

CPP

PHILANTHROPY EDITION

CAL POLY POMONA MAGAZINE | FALL 2022

THE GIFT OF **innovation**

*Alumni Couple Give \$12.5 Million
to Graduate Business Program*



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WHAT'S INSIDE

That's SoCalPoly

Short stories that celebrate our campus' unique location, traditions and inclusive polytechnic identity. [Page 2](#)

The Gift of Innovation

Alumni David and Ruth Singelyn transform graduate business education with a \$12.5 million gift. [Page 7](#)

Where He Belongs

After growing up in the foster system, Ramiro Montiel finds home at Cal Poly Pomona and in New York City. [Page 15](#)

Photo Essay

From rockets to satellites to unmanned aerial vehicles, aerospace engineers soar to new heights. [Page 21](#)

Philanthropic Highlights

Donors gave over \$23 million for scholarships, research and polytechnic learning experiences. [Page 26](#)

University News

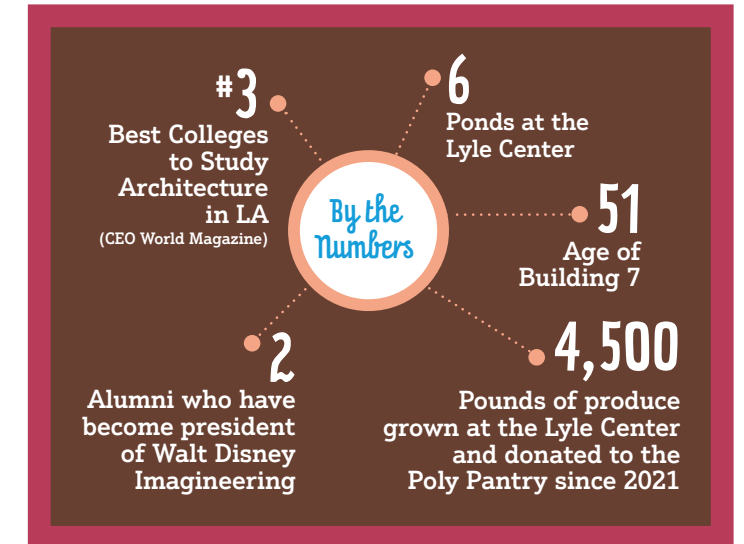
[Page 32](#)



BY THE NUMBERS

College of Environmental Design

Founded in 1970, the College of Environmental Design has grown to include art history, visual communication design, urban and regional planning, regenerative studies, landscape architecture and architecture. As one of only two colleges of environmental design in the 23-campus CSU system, ENV is one of the largest, most diverse and financially accessible design schools in the nation.



A BRIEF HISTORY

Educational Leadership Doctoral Program

Cal Poly Pomona’s only doctoral program in educational leadership emphasizes research with a focus on transforming schools, elevating underperforming schools and enhancing schools that are already succeeding. Each year, a new cohort is selected for the three-year program.

After graduating, alumni continue to excel and progress in their educational leadership, taking on roles such as school district superintendents, associate vice president for a community college, director of human resources in a school district, and more.

2006

The CSU Executive Order 991 established Ed.D. degree programs to improve leadership in public education systems. Cal Poly Pomona’s program is designed through a year-long, collaborative process.

2012

The Educational Leadership Doctoral Program begins offering classes in the fall.

2019

Two external reviewers commend the program’s coherence and quality of the curriculum and faculty, the level of student support, and the quality of the program’s leadership.

2021

In November, the program is recognized as a full member of the University Council for Educational Administration (UCEA), an association committed to advancing the preparation of educational leaders.

2022

The Educational Leadership Doctoral Program receives approval to offer two options – Leadership in Community Colleges and Postsecondary Education and also PreK-12 Educational Leadership.

Ed.D. graduates in May 2022.



Prospective students can sign up for a virtual information session by visiting www.cpp.edu/ceis/edleadership

EXPERT Q & A

Embedded Planning: A Practitioner’s Origin Story

Jonathan Pacheco Bell originated the Embedded Planning praxis, the idea that urban planners can better advance equity by actively participating in their cities’ daily lives to create policies that reflect “street realities.”

A senior project manager at the **South Bay Cities Council of Governments**, Pacheco Bell teaches in the College of Environmental Design.

How did your upbringing inspire Embedded Planning?

I was born in Boyle Heights and raised in East LA/Montebello during the rise of West Coast hip hop and graffiti culture. I started tagging in the late 80s in junior high school. By the time I got to high school, I’d graduated to street murals. Graffiti is how I was exposed to cities and urbanism.

I studied architecture at East LA College and political science at Cal State LA. When I finished my undergraduate studies, I realized that I had a trajectory. I wanted to “bring it all together” by studying the politics of city design in graduate school. That’s how I found urban planning. At UCLA I studied under the late **Edward W. Soja**, whose teachings about critical planning are in the DNA of Embedded Planning.

Where did you first apply Embedded Planning?

Embedded Planning was born on the streets of Florence-Firestone in South Central LA. This community has long been

burdened with the legacies of inequitable planning: redlining, environmental racism, disinvestment and more. As a youth, I learned of these injustices from N.W.A. and Ice-T. Years later, I got the chance to do something about it as an LA County planner working on the ground. Like so many marginalized communities of color, Florence-Firestone needed tailored, empathetic planning. So I pushed my planning work to the street-level. I demonstrated that I was trustworthy, and community members embraced me as an ally. By taking it to the streets, Embedded Planning got more people engaged, aware of planning, and participating in the planning process.

The next generation does not want to plan from a desk. I see this in our Cal Poly Pomona students. Increasing injustice in cities has raised the stakes. This spirit is driving the spread of Embedded Planning beyond LA.

Where else is Embedded Planning succeeding?

In Dallas, Texas. **Do Right By The Streets Planning** and **RAYO Planning** work with intention from neighborhood spaces.

DRBTS partners with residents to co-design food festivals and pop-up markets. Their work is planned, designed and built in the community. “For Us, By Us,” as we say. RAYO’s work counters racism in the city. Working from the community,



RAYO is organizing with Latino-owned auto shops to ensure inclusion in community planning processes. DRBTS and RAYO demonstrate that Embedded Planning can be done anywhere. It starts with planners putting their feet on the ground.

Read the full Q&A at www.cpp.edu/cppmag



How to Care for an Iguana

BioTrek, a learning center on campus that provides interactive educational connections to the tropical rainforest, houses over 200 rainforest species, including Galileo, the newest iguana who took up residence in July.



Galileo enjoys walks in the garden and likes crunchy foods such as snap peas. He is cared for by Jennifer Alexander, a curator of organismal biology in the biological sciences department, as well as multiple student assistants.

1

Provide a Welcoming Home

Iguanas need a large enclosure with good ventilation that is roomy enough for them to walk around, eat, drink and defecate. They also require a vertical area with tree branches to climb.

2

Turn Up the Heat

Iguanas typically prefer hot and humid climates, with temperatures between 95 and 100 degrees. Humidity helps prevent poor shedding and kidney damage.

3

Serve Delicious, Nutritious Meals

Iguanas are herbivores and must be fed daily. Galileo's diet consists of kale, squash, bell peppers and snap peas, as well as small amounts of tropical fruit like mango, guavas, bananas and strawberries.

4

Keep a Watchful Eye

A healthy iguana should shed every four to six weeks. Older iguanas may shed more often. If your iguana is not shedding enough, shedding too much or seems lethargic, consult with an animal healthcare professional.

5

Treat Iguanas with Respect

Let your iguana have bad days. Some days, iguanas may not feel like interacting with people or coming out of their cage for a walk. Respect their space.

BRONCOS AT WORK



Erin Edwards

'13, liberal studies

Director of Marketing and Communications
Los Angeles Dodgers Foundation

Tell us about your career.

I am the Director of Marketing & Communications for the Los Angeles Dodgers Foundation (LADF), leading the strategy and execution of digital, social, print and PR communications. I manage all aspects of digital marketing campaigns, social, email marketing, display advertising, video, photo and analytics management. Starting out as an intern, I've moved my way up as a coordinator, manager, and senior manager of marketing and operations. I'm in my ninth year with LADF.

What does the foundation do?

The Los Angeles Dodgers Foundation envisions a city where everyone, regardless of ZIP code, has the opportunity to thrive. We are tackling the most pressing problems facing Los Angeles with a mission to improve education, health care, homelessness and social justice for all Angelenos. Through a social justice lens, we run and fund proven programs that level the playing field and invest in solutions driven by the communities we serve.

What do you enjoy the most about what you do?

The impact. We like to say that it's "Bigger Than Baseball," and it truly is. We get to use our well-recognized brand for good. Since 2020, we have distributed over 6 million meals, impacted over 8.8 million youth and more. How can you not love what you do?

Favorite Dodger Stadium snack?

I am a big Dodger dog fan. For my birthday last year, my co-workers got me a platter of Dodger dogs instead of a cake.

How did you get to Cal Poly Pomona?

You can say that I was born at Cal Poly Pomona. My mom was pregnant with me when she was getting her teaching credential there. I went to Citrus College and transferred to Cal Poly Pomona.

BRONCOS AT WORK



Denise Kaufman

'96, accounting

Vice President of Accounting and Financial Operations
Los Angeles Chargers

Tell us about your career.

I wanted to be in a place that would excite and motivate me around something I felt passionate about, so I decided to pursue opportunities with the NFL. I utilized my professional network and found someone who connected me with the Chargers front office. That led to an interview and the creation of a position for me. Now I'm in my fifth season. I manage a team of 10, encompassing all the accounting, finance and payroll of the club. I also oversee the owners' financial operations.

What do you enjoy most?

I get to do what I love doing in a fun and exciting environment. It is definitely a highlight to go downstairs, grab lunch and see all the players. There is never a dull moment, and when we win or lose, we all share that vibe the following day.

Are you a big football fan?

I was not a football fan, but my husband always had been, and when the kids (three sons and a daughter) were little, I started to like it. We became a football family.

How has your determination contributed to your success?

I am originally from Argentina. I moved to Upland during my sophomore year in high school. I only spoke Spanish. I was put in ESL classes and was determined to learn English. I did so in less than 6 months. I am a very determined person. Eyes on the prize, like I tell my children. Good things come to those who work hard.

How did CPP prepare you for your career?

I went to college to get the tools I needed to work for a CPA firm. That's what I thought I wanted at the time. Cal Poly Pomona gave me exactly that. It also taught me the importance of networking. That's how I got my internship at Kieckhafer Schiffer LLP, a CPA firm in Irvine, which led to a full-time job there.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



Investing in Opportunity

The demand for a Cal Poly Pomona education has never been higher.

To cite just one measure, this fall we received the most applications in the history of our university, topping 60,000 for the first time. This historic high beat out the previous record, which coincidentally had just been set only one year before.

The cause of this state of affairs comes as no surprise. Like you, prospective students understand that Cal Poly Pomona offers a transformative educational experience that is engaging and relevant and that they will be ready to succeed the moment they cross the stage at graduation. These potential Broncos see that regardless of what field of study they would pursue, our students learn how to think critically, innovate and utilize the latest in technologies and practices. They engage with employers and build a wealth of knowledge and skills to succeed now and as part of the workforce of the future.

To put it more succinctly: **Cal Poly Pomona equals opportunity.**

And that being the case, it follows that when people give of their time, expertise and resources to Cal Poly Pomona, they're investing in opportunity.

Each year, we dedicate the philanthropy edition of CPP Magazine to highlighting the people and programs investing in opportunity for our students. These investments are happening all over campus, and in this edition, we're pleased to announce a gift of historic proportions from Distinguished Alumni **David and Ruth Singelyn** that promises to elevate graduate education in the College of Business Administration to new heights. Their generosity is growing the legacy of opportunity that they first experienced as undergraduate students at Cal Poly Pomona.

As always, thank you for being part of the Cal Poly Pomona community, and thank you for investing in opportunity.

Sincerely,

Soraya M. Coley, Ph.D.
President

THE GIFT OF innovation

*Alumni David and Ruth Singelyn
Transform Graduate Business
Education with \$12.5 Million
Gift to Cal Poly Pomona*

When David and Ruth Singelyn were students at Cal Poly Pomona in the 1980s, they experienced the best that a polytechnic education has to offer: the opportunity to earn a top business degree while getting the hands-on experience necessary to set them apart in their early professional roles.

The couple went on to build successful and fulfilling careers and now have set their sights on bolstering the program that provided them with a strong foundation.

"Cal Poly Pomona offers one of the leading business programs in the country but is not yet recognized in the national conversation of top institutions for graduate education," says David, co-founder and chief executive officer of **American Homes 4 Rent**, a Las Vegas-based real estate investment trust. "We're still the best-kept secret in the United States, and that needs to change. Every professor, thought leader and candidate for an advanced business degree should have us on their list."





"Visionary philanthropy has always been fundamental to Cal Poly Pomona's success starting from the time of W.K. Kellogg, and it is even more important today. It gives us the freedom to imagine new possibilities and make them happen, and creates essential opportunities for growth and ambition."

President Soraya M. Coley

Family and Faith

For the Singelyns, now in their 60s and residing in Denver, guiding and empowering future generations are priorities.

"Hard work, teamwork and collaboration are integral to any family's success," says Ruth ('84, computer information systems), who is passionate about modeling that behavior for her children and grandchildren.

David and Ruth met in 1982 when she introduced herself to him at the university's bookstore, having noticed him in class, and invited him for a beer at the former on-campus pub Blazing Saddle. The rest, as they say, is history.

Born in Germany to a German mother and Swedish father, Ruth and her family moved to Illinois in her early childhood, then to the San Gabriel Valley when she was 15. She earned an associate's degree at Pasadena City College and, with encouragement from her father, later enrolled at Cal Poly Pomona.

After graduation, Ruth took a job as a systems engineer for IBM. She and David married in 1987. When they had their second child, Ruth stepped away from working outside the home to devote herself to their growing family. Once their three sons finished college, Ruth received a master's degree in counseling psychology from Cal Lutheran, with an emphasis on marriage and family. She retired a few years ago when their sixth grandchild arrived.

David was born in Inglewood and has lived mostly in Southern California. His brother, sister-in-law and nephew are also Bronco alumni. When David graduated, he took a staff accounting job with Arthur Young & Company (now called EY). Since then, he has held

leadership roles at Winchell's Donut House and Public Storage. In his late 30s, he became president of Public Storage Canada.

In 2006, David partnered with his mentor and real estate icon Wayne Hughes to found American Commercial Equities, a private real estate company focused on the acquisition and management of retail properties. In 2011, he and Hughes co-founded American Homes 4 Rent, transforming the value proposition of single-family rental properties, while creating an entirely new real estate sector and asset class. Today, David is a trustee and the chief executive officer of American Homes 4 Rent.

David is currently a member of the Cal Poly Pomona Philanthropic Foundation board of directors and a member of the College of Business Administration's Dean's Advisory Council. In addition to Cal Poly Pomona, the Singelyns are also involved in other philanthropic endeavors, including supporting their church and youth programs that promote lifelong learning.

Ruth says they were motivated to give back to their alma mater because of the students.

"As the first in my family to graduate from college, I'm thinking of the students who are going to be able to raise themselves beyond their socioeconomic status," she says. "Nothing is more powerful or motivating than that journey."

David adds, "There's research that says you're a happier person if you give back and help others. There's a lot of truth to that."

David and Ruth, who were honored as Distinguished Alumni in 2019, believe the time has come for Cal Poly Pomona to take its rightful place within both academia and the business world. As proud alumni and passionate supporters of higher education, the couple is investing \$12.5 million to elevate the College of Business Administration's graduate program, which has been formally named the Singelyn Graduate School of Business. The donation represents the largest outright gift commitment from an alumni couple.

With the gift, the Singelyns, working alongside university leadership and faculty, are committed to sharpening the program that prepares young professionals for

the challenges and opportunities that exist in today's workplace. David ('84 accounting and computer information systems) says the expansion will emphasize public-private collaboration, storytelling and interdisciplinary synergies across colleges.

"We have the ability to innovate and elevate the business school experience," David says. "Let's change the mindset. Let's promote curricular innovations. Let's create a transformative, creative experience in business education that the business community and community at large not only support but desire to partner with."

"This gift is a game-changer. David and Ruth's generosity will make an immediate impact in expanding opportunities for students, fostering innovation in our academic programs and continuing to attract world-class teachers and scholars to our faculty," says Cal Poly Pomona President Soraya M. Coley. "Visionary philanthropy has always been fundamental to Cal Poly Pomona's success starting from the time of W.K. Kellogg, and it is even more important today. It gives us the freedom to imagine new possibilities and make them happen, and creates essential opportunities for growth and ambition."



A Transformative Gift

"When people ask me what I like most about working at Cal Poly Pomona, I always say it's the difference I can help make in students' lives. And I think the Singelyns, being alumni, really understand what that means."

Professor Rita Kumar
Director of the Singelyn Center for Innovative Analytics

Getting Involved

The Singelyns' alumni connection with the College of Business Administration started in 2016, when David's nephew and marketing management student asked him to speak to his marketing fraternity. That led to an introduction to **Erik Rolland**, former dean of the College of Business Administration, and **Jeff Cox**, the college's senior director of development. That was David's first significant interaction with the university since he'd graduated and the beginning of what would become a life-changing relationship for him, Ruth, the college and the university.

Rolland worked closely with the Singelyns as the college was rethinking its graduate program. The Singelyns' first gift of \$1 million in 2017 funded the **Singelyn Center for Innovative Analytics** and provided the resources to launch two new graduate degrees – business analytics and supply chain analytics – while strengthening the undergraduate curriculum and supporting faculty research.

David understood the importance of data analytics in business, as customer insights and the ways data can be used to solve problems helped him and his team build American Homes 4 Rent into the publicly traded company that it is today. The company provides a high-quality housing option to more than 200,000 residents nationwide and employs approximately 1,800 people.



Alumnus David Singelyn shares his motivations for his transformational gift with then Dean Erik Rolland and university staff.



Professors Rita Kumar, center, and Anthony Orlando, right, talk with students about a research project focused on the City of Pomona.

With their latest donation, the Singelyns, together with the college, envision transforming the already successful graduate business program into a leading, sustainable institution that is recognized around the world for the caliber of its students, faculty and thought leadership. Beyond the gift, they plan to play a hands-on role in establishing the cornerstones of this enhanced program.

"David and Ruth bring so much in so many ways, not just financially but with new ideas, too," Rolland says. "The shared vision that they have, and them being role models, it's incredibly helpful to a public institution."

Rolland, now president of the **University of the Bahamas**, says a named graduate school will attract talent and also make Cal Poly Pomona a magnet for accomplished, forward-thinking students who bring new ideas and perspectives to campus. The Singelyn Graduate School of Business

is the first named CSU graduate business school in Southern California.

Alumna and now interim dean of the college **Larisa Preiser-Houy** says the school will serve as a new type of professionally focused and technologically agile program that also emphasizes communication, leadership and global citizenship.

"Effective leadership and technological agility are necessary for organizational success – from the top down," Preiser-Houy says. "As automation and technology make new inroads in organizations, the human aspects of management and leadership are critically important."

The Singelyns' transformational gift enables the college to sustain its program growth and impact beyond the university's current capacity, as demonstrated by the recent success in building a world-class center and programs in analytics. Their investment in graduate business programs and the Singelyn Center for Innovative Analytics has proven instrumental to the financial stability and success of the college, providing new capabilities and revenues to Cal Poly Pomona, according to Preiser-Houy.

Graduate Programs Director **Meihua Koo** adds, "Establishing the Singelyn Graduate School of Business will be essential in advancing high-quality polytechnic education, while addressing the needs of society by providing social mobility and a well-prepared work force."

In partnership with David and Ruth, a growing endowment will secure the sustainability and impact of Cal Poly Pomona's mission in perpetuity, leaving a legacy that provides value and opportunities for generations to come.

Professor **Rita Kumar**, director of the Singelyn Center for Innovative Analytics, says she is inspired by the couple's passion and enthusiasm.

"When people ask me what I like most about working at Cal Poly Pomona, I always say it's the difference I can help make in students' lives," says Kumar, professor of technology and operations management. "And I think the Singelyns, being alumni, really understand what that means."



Photo by Patrick Record



At the CSU Board of Trustees meeting in November, Ruth and David Singelyn speak about the opportunities to elevate the graduate business program.

Providing Opportunity

The Singelyns are eager to help students broaden their experiences and interact with professionals. That's exactly what they did in 2019 when they sponsored 13 Cal Poly Pomona students to attend a national real estate conference in Arizona.

Slater Storm Solis ('20, finance, real estate and law) says it was the first time he had been to such a gathering. Solis, originally from Corona and now a real estate agent living in West Los Angeles, was impressed and proud that three Cal Poly Pomona alumni, including David, were presenters at the main session.

"Beyond being informative and eye-opening," he says, "it was also reassuring to know that I'd chosen the right career. Having exposure to all of those professionals was affirming."

In 2016, the graduate business program had 62 students. After the launch of the Singelyn Center for Innovative Analytics in 2018 and the addition of innovative, tech-focused degree options, such as a new master's in business analytics, the number of graduate students skyrocketed to 619, a nearly 900 percent increase that has made the program largely self-supporting.

It is that self-sustaining model that David and Ruth hope will ensure that the graduate school thrives. They look forward to more opportunities to expand certificate programs, hire more faculty and add classes.

A new associate dean will be dedicated to the Singelyn Graduate School of Business in collaboration with the newly renamed College of

Professional and Global Education, making it easier to coordinate lifelong learning. David believes certificate programs for working professionals can be invaluable to competing in today's ever-changing work environment.

Nandita Chauhan ('18, computer science; '22, master's in business analytics) says she appreciates that the graduate program emphasizes both technical skills and people skills.

"I came into the program with a technical tongue," she says, laughing. "But my public speaking skills have come a long way. Now when it comes to client-facing work, I'm able to present a project."

David knows that soft skills are vital to success. "We're putting in more than just the technical skill sets," he says of the changing curriculum. "We're adding all the soft skills that are needed. If you can't communicate to a client what the data means, what good is it?"

As an undergraduate, Chauhan received a scholarship from **Avanade**, a global technology consulting firm that partners with the university. That led to an internship and another scholarship to fund her master's degree. She's now a full-time software engineer with the company in San Francisco.

Chauhan says group projects in her master's coursework paid dividends quickly for her and her classmates. "People were applying what they learned in class that same week in their workplace," she says. "I learned a couple of dashboards [a visual representation of data] and I went back to my internship job and built one."



President Coley and the Singelyns celebrate the naming of the Singelyn Graduate School of Business on Nov. 17.

Setting the Standard

David often says that "success breeds success," and he believes that measuring it means clearly outlining goals and objectives. For him and Ruth, success would mean that everyone considering a master's degree in business, and anyone who wants to teach business, has Cal Poly Pomona at the top of their list.

They also hope that the Singelyn Graduate School of Business will provide a template for other CSU campuses to expand their programs.

"We're not going to be professors or dean of the business school," Ruth says, "but there are many ways we can walk alongside and help."

The Singelyns are certainly helping to set a new standard for business education, and their donation is set to change the lives of countless students.



An Innovative Philanthropic Investment

The Singelyn Family Endowment establishes the Singelyn Graduate School of Business, the first named CSU graduate business school in Southern California. Here's what the \$12.5 million gift will support:

Singelyn Family Deanship for the College of Business Administration

The first endowed deanship at Cal Poly Pomona will ensure a continuing commitment to dynamic, visionary, and community-minded leadership and scholarship. The deanship aims to attract a talented individual focused on student success in an inclusive polytechnic university.

Singelyn Family Associate Deanship

The associate dean will lead the development of the graduate school, build a well-regarded national reputation for its programs, work with esteemed faculty and partner with the business community

Graduate Professorships

Endowed Singelyn professorships of up to \$15,000 will elevate the university's ongoing commitment to teaching and research, recognize exceptional faculty with a national reputation and continue to build relationships with external partners.

Faculty and Student Fellowships

Singelyn faculty fellowships will recognize individuals who make positive, long-lasting contributions to graduate programs and their academic discipline. Singelyn student fellowships will be awarded to those engaged in applied research or industry projects.

Graduate Student Scholarships

Scholarships of up to \$2,500 will support and encourage undergraduate students to pursue a graduate business degree, as well as attract new students to the Singelyn Graduate School of Business.

Ph.D. Track Scholarships

To promote the diversity of business faculty, the endowment will provide scholarships of up to \$10,000 to Ph.D. candidates enrolled in doctoral business programs at AACSB-accredited campuses. The scholarship will include the option of mentorship to support their success and persistence.

RIGHT WHERE HE BELONGS

On a Journey to Discover Community and Career, a Former Foster Youth Finds His Place at Cal Poly Pomona and in New York City

By MELANIE JOHNSON



You see it all the time in movies and television shows about New York City.

A plucky young outsider driven to make their dreams come true gets a one-way ticket to the big city, arriving wide-eyed and eager to prove they can make it.

For **Ramiro Montiel**, life kind of imitated art. He really did arrive in the city that never sleeps with a one-way plane ticket in 2016.

But unlike some of those fictional characters debarking with little more than lint in their pockets and hope in their hearts, Ramiro ('16, marketing management) arrived with a job at HBO, a relocation allowance, and a generous first salary as an executive assistant with the entertainment behemoth.

Now, the 29-year-old works at another industry giant, **SHOWTIME**, a Paramount Global Company, and is tasked with strategizing how best to drive viewership and subscriptions across original series, films, and sports programming through integrated paid media efforts, while leading marketing strategy, audience development and media insights.

"It's been a unique career journey – a riveting experience, and I am grateful for it," says the Southern California native. "I am at the stage in my life when I look back and wonder how in the hell did this happen."

How it happened is a storyteller's dream.

A Brother's Love

What was that about pluckiness?

Oh yeah. Ramiro arrived as a freshman at Cal Poly Pomona with plenty of that. But before the scene could be shot, he needed to ground himself in a world that from birth had been shifting under his feet.

Ramiro, the youngest of five children, went into foster care when he was 3 months old. Social services removed all the siblings from an abandoned Compton trailer park where they lived with their parents, citing severe neglect and dispersing them to different foster homes.

Enrique Montiel ('06, sociology), the second eldest child, recalls how he and his brothers and sister were put in a car and dropped off at different Department of Children and Family Services offices, saying their quick goodbyes. Enrique, who was 9 at the time, and Ramiro were the last to be separated.

"I kissed him on his forehead and didn't see him for three years after that," Enrique says.

Three years after the siblings were dispersed into foster care, their father died. Their mother died the following year.

Ramiro would go on to live in 24 foster homes, a blur of Southern California cities – Hacienda Heights, Baldwin Park, San Dimas, Lynwood, Compton, Rialto, Corona, Hesperia, La Puente, Southgate, Pico Rivera.

In the meantime, Enrique was experiencing a similar continual shift, living in 11 homes in 11 years.

Yes, this is Ramiro's story, but you can't tell it without Enrique.

Enrique always excelled in school. Without any guidance from his foster families, he knew he could be successful in college. The statistics for youth aging out of the system served as motivation, he says. Less than 3 percent of foster youth go on to earn a college degree, according to the National Foster Youth Institute. Around 20 percent become instantly homeless after aging out, and only 50 percent find employment by age 24.

Enrique enrolled at Cal Poly Pomona after high school and also was accepted into **Renaissance Scholars**, an academic and social support program on campus for foster and former foster youth. The program, celebrating its 20th anniversary this year, has been supported by nearly 650 donors and \$2.5M since its inception.

Although he had the smarts, Enrique says he lost focus once at the university. He was on academic probation when he went to visit Ramiro and their sister **Magdalena**, who would later graduate from **Cal State Fullerton**.

"When I visited them, they would be struggling in their foster homes," Enrique says. "Ramiro and Maggie asked, 'Would it ever be possible for you to take care of us?' That changed my mindset. I didn't want my brother and sister to be raised by strangers. I didn't want to be a negative statistic. Also, I noticed that my siblings were looking up to me."

Enrique got back on track, earned his degree and began a career in social work. He also became a foster parent to Ramiro and Maggie, then teenagers. He remains in the field, serving as the program director at the **Orangewood Foundation**, an Orange County-based foster care agency. Taking on the responsibility of parenting when he was barely into adulthood himself was not easy, Enrique says.

"At 21 years old, I had to become a parent and I was still trying to figure out my life," he says. "Having to fluctuate between father and brother was one of the most difficult jobs I took on. I had to be hard on my brother and sister while also being nurturing."

Ramiro remembers that time well.

"Going under his guidance was eye-opening," he says of Enrique. "Early on, he instilled in me, 'I'm not your father. I'm your brother. My job is to ensure you have a roof over your head, food in your stomach and that you are able to go on in life and succeed.'"

Ramiro sometimes acted out as a teenager and felt overwhelmed by what happened to him as a child.

"My brother helped with my thought process," Ramiro says. "He taught me what it meant to be human, seen, loved, cared for, and to be benevolent towards others, despite my upbringing. Life is not all about me. A great volume of my success is attributed to my brother. He was very hard on me, tough love if you will, but he had to be that way in order for me not to take life or any opportunity for granted."

Becoming More Himself

Following in his brother's footsteps, Ramiro enrolled at Cal Poly Pomona, where he became more himself – tapping into his natural drive, determination and talent – to find his passion and purpose.

Through his own involvement in Renaissance Scholars, Ramiro became more focused.

Program coordinator **Makeda Bostic** ('05, psychology) recalls that when Ramiro first got involved, he had a "too cool for school" air about him.

"Ramiro has always been very creative and very charismatic," Bostic says. "At one point, he didn't know how to channel that charisma. He didn't know how much of an impact that charisma had on others and how dynamic he is."

By his second year, he started to grow and mature, Bostic says. Ramiro began to think about where he would like to see himself after graduation and gained an understanding of the impact of college on his future and his family.

Sara Gamez, director for Student Support and Equity Programs, was the Renaissance Scholars coordinator when Ramiro arrived. Gamez ('04, liberal studies), a former foster youth, was in the program herself as a student with Enrique. She also spent some time overseeing Cal State Fullerton's program for foster youth, so she knew their sister Magdalena as well.

Gamez could see early on that Ramiro had the hunger to succeed.

"He was definitely an awesome student with a lot of personality, he was destined to do great things and change the outcome of his life."

Once Ramiro focused on pursuing a career in entertainment, he really took off.

While an undergraduate, he had internships at five companies – **Warner Bros.**, **HBO in Los Angeles**, **FOX Entertainment**, **HBO in New York** and **Lions Gate Entertainment**. In his senior year, Ramiro also worked at **J61Media**, a small media production company, leading strategy, advertising and creative efforts.

"My internships exposed me to multiple worlds within the entertainment industry, which allowed me to see the work and power it takes to greenlight, develop, strategize, and launch a TV series or film across many business verticals!" he says.

His foray into the entertainment industry came at a time of big changes.

"In 2014, I vividly recall the days of ongoing industry disruptions. HBO Go was in full swing, HBO Now was announced to launch in 2015. Netflix was optimizing its platform month-

over-month, while also making big streaming launches internationally, and the evaluation of broadcast cable was a top conversation. It was palpable that media and entertainment was being shifted into a new space."



Older brother Enrique was the first in the family to graduate from college. A few years later, Ramiro followed in his footsteps to Cal Poly Pomona.



The Montiel brothers found a community with Renaissance Scholars at Cal Poly Pomona. In 2015, they attended the program's Thanksgiving celebration with Enrique's wife and two children.

The internships, along with the relationships he built with his managers, mentors and vendors, helped him gain an understanding of entertainment and fueled his relentless curiosity.

Ramiro landed his first internship in the marketing department at Warner Bros. through **United Friends of the Children**, a nonprofit that focuses on former foster youth in Los Angeles County. Next, through continuous networking and with the help of United Friends, he secured an interview at HBO in Los Angeles and landed his second internship.

"I realized that if I could get internships that pay, I could help pay the bills and could also learn at the same time," he says. "That changed the trajectory of my career. I learned the importance of networking and connecting with people, getting out of the box."

Professor **Kristen Schiele** had Ramiro in a few of her classes and remembers how he brought all of his knowledge, experiences and work ethic with him.

"He was just such a great student," says Schiele, now an associate professor of social media and digital marketing at USC. "When I had him in my class, I was like, 'Students like you are the reason why I want to teach.' He was so driven. Not only was he able to understand the concepts, but he could apply them to the real world. He really contributed to the class discussions."

It was a return to HBO for another internship, this time in New York, that created a shift in him. It was the first time Ramiro had been on a plane and truly left California.

"New York was a game changer! It broke down barriers. I was halfway across the country in meetings and in rooms filled with brilliant minds. My multicultural marketing internship ignited my curiosity for international and digital marketing."

At the end of summer 2015, Ramiro returned to Los Angeles and secured a final undergrad internship with Lionsgate as an international television marketing intern, doing exactly what he had intended to learn and experience. These internships also inspired him academically. He completed his bachelor's degree at Cal Poly Pomona, also picking up two minors in international business and public relations.

Ramiro's tenacity and drive, forged by his upbringing, kept him motivated to push for more opportunities. He contacted internship or human resources representatives at Disney, Netflix and Hulu and didn't take rejection as the final word, staying in touch with some of those who told him no.

"My hellish adolescent memories in the system kept me going throughout high school and my undergrad college career – especially early adulthood," he says. "I never wanted to experience that type of fear or discomfort as an adult. Everything I strived for was done with excellence, backed with resiliency and integrity, and a hunger to learn and grow."

"My brother had said, 'How you handle this life will determine how you do in the future, where you sleep, where you eat, what you become. You don't have a safety net like everyone else. You will work and take care of yourself.' These experiences and internships did take a toll on my GPA. But to me, the work was meaningful. The work would help me build a career and ultimately, I have a life to truly call my own."

"When I was growing up, I couldn't control my destiny. Now, I can control whatever I want. I can become whatever I want."

Hitting his Stride

After graduating, Ramiro took a professional internship at **Disney ABC Television Group**, but his housing situation was unstable. He was renting rooms off of Craigslist and moved three times in less than four months before finding a more stable spot in Baldwin Park.

After giving a speech at a nonprofit event in 2016, Ramiro was exiting the stage when someone pulled him aside and introduced him to **Richard Plepler**, then CEO of HBO. They talked about Ramiro's previous internships at the company and discussed a potential full-time job after the Disney internship.

A month and a half after the HBO conversation, Ramiro says his "life was in flames." He found out his post-graduate internship at Disney would not turn into a permanent gig and his funds were running low. He was looking for jobs, went through a breakup with a longtime girlfriend and got into an accident that totaled his car.

The HBO opportunity came at the right time. The company hired him as the executive assistant to both the senior vice president of Digital Media and Marketing and the vice president of Digital Media and Acquisition. Ramiro worked his way up to a specialist role, contributing to the integrated paid media campaigns across original series, documentaries, sports, news, podcasts and multicultural marketing campaigns.

Alissa Tofias, vice president of media at **Nickelodeon**, worked with Ramiro for about five years when she was at HBO.

Ramiro had been working as her boss' assistant for a couple of years when he expressed an interest in joining the media team. He came in as a coordinator of media strategy during a time when the

team was transitioning from a digital focus to a more integrated media approach, Tofias says.

"Ramiro is just a lover of learning and a lover of really digging in, being able to figure stuff out and making himself a little uncomfortable for learning and growing," Tofias says. "He is very determined, very passionate with boundless energy and has one of the biggest hearts ever seen in the way he treats coworkers and teammates."

He has the type of passion that can't be cultivated but also must be harnessed, she adds.

"He's like a sponge. He soaks up information and is constantly asking for more things to learn, more exposure on projects," Tofias says. "He is always looking for ways to connect the dots, to see and understand the big picture and how things work together."

After more than five years, Ramiro moved on to **SHOWTIME** in January to take on a senior manager role, leading integrated paid media, marketing strategy and insights. He enjoys reading the scripts of the shows he is promoting, watching early pilots, and coming up with marketing strategies and audience approaches.

It's the type of marketing where the science meets art.

"It all comes down to having a creative lens while balancing your quantitative and analytical skills," he says. "It can be stressful because I am very passionate about my work, but I love my job. It never feels mundane or boring because I have to tap into different sides of my brain to market shows that are very different from one another."

He credits supportive and encouraging managers who provided him with new opportunities for projects and leadership for his career success.

Ramiro is not done striving. He has set his sights on graduate school, with an aim of earning his MBA.



After graduation, Ramiro moved to New York City to work at HBO and now calls it home. In November, he ran the TCS New York City Marathon, finishing in 3 hours and 30 minutes.



Giving Back

One key lesson Ramiro has learned from his life experiences is the importance of giving back.

He serves on the advisory board committee for **The Door**, a New York City nonprofit that focuses on underrepresented youth up to age 24, including those in the foster care system, in need of aid. The organization also provides healthcare, tutoring, legal services and resources for the homeless.

While at HBO he served as the co-chair for HBO's Latino employee business resource group, **Alianza**. And recently, he spoke to Schiele's class at USC, a digital marketing course for undergraduate business students and MBA candidates.

Ramiro is on the **Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Council for Showtime Networks Inc.**, and has long been a community volunteer for **United Friends of the Children**, the Los Angeles nonprofit that helped him land his first internship. He is also a participant in **VECINOS Collective**, a Latinx group building inclusion and empowerment within media and entertainment.

Ramiro and Enrique have returned several times to the Renaissance Scholars' Thanksgiving dinner that provides students with a welcoming family-style meal.

Contributing to the wider community is a big part of Renaissance Scholars, which is celebrating its 20th anniversary. In addition to the activities and educational enrichment opportunities, the scholars also perform community service, such as beach cleanups for Pomona Beautification Day and helping at food banks.

"We teach that you don't necessarily have to donate money," Gamez says. "There are so many ways of giving."

Bostic says the last time she connected with Ramiro was during the program's annual winter retreat earlier this year. He and a handful of alumni joined the event online and shared words of encouragement.

"Whenever we have giving day or other opportunities to give, Ramiro and Enrique have supported that by spreading the word," Bostic says.

Cherrie Peters, a counselor in the Career Center, says she first met Ramiro as a student volunteer at a career fair and he quickly became a fixture at the center. They kept in touch after graduation, and Ramiro has always been willing to lend a hand, including serving on a virtual career panel.

Ramiro has always been very welcoming to help any student I send his way. When a student knows, 'Hey, that is someone like me, and I could potentially be that alum one day,' it helps them build that esteem and realize they can get where they want to go."

"When I was growing up, I couldn't control my destiny. Now, I can control whatever I want. I can become whatever I want."

Finding Home

Ramiro found his career path in the entertainment industry. The big move to New York City showed him where he belongs and that he does belong.

From his Upper East Side apartment, the Metropolitan Museum of Art is just a mile away and Central Park is his backyard. He runs the local streets, training for the New York City Marathon, which he completed in November in a time of 3:30:05. For Ramiro, 20 blocks is "totally walkable," and he can easily pick the best coat for the day's weather forecast.

Ramiro, who is Chicano, also embraces the mix of cultures for which his adopted hometown is known.

"I like the pulse of New York and its fast pace," he says. "I also love the culture. I feel the culture. I can be ordering a stuffed 'Hungry Man' on a hero at a bodega adjacent to a Jewish-style deli, where outside there's a sea of Puerto Ricans, Greeks, Polish, Dominicans, Irish, Koreans, and many more ethnicities going on about their day, minding their own business. It's just a mix of people and culture. New York is home!"



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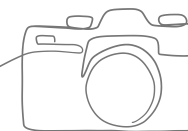


PHOTO ESSAY

Cal Poly Pomona's aerospace engineering program continues to soar to great heights.

This highly touted program is ranked No. 5 in the nation, according to U.S. News.

From rockets to satellites to wind tunnels to unmanned aerial vehicles, aerospace students are applying their technological prowess and creativity to projects that will make an impact on the world.

The mission to become the first university to launch a liquid-fueled rocket into space has made great strides with the April opening of the **Liquid Rocket Lab**.

The student and faculty effort, which took off in 2017, has garnered support from the community and government leaders alike.

The Diamond Bar-based nonprofit **National College Resources Foundation**, which focuses on increasing higher education opportunities and success for underserved and underrepresented students, gifted the program \$1.67 million that year.

Subsequent funding has come from the federal government, thanks to the efforts of U.S. Congresswomen **Norma Torres** and **Grace Napolitano**, who helped secure an Educational Partnership Agreement between Cal Poly Pomona, Cal Poly San Luis Obispo and the **Air Force Research Labs**. The two universities split \$25 million over four years, with Cal Poly Pomona using its half for the rocket lab. Other donors have stepped up to help, including **Boeing**.

Another group of aerospace engineering students have their eye on a space mission of a different kind. The student-led **Bronco Space Club** launched two miniature satellites into space in 2022 – one designed to detect nascent fires and another to showcase the capability of a CubeSat to conduct complex data analysis in orbit.



Cold flow testing on liquid rocket engine



CubeSat technology in the clean room



e-VTOL (electric vertical take off and landing) aircraft



Liquid Rocket Lab



Introduction to Aeronautics and Air Propulsion Lab

A HELPING HAND

By MICHELLE HISKEY



Last fall, **Sandra Perez** entered Cal Poly Pomona as a 30-year-old mother of two. Her children were in school, so she would further her education too. A four-year degree was a step to a professional career that would financially benefit her family and teach her kids “that no matter what your age, you can get an education.”

In her first month of classes, when a family crisis almost made Perez quit, another “family” – the **Latin Alumni Network of Cal Poly Pomona** – stepped up. They and the **Black Alumni and Friends** are fundraising for, and giving, scholarships to students who remind them of their own goals and challenges.

Half of the \$2,000 scholarship cleared Perez’s tuition balance; the rest covered this semester. She will graduate in May 2023 with a sociology degree and psychology minor.

“When I saw what I owed was zero, I felt so grateful and honored,” Perez says. “If you have the means to provide a scholarship, it’s so impactful for that student.”

Since 2010, LAN and its predecessors awarded scholarships to 85 students totaling \$219,633.

“I see the need almost every day,” says LAN president **Cynthia Avina-Tejeda** (’07, management and human resources), who coordinates **Project CAMINOS Student Success, Equity and Innovation** at Cal Poly Pomona.

It’s Avina-Tejeda’s story, too. The youngest of seven children, her family’s first generation in college, she remembers her single mom’s caveat: “I’m not going to be able to help you.”

In many Latino/a/x families, everyone contributes to the household financially, she says. LAN donors are a family that extends finances to the student.

At Cal Poly Pomona, Avina-Tejeda became a single parent and fought a custody battle. At a low moment, her high school basketball coach gave her a few hundred dollars that helped pay an

BRONCO ALUMNI NETWORK RAISES SCHOLARSHIP FUNDS FOR STUDENTS IN NEED

electric bill and put gas in her car.

“With funds donated to LAN scholarships, we reach students who are in need,” she says. “And these needs are very similar to what our alumni faced through their journey at Cal Poly Pomona.”

The Cal Poly Pomona Black Alumni and Friends Chapter has raised \$6,464 of a \$10,000 goal for scholarships to benefit rising leaders in Cal Poly Pomona’s Black community. The first award is expected in 2023.

“Our scholarship is strictly based on a student’s activities to uplift the Black community,” says **Corey Gaither** (’11, sociology), president of the chapter and member of the **Cal Poly Pomona Alumni Board**.

“We envision [scholarships] will increase our engagement with students, as they apply each year.”

Gaither made it through Cal Poly Pomona by working for UPS. Many successful alumni donate so today’s students can make it too.

“There were people who I knew that dropped out because of money issues and left to help their families or figure out a way to continue their education,” says Gaither, a cybersecurity recruiter for **Google**. “And most of them didn’t come back.”

Perez plans to get a master’s degree and become a school counselor. When her husband lost his job last fall, borrowing money meant more financial pressure, so she applied for a dozen scholarships, and made dropping out her last resort.

“I’m already here. I can’t give up,” she told herself.

Another factor was Perez’s commitment to her own mom. “She is

undocumented, so me and my siblings will provide for her,” she says. “Pursuing higher education to get a better job is for my extended family as well.”

The scholarship inspired and enabled Perez to give back. She is president of **Parenting Broncos**, where she helps fellow students find resources for juggling family and school, vice president and secretary of the **National Society of Leadership and Success**, and a member of **Grrrl Squad** and **Hermanas Unidas**.

“I was surprised and shocked, and still can’t believe it,” Perez says of her scholarship. “It really did close the gap for me. I thought, ‘Someone does care about my education.’”

Your donation can help students achieve their goals. Make a gift today at www.cpp.edu/give



Latin Alumni Network board members, top row, present the Hilda Solis scholarship to students in September.



The Black Alumni and Friends chapter is fundraising for scholarships to encourage students to continue their studies and uplift the Black community.

CAL POLY POMONA PHILANTHROPIC FOUNDATION

Get Involved and Help Transform Students' Lives

Since it launched in 2019, the Cal Poly Pomona Philanthropic Foundation has significantly raised the bar on the role philanthropy plays in advancing student success at Cal Poly Pomona. Leveraging the generosity of thousands of donors - including engaging 2,179 first-time donors - the foundation raised more than \$23 million last fiscal year for polytechnic labs and experiences, student scholarships and fellowships, facilities, faculty research and scholarship and other academic enrichment opportunities.

This success was built on the momentum sparked by the pandemic when the philanthropic foundation called upon donors to help students in need, and donors responded with an outpouring of support. This generosity empowered the foundation to give \$500,000 to the **Broncos Care Basic Needs Program**, providing critical emergency grants to more than 1,000 students, and over 300 laptops and hot spots, allowing these students to continue their academic journey amid hardship.

The new chair of the philanthropic foundation, **Diane Miller** ('81, computer information systems), intends to channel this giving momentum to catalyze more involvement and continue to increase the foundation's impact on student success.

"What inspires me is the passion of all the board members, their level of commitment, and exploring really creative and innovative ways to serve the Cal Poly Pomona community and make the biggest impact," she says. "I know how important that hands-on polytechnic approach is to prepare students for successful careers, and it also puts them in a position to be able to give back."

One of Miller's goals as chair is to increase interaction between the foundation's 20 board

members and the campus community. She envisions engaging with colleges and student-focused programs and spending time on campus to understand where challenges exist and how to best provide philanthropic support.

Using the five-year strategic plan she spearheaded for the foundation, Miller also aims to help foundation board members, which include alumni, staff and faculty, become even stronger ambassadors for Cal Poly Pomona in their networks and communities.

"When people hear about the transformational impact Cal Poly Pomona has on students - how we're helping them achieve their dreams and become future leaders in our community, they're inspired. We want to get more people inspired and involved."

Learn more about the
Cal Poly Pomona
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www.cpp.edu/philanthropy



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4

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kellogg voorhis legacy society

The Kellogg Voorhis Legacy Society is a group of supporters named for university founders W. K. Kellogg and Charles B. Voorhis, whose early gifts of property helped establish the Cal Poly Pomona we know today. Membership is extended to those who establish planned gifts to Cal Poly Pomona by including the university in their estate plans through gifts of cash, securities, trusts, insurance or other related planned giving programs. Cal Poly Pomona recognizes the following members.

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founders' society

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New Chief Diversity Officer Appointed

Cynthia Pickett has been appointed the university's Presidential Associate for Inclusion and Chief Diversity Officer effective Dec. 12.

Pickett will provide leadership in the university's work to advance equity, diversity and inclusion as core values and collaborate with partners across the campus to foster a meaningful sense of belonging for all.

Pickett comes to Cal Poly Pomona from DePaul University, where she served as associate provost for diversity, equity and inclusion and an associate professor of psychology.

A social psychologist by training, Pickett conducts research in the areas of social identity, intergroup relations, the self, social cognition and social inclusion and belonging, with her recent work focusing on promoting inclusive scientific practices. She serves as president-elect of the Society for Personality and Social Psychology.

Pickett is a fellow of the Association for Psychological Science, the Society of Experimental Social Psychology and the Society for Personality and Social Psychology and is also a member of the National Association of Diversity Officers in Higher Education. She received her Ph.D. and master's degree from the Ohio State University and her bachelor's from Stanford University.



Veterans Resource Center Commemorates 10 Years of Service

Some of the greatest legacies start on a blank page. The **Veterans Resource Center** at Cal Poly Pomona, now 10 years strong, began as a mere scribble on a piece of paper before it became the primary source of support and community for the campus' military-affiliated students.

The VRC, which celebrated its 10th anniversary in October, is an essential and powerful resource for student veterans, military dependents, faculty and staff.

In fall semester, the center supported the academic and personal success of nearly 1,500 military-affiliated students, including veterans, service members, and military dependents. Many note that the sense of community it offers is the most valuable aspect of the center.

"A lot of us feel like we're by ourselves when we go to school, and once we come to the VRC, it helps us feel like we belong," said **Jovan Santos**, a junior in computer information systems and former Hospital Corpsman Second Class in the United States Navy.

Towering Snails Highlight 2023 Rose Parade Float

Gigantic snails and colorful fungi turning the past into resources for a brighter future are showcased on the Cal Poly Universities' float for the **134th Rose Parade** on Jan. 2.

The only student-built and student-designed entry, "Road to Reclamation" represents a rebirth and the wonder that comes with the endless possibilities of a new start. It embodies the parade's theme of "Turning the Corner."

The 23-foot-tall float features an enormous purple snail scanning the parade crowd from his perch atop a 16-foot-tall red-capped mushroom. Another mega-snail will be watching baby snails playing chase, while a third 6-foot snail, in shades of brown and gold, scouts the parade route. The float's forest floor is decorated with a rainbow of oversize fungi, moss and lichen converting a fallen log into nutrients for their community, while ladybugs flap their wings in preparation for takeoff.

"Having the opportunity to be a part of such a well-known event and to build such a unique and amazing thing while working with a hugely creative and passionate

family of Rose Floaters has been a dream," said **Ryan Ward**, a mechanical engineering senior and president of the Cal Poly Pomona Rose Float team. "The learning opportunity is also unmatched. I've been able to learn and practice the skills needed to work in a large-project environment like this every step of the way, most of which can only truly be developed by actually working in that environment."



Geology Professor Nick Van Buer filmed his solo hike across the Mojave Desert.

Geology Professor Completes 500-Mile Desert Hike

In a feat possibly not attempted for more than 50 years, Nick Van Buer, associate professor of geology, hiked more than 500 miles across California's Mojave Desert during his sabbatical last spring.

For more than 35 days, Van Buer traveled on foot from the Mexican border near Yuma, Arizona, to the Sierra Nevada Mountains near Olancho, California. He baked his own bread to conserve weight and space in his pack of provisions, which weighed up to 70 pounds.

He swam the Colorado River twice to shave off 6 miles of non-wilderness travel, dug for water at Chuckwalla Spring, hiked across the Cadiz Dunes at night in a windstorm, and traveled in the Avawatz Mountains.

Van Buer, who specializes in late Mesozoic hard-rock geology, undertook the journey to learn more about some of the desert's more rarely studied geologic features.

"I seem to have planned this trek with just enough knowledge of my abilities to make it possible, but with enough over-optimism (for it) to be extremely difficult," he said.

Hoping to inspire young people to pursue STEM studies, he recently posted a 13-episode video series of the trek, "Across the Mojave," on YouTube. He will also use some of the videos in his classes.

Watch Van Buer's journey through his YouTube videos.



A student sings the national anthem at the VRC's 10th anniversary celebration in October.



Cal Poly Pomona Rises in National Rankings

Cal Poly Pomona has risen to No. 2 among the “Top Public Schools in the West” in the **U.S. News 2023 Best Colleges Ranking**. It is also ranked No. 14 among “Regional Universities West,” a region that covers 15 states. U.S. News rated the campus No. 4 Most Innovative School West; No. 6 Best Undergraduate Teaching West (tie); and No. 6 Top Performers on Social Mobility West (tie). The College of Engineering was recognized among the top programs in the country at No. 10 (tie) for “Best Undergraduate Engineering Program,” where doctorate degrees are not offered, and No. 3 in California. Over the last five years, CPP has climbed 14 places in the “Top Regional Universities West” category. Diverse Issues in Higher Education has again recognized Cal Poly Pomona among the nation’s Top Producers of Hispanic Graduates. At No. 25, Cal Poly Pomona also is the highest ranked polytechnic institutions in several majors: No 3 in business administration, management and operations; No. 4 in engineering, No. 13 in social sciences and No. 25 in communications, journalism and related programs. Among the magazine’s top 100 list published in 2021, Cal Poly Pomona is listed at No. 18 for the most Latino/a/x graduates. CPP’s student body is 53 percent Latino/a/x.



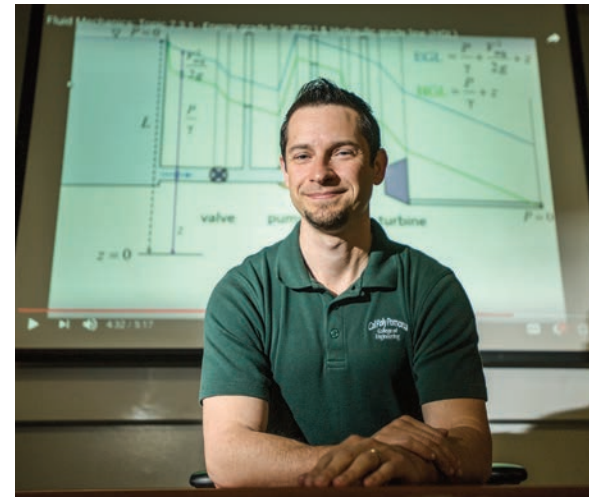
Cal-Bridge Receives \$5M to Increase Diversity in STEM

The **Cal-Bridge** program, which supports underrepresented college students at CSU campuses to pursue Ph.D. degrees in STEM fields through the UC system, was allocated \$5 million in the 2022-23 state budget. Cal-Bridge will expand the subject areas covered and extend its impact, building a pathway for thousands of California students from diverse backgrounds to develop the expertise needed to fill university faculty and technology leadership positions in the state and beyond. “Diversifying the professoriate will lead to growth in gender, racial and ethnic representation in the technology workforce more broadly by increasing the number of students from historically underrepresented groups completing degrees in STEM fields because they see faculty that look like them,” said Physics and Astronomy Professor **Alexander Rudolph**, founding Cal-Bridge executive director. Cal-Bridge, which launched in 2014 with five scholars, provides financial support, extensive mentoring, research opportunities and professional development workshops for students studying physics, astronomy, computer science, computer engineering or mathematics. Cal-Bridge has 96 undergraduates, 20 master’s students and 77 Ph.D. students.

MechE Professor Wins National Teaching Award

The **American Society for Engineering Education** awarded its annual Outstanding Teaching Award to Mechanical Engineering Professor **Paul Nissenson**. Chosen from among a national pool of nominees, Nissenson was selected for his dedication to teaching and leveraging technology to significantly improve not only his students’ outcomes but also those of students around the world. Nissenson implemented a flipped classroom approach in his fluid mechanics and introductory programming course. The flipped approach has students learning new material via video tutorials prior to in-person lectures, freeing up class time for discussion, demonstrations and active learning exercises. As a result of implementing the flipped classroom, the fluid mechanics course saw its dropped/fail/withdraw rates plummet from 34 to 11 percent.

Nissenson also took a lead role in launching **ME Online**, a free educational resource containing more than 600 videos by Cal Poly Pomona faculty featuring full-course lectures and short video tutorials. The library lives on the CPPMechEngTutorials YouTube channel, which has 105,000 subscribers, over 10 million video views and more than 1 million hours of viewing time around the world. He also launched the university’s first massive open online course in 2014, in which 13,000 people around the world enrolled. “Taking a step back and reflecting upon how I got to this moment, it was only possible because Cal Poly Pomona is a place that truly values teaching,” he said. “I’m indebted to my colleagues and collaborators who supported my efforts along the way.”



National Science Foundation Grants to Power Student Success

Major grants from the **National Science Foundation** (NSF) totaling nearly \$2.5 million will fund two projects designed to boost opportunities and improve graduation rates for engineering students. The first project, “Career development in construction Engineering Through Academy and Industry Network (CERTAIN),” aims to increase professional opportunities for underrepresented minorities and increase the number of engineering graduates headed for a construction industry career. \$1.5 million will be used for 150 individual scholarships, as well as recruitment and retention efforts. The nearly \$1 million for the second project, “Bridging Institutions to Decrease Gaps in Engineering Education (BRIDGE),” will help create a transfer pathway program in partnership with Mt. SAC, Citrus College and Victor Valley College for the civil and mechanical engineering programs. This will reduce the time it takes transfer students to graduate. BRIDGE also establishes a faculty learning community that shares resources with the instructors from community colleges to develop and teach lower-division engineering courses in a way that mirrors how the College of Engineering teaches. The three partner institutions will collaborate with CPP in this effort before scaling it across other community colleges in California. Both projects are massive, multi-year efforts that seek to improve both the educational experience and outcomes for a diverse population of students.



Civil engineering students collect soil samples for a geotechnical engineering lab class.

Architecture Students Receive Inaugural Awards

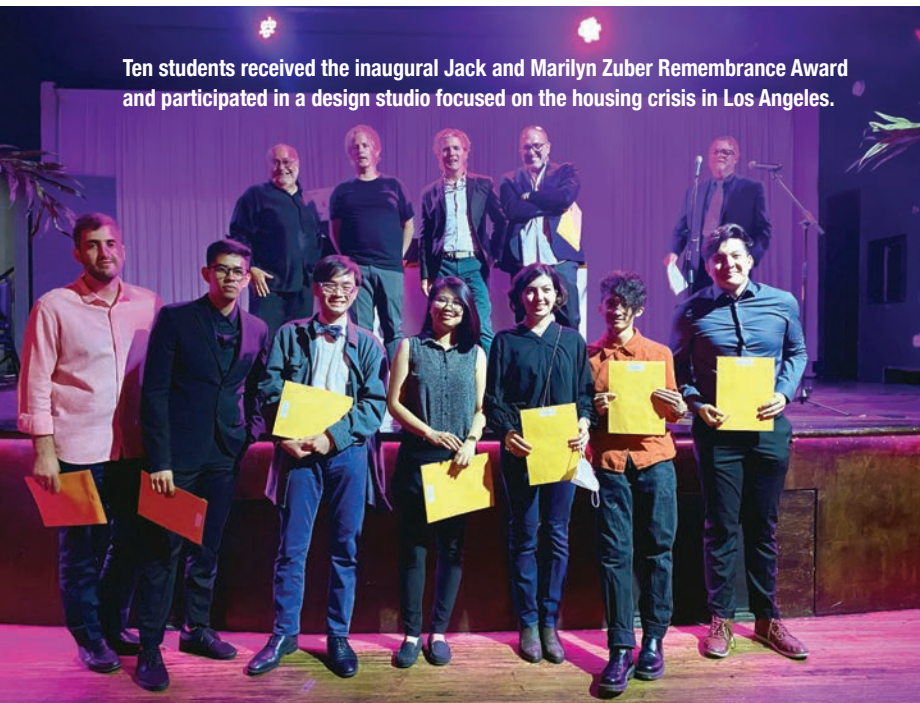
A \$400,000 gift from a Southern California couple committed to architecture education rewards the efforts of Cal Poly Pomona students designing real-world projects in a comprehensive housing design studio.

The gift, which provides 10 merit awards of \$5,000, is to honor the wishes of the late **Jack and Marilyn Zuber**. Cal Poly Pomona was selected to receive the funding following a nationwide search conducted by Mark Eskander, trustee of the couple's John A. Cariello Charitable Trust. The gift will be distributed over the next eight years to support tuition and educational expenses.

"Since third-year spring is the most intensive term in the program, and for some a major hurdle to leap over, the merit awards offer something to look forward to, which will no doubt elicit friendly competition for the rewards that will come with great effort," said department chair **George Proctor**, who teaches the housing design studio.

This year's studio project was a mixed-use building in Los Angeles, with the theme focused on the housing crisis. The required studio challenged students to integrate design concepts with structural, environmental and construction systems and develop their designs into a package of professional drawings ready for "official" city approval.

After students participated in a two-tiered juried competition in May, the inaugural winners were named: Chris Caracena, Ahmad Chehab, Miguel Cruz, Geraldin Quinteros Gudiel, Ryan Jose, Daniel Li, Ryan Panganiban, Asli Sungur, Angel Torres and Kenneth Truong.



Ten students received the inaugural Jack and Marilyn Zuber Remembrance Award and participated in a design studio focused on the housing crisis in Los Angeles.

Photo courtesy of George Proctor, Department of Architecture

New Police Chief Subscribes to 'Learn By Doing' Philosophy

Cal Poly Pomona's newest Chief of Police brings to campus a commitment to service that has been fostered since his childhood.

When he was 5 months old, **Linh Dinh** arrived in Arkansas with his parents as refugees of the Vietnam War. Dinh spent his early years in Ohio and Iowa, before moving to Southern California. He credits these formative years as integral in his career in law enforcement.

"It was the generosity of the strangers that helped us settled in that provided me with opportunities I would never have had otherwise," he said. "Their kindness inspired my dedication to help and serve others."

Dinh began his tenure at CPP on July 25. He will work closely with the university's Police and Safety Advisory Committee to promote engagement between the University Police Department and the campus community, advance CPP's commitment to implementing a community policing framework, and align UPD's culture and operations with the university's values of inclusivity, community engagement and social and environmental responsibility.

He previously served the Montebello Unified School District Police Department for 13 years, working his way up to Chief of Police. Before coming to CPP, he was a lieutenant at CSU Dominguez Hills.

"I appreciate the diverse community of the campus and the innovation that happens throughout each department," Dinh said. "I especially love the philosophy of 'learn by doing' because I think that's the best way one can gain the skills needed to become agents of good."



In the early morning hours, students harvest wine grapes from the vineyards at AGRiscapes.

USDA Awards \$300K to CPP Team for Climate Change Research on California Crops

A \$300,000 grant from the **U.S. Department of Agriculture's National Institute of Food and Agriculture** will fund a three-year project at Cal Poly Pomona that will help California farmers growing grapes, strawberries and citrus fruits prepare for climate change.

This trinity of specialty crops bring billions of dollars each year to the Golden State.

"Given that climate change is happening so fast, climate conditions ask, 'How can farmers plan for it?'" said Geography Professor **Gabriel Granco**, lead investigator. "Are we using areas that we will maintain or remain suitable? Are we developing new areas in locations that would not be suitable in the future? One point for us is to define suitability — to have the appropriate or good climate, soil and good terrain for the crops to grow."

More than a third of the country's vegetables and two-thirds of the country's fruits and nuts are grown in California. In 2020, the state's Department of Food and Agriculture valued production of grapes at \$4.5 billion, strawberries at \$2 billion, and citrus fruits at \$3.6 billion.

The research team will draw from multiple disciplines — aerospace engineering, computer science, geography and plant science — to integrate machine learning, unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) and geographic information systems to develop 24 models measuring agricultural suitability.

The best model will be translated as web maps available to farmers as early as 2025, improving their access to information for decision-making under current and future climate conditions.

\$18M for State-of-the Art Ag Facilities and Equipment

Cal Poly Pomona will receive \$18.5 million from the 2022-23 California budget as part of a \$75 million investment in the four California State University campuses with farms to support programs combating the effects of climate change on the agriculture and food industries.

California is the nation's leader in food production with a nearly \$50 billion agriculture industry. Cal Poly Pomona is the only university in Southern California that offers four-year and graduate agriculture degree programs preparing graduates to be changemakers and leaders in the industry.

The university has proposed three climate-smart agriculture projects that are currently under review — an apiary lab, an investment in leading-edge agricultural equipment, and a plant processing lab to help meet the increasing demand for plant-based protein alternative products.

"Our talented students and faculty are already leading innovation in the agriculture and food science industries," said Martin Sancho-Madriz, interim dean of the Huntley College of Agriculture. "With this commitment of state funds, they will have access to additional state-of-the-art technology to increase their ability to contribute to climate-forward research and drive change in agriculture."

STARTING THE YEAR WELL GET A HEAD START PLANNING FOR 2023

CONSIDER THESE WORTHWHILE STRATEGIES:

- Write or update your will or trust
- Contact your bank or financial advisor to update designation forms
- Age 70 ½ or older — Make contributions this year from your IRA
- Donate appreciated assets (stock or real estate) rather than cash
- If selling securities or a business, consider planning strategies that avoid Capital Gain Tax
- Make a contribution that provides you with income for life
- Donor Advised Funds provide tax savings and more time to designate your charitable gifts

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