass, acapella, mariachi, and singer-songwriter competitions. There is something from everyone, get your tickets [here](#).

Theater Productions | March 8 - May 9, 2024

This spring, Theatre and New Dance are mounting [The Wolves](#) and [The Last, Best Small Town](#) in addition to a faculty/student dance concert and student plays. Each performance highlights the skills and depth of our student talent. Tickets [here](#).

CLASS Commencement | Saturday, May 18, 2024

Spring 2024 Commencement is right around the corner, visit the [commencement website](#) for frequently asked questions and details about the day! If you're interested in volunteering for one or both CLASS ceremonies, [submit a form here](#)!

Tell us what events are happening in your departments through the "[Submit Your News](#)" form on our website!

Communication

Congratulations **Sunny Lie**, assistant professor of communication, for being selected for a Fullbright US Scholar award for 2024-2025! She will be teaching intercultural communication at a university in Jakarta, the capital city of Indonesia.

Congratulations to assistant Communication professor, **Denisse Vasquez Guevara**, on being selected as an awardee for [Fall 2023 Signature Polytechnic Experience \(PolyX\) Hub](#) for her **Online and Social Media: Creating Meaningful Audience Engagement** course. Denisse has also been granted a **Golden Leaves Author Award for 2024** from the University Library for her work in science communication and public engagement!

Fallon Okwuosa ('12, communication) [has been appointed Assistant Deputy Director for Public Affairs at the Department of General Services](#), where she had served as an Information Officer since 2021. Previously, she was a segment producer at NBCUniversal, Inc. for "Access Hollywood" and a researcher at CBS Television Distribution for "The Doctors" talk show.

Andrea Smith, assistant professor of communication, co-authored paper, "Which course delivery format do students prefer? The influence of students' traits and expectations on their instructional modality preference" received the Top Paper Award for the Instructional Communication Division at the Western States Communication Association (WSCA) annual convention.

Communication professor, **Steven deWalden**, was recognized at a Faculty/Staff appreciation as an outstanding professor and was featured during Halftime of the Men's Basketball game vs. CSU Monterey Bay this past week.

Communication student, **Lindsey Lam**, was selected as a winner in the CPP Common Read Writing Contest and was acknowledged at the [CPP Common Read event](#) with author Heather McGhee.

Communication faculty member **Lauren Furey** won an [Award of Excellence at BEA's Festival of Media Arts](#) for an episode from her women in politics podcast "The Pink State". The episode features an interview with Olivia Hill, the first transgender person elected to office in Tennessee. You can find the post on the Communication department LinkedIn page.

Ivana Cvetkovic, assistant professor of communication, co-authored a study titled "[Online harassment, psychological stressors, and occupational dysfunction among journalists working in a conflict zone](#)" published in the Digital Journalism journal.

Nell C. Huang-Horowitz (communication department chair and professor of communication) and **Sunny Lie** (assistant professor of communication) collaborated on research article "[Stakeholder identity orientations: understanding the perceptions of a public university's identity through the lenses of students, faculty, and staff](#)" for the Atlantic Journal of Communication

Sociology

Anthony Campo, sociology professor, takes readers inside and beyond his book "Brown and Gay in LA: The Lives of Immigrant Sons" on the New Books Network Podcast episode "[Brown and Gay in LA and the Craft of Writing Nonfiction](#)". Professor Ocampo was also featured in an NBC News article "[May December' film about Mary Kay Letourneau ignites discussion of race and class.](#)"

Peter Hanink, assistant professor of sociology, was [featured in the Daily Breeze](#) discussing the use of Brazilian jiu-jitsu to police at Torrance's Gracie University to reduce injuries to cops and suspects. Peter was also featured as an expert in several news sources including the [Los Angeles Times](#), [CBS2 Los Angeles/KCAL News](#), KNX-AM 1070, Agence France Presse, AirTalk with Larry Mantle on KPCC 89.3, and [Press Enterprises](#) regarding the El Mirage deaths that occurred in the Mojave Desert.

Theatre and New Dance

Theatre company, [The Freedom Theatre](#) in Jenin Palestine, that **Sayda Trujillo** (theatre and new dance assistant professor) is affiliated with and has collaborated with since 2013 when she lived and worked in Jenin, Palestine has recently been [nominated for a Nobel Peace Prize](#).

Thomas Bryant, theatre adjunct professor and dramaturg, recently published [THE DRAMATURGY OF HISTORY](#) by Routledge Focus. The book uses case studies from Bryant's collaborations with playwrights on successful Broadway and regional productions to work through the fundamental questions of historical adaptation.

Linda Biseti, professor emerita of theatre and new dance, directed "[Oceanside Firsts](#)" a sequel to the 2023 sold-out play produced by the Generational Black Pioneers. The production told stories of Oceanside's Black pioneers: the school district's first Black teachers, its first Black Mayor Terry Johnson; and its first Black police chief, Kedrick Sadler. Biseti's production was also featured in [Broadway World San Diego](#).

Theatre and New Dance welcomed their new Department Coordinator, **Alyssa Martinez**, at the beginning of February! Alyssa earned her A.A. in Business Management from Eastern Gateway College, and since then has held administrative positions in both private sector and public sector organizations. Most recently, she was a Senior Administrative Assistant at Seattle University.

English and Modern Languages

Mary Sisney, professor emerita of English literature, was featured in a [Los Angeles Daily News article](#) discussing why reading trumps audiobooks: "A passage in a book can trigger a memory of an experience or another book. When I'm reading, I can return to the book without missing anything."

Andrew Moss, professor emeritus of English and nonviolence studies, writes about the concept of "satyagraha", a term coined by M.K. Gandhi to describe the adherence to factual and ethical truth in an [LA Progressive article](#) last month.

English literary studies transfer student, **Sydney Sears**, shares her story as a CPP transfer student in a [PolyPost article](#).

English associate professor, **Kate Ozment**, was interviewed about the gains in the tentative agreement reached between the CFA and the CSU after the systemwide strike for EdSource's [Education Beat Podcast](#).

English professor, **Dewey Hall**, is currently [being hosted at the University of Bristol](#) by the Centre for Environmental Humanities, English Department. During his visit, Hall will collaborate with the *Cabot Institute for the Environment* in hopes to co-host a panel of ecocritics and environmental specialists to discuss the "Significance of the Humanities in an Age of Climate Change."

Political Science

Political science students traveled with assistant professor **Jared Cuellar** to Des Moines for the Iowa caucus season last month. During the trip, the [Des Moines Register](#) reported a meet-and-greet- that **Brian Lazo Casanave** ('25), **Yeltzin Rodriguez** ('24), and their peers attended with Republican presidential candidate Asa Hutchinson at Confluence Brewing Co. Their trip was featured in several media outlets including the [Claremont Courier](#), [Univision 34](#), [Polycentric](#), and The San Gabriel Valley Economic Partnership.

Political Science adjunct professor **Farrah Hassen** [wrote an article for Long Beach Press Telegram](#) about the “mass killing of Palestinians in Gaza’s schools, medical facilities, shelters, and residential areas are all evidence of likely genocidal acts. As are forced relocation of over 1 million Palestinians out of northern Gaza and Israel’s frequent bombing of civilian evacuation routes.

Alfred Ortiz ('92, political science), CEO of Cyber Software Distributors, is a testament to the power of education and the impact it can have on a student’s career trajectory. “CPP was very influential,” Ortiz said. “I was able to understand how politics and technology intertwine.” Recently, [Ortiz testified in front of the U.S. Senate](#) regarding small businesses in the cybersecurity sector. “I have witnessed firsthand the pressing need for accessible solutions that empower entities of all scales to secure their futures.”

Political Science professor **Renford Reese** payed tribute to his friend and former colleague the late professor emeritus **Toni Mokjaetji Humber** by [creating a scholarship in her name](#). Reese’s \$25,000 “Black History Month” donation honors Dr. Humber’s professional work in African American studies, Africa and Black culture in the Department of Ethnic and Women’s studies from 1995 to 2016. The funds provide a \$500 annual scholarship to 15 students to help cover books and other educational expenses. “There is no one that I admired and respected more on this campus.” Reese said. “She embodied King’s ‘Beloved Community,’ which she created with her students and mentees at CPP.

Marc Scarcelli, political science professor, recently published an article titled “[Economic decline, ethnonationalism and civil war onset](#)” with the Association for the Study of Ethnicity and Nationalism and John Wiley & Sons Ltd.

Associate professor of political science, **Robert Nyenhuis**, has been appointed as an Editorial Board Member to the Journal of Modern African Studies and currently serves as an Associate Editor for African Studies Review, the African Studies Association's flagship journal. Lastly, Nyenhuis has a new publication out in Commonwealth & Comparative Politics which can be [read here](#).

Political science alum, **Jonathan Horton**, was featured in [Pasadena Now](#) discussing his vision as District 4 Candidate. “My vision for Pasadena over the next four years is one of steady and noticeable improvement, especially in District 4.”

The California Elections and Policy Poll (CEPP), a representative survey of likely California voters prior to the March 5, 2024, primary, was conducted by Political Science assistant professor **Jarred Cuellar** and colleagues from CSU Long Beach and USC. Among its key findings: 80 percent of the state’s Latino voters who plan to vote Republican and were polled between Jan. 21-29 say they will vote for former President Donald Trump in the Republican primary election. The poll was featured several news outlets including [USC Today](#), [Daily News](#), [East Bay Times](#), [Yahoo News](#), [Washington Examiner](#), [Desert Sun](#), and [Politico](#)

Geography and Anthropology

James J.A. Blair, associate professor of geography and anthropology, served as a panelist in an expert briefing for California state legislators on "[Lithium Extraction from Geothermal Brine](#)" hosted by the California Council on Science and Technology. Blair was also interviewed in Episode 1 and 4 of a new podcast called [Electric Futures](#), produced by the USC Annenberg Center for Climate Journalism and Communication. The six-episode series is focused on local impacts of geothermal lithium development in Imperial Valley, California.

Geography and Anthropology Professor **Sahar Derakhshan** was featured in an article in [Temblor](#) discussing the frequency of disasters and how they can have an outsized impact on marginalized communities, more easily overwhelming residents. "For a community to become vulnerable, or in more positive terms, less resilient, that community is not just based on its economy — there's a compound effect of many other factors."

Music

Music Industry Studies 2023 alum, **Reza Matin**, recently [performed with the band "The Lemon Twigs"](#) on The [Tonight Show with Jimmy Fallon](#).

Ethnomusicology associate professor, **Jessie Vallejo**, was recognized by her peers on [Yamaha's 4th annual "40 Under 40 Music Educators" list](#) for imagination, innovation and implementing "new or bold" ideas. As well as for her endeavors in growing or improving music education in schools and communities.

Ethnic and Women's Studies

Congratulations to EWS adjunct professor, **Paul Knopf**, for being awarded a 2023-2024 CCE Impact Grant to support his project in EWS 3600 during the Spring 2024 term!

Ayana Jamieson, assistant professor of ethnic and women's studies, recently launched the [Octavia E. Butler: Seeding Futures exhibit](#) at The New Children's Museum which opens to the public on March 9th! To celebrate the exhibit's launch, the New Children's Museum will [host a panel discussion](#) to discuss the life, legacy, and global influence of Octavia E. Butler on March 9 from 2p – 3p! Dr. Jamieson is [collaborating](#) with CPP alum, [American Artist](#), and grammy award winning journalist, Lynell George.

Philosophy

Karina Ortiz Villa ('21 Philosophy and PhD candidate at University of California, San Diego) published a paper on the philosophy of Gloria Anzaldúa, entitled "[La Facultad: Towards Active Embodied Agency and an Embodied Epistemology](#)" in the [American Philosophical Association's Newsletter on Hispanic/Latino Issues in Philosophy](#). Karina draws on Anzaldúa's work to argue that a distinctive form of knowledge is available to people who integrate conscious self-awareness, bodily experiences, motor skills, and sensory information with the rational mind to engage with and navigate the world.

Listen to CCEP student fellow, **Rena Miller** on the latest CCEP Podcast on Migration Mobility Justice "Movements in California". The most recent episode highlights two stories of immigrant families coming to the United States- one from Mexico and one from China- discussing their unique challenges and how

their stories differ from the typical “immigration story” we see in media and pop culture narratives. [Listen now on PodBean!](#)

CLASS Dean’s Office

The Dean’s office welcomed several new staff members this past month. Join us in welcoming:

Sharena Harvey – Assistant to the Dean and Front Desk Coordinator

Sharena earned her BA in Communication with a minor in Public Relations from Cal State LA. For several years, she was an Administrative Assistant for the BSC Accounting Corporation and served for several years as an Executive Assistant at two different companies.

Lydia Dolan – Assistant to the Associate Dean

Lydia earned her BS in Child and Adolescent Studies at CSU Fullerton. She’s worked as a property manager and most recently as the Administrative Support Coordinator for the Urban and Regional Planning Department at Cal Poly Pomona.

Noelle McKinn – External Relations Associate

Noelle joins CLASS After spending six years with University Advancement at CPP. During her time here, she collaborated across campus and beyond to coordinate various events such as CPP’s Tasting and Auction Event, alumni regional events, Fall Convocation, and Commencement. Prior to CPP, she worked as an ASC at CSU Fullerton and in non-profit organizations. She earned her BA in Business Administration with an emphasis in Marketing from Vanguard University.

Submit your news!

CLASS Kudos is a monthly list of shout outs to brag about the incredible work you’re doing! Keep us up to date on what’s happening in your departments and tell us about upcoming events, share exciting news, announce student successes, and more by [submitting your news on our website!](#) For questions, contact CLASS Communications Specialist Ashley Bagwell, adbagwell@cpp.edu.

*Deadline for the next CLASS Kudos is **March 25th at 5pm.***

Connect with CLASS on social media: [Facebook](#) | [Instagram](#) | [LinkedIn](#)

