



*"I worked with professors who inspired me to push forward by knowing that it's not just an assignment that needs to be done, but that there needs to be a purpose behind everything it is that I do."*

**MATTHEW NAKANO**

'22, marketing and business administration  
Government Relations Coordinator



*"I felt prepared for my very first job out of college. At CPP, working with a diverse group of people helped me build a foundation of communication and organizational management skills."*

**LAUREN CUCCHISSI**

'19, business management  
Administrative Support, Procurement Department

that I could make my dreams happen," Apodaca says. "I really enjoyed the hands-on portion of my education. It gave me a realistic picture of what I was going to be doing, to the point where I really understood where I was headed and could envision my future career."

**SERVING STUDENTS LIKE THEM**

Recently, Foothill Transit increased their services for Cal Poly Pomona students, and alumni have a front row opportunity to support their alma mater.

The new Class Pass program, which provides free rides for Bronco students, is close to the heart of HENDY SATYA ('10, business administration), a marketing and communications manager at Foothill Transit. His parents immigrated from Indonesia, and taking public transportation was an inexpensive and necessary resource to go where they needed to go. It's the same resource that current students also need access to.

"I grew up in Montebello and West Covina taking the bus and also rode the bus to class at Cal Poly Pomona," Satya says. "Because I worked to put myself through college, I know how important it is to have cheap, reliable transportation. It's one less thing for me to worry about. With the Class Pass program, Foothill Transit is an additional life raft for many students."

Since its pilot launch in fall 2021, the program has been a success. After the first full year, more than 26,000 students signed up for a Class Pass TAP card and took over 75,000 trips. In January, Foothill Transit and the university teamed up again to add the Silver Streak bus stop at the center of campus. With their free Class Pass TAP card, students can get to downtown LA within an hour free of charge.

"I wanted to give back to CPP and the greater community," says Satya, who has been with Foothill Transit for 15 years. "Coming from being an alum and using public transit almost my whole life, I wanted to provide this same benefit to current students."

**BRONCO ALUMNI:**

**LET US KNOW WHAT YOU ARE UP TO!**

*Fill out a Class Note and tell us how CPP helped launch your career.*



*"One of my favorite classes was international business taught by Dr. William Relf. He had real-world business experiences and connected with the students. Overall, my experiences at Cal Poly Pomona set a great foundation for my career in public service."*

**JOHN CURLEY**

'92, management and human resources  
Chief of Safety and Security



*"There are now three Cal Poly Pomona alumni in my department. We all graduated different years and we have talked about how different our experiences were coming from different majors. At the end of the day, we have that centralized feeling that CPP was home and was good to us. We're so proud to be Broncos."*

**DENISE MARTINEZ**

'17, graphic design  
Creative Content Designer

# BLACK THRIVING

A March Toward a More EQUITABLE CAMPUS COMMUNITY



*"We must challenge ourselves daily to promote equity, justice, and inclusion in our classrooms, programs, units, meetings, budgets, promotions, interactions, policies and procedures. I believe with all of us working together that a brighter day is on the horizon."*

**JONATHAN GRADY**

Senior associate vice president and dean of students

**BY DAVID SEDILLO**

Students, staff and faculty who identify as being of African descent were led through a 90-minute forum in May 2022 by psychologist Jacquelyn Johnson, who had been invited to Cal Poly Pomona to conduct an assessment. The goal: to gain insight into the well-being of Black individuals on campus in 11 distinct categories.

The results were troubling. The report found that intervention for faculty and staff was needed in all 11 categories, including areas such as cultural representation, upward mobility and authenticity. Eight of 11 categories were flagged for students.

The message was clear: Black students, staff and faculty felt minimized, underrepresented and frustrated. Data points revealed overwhelmingly that Black individuals felt they could not show up



as their authentic selves without fear of repercussions. The evidence served as an immediate call to action that culminated in the **Black Thriving Initiative (BTI)**, a campuswide and multi-year strategy that responds to anti-Blackness as an existential threat to the mission of Cal Poly Pomona. The initiative is the first of its kind in the California State University system.

BTI is built on four distinct phases: building capacity and consciousness, leveraging the mission, engaging (and re-engaging) Black communities,

and transforming the culture. Within each is a list of strategies comprised of various action items.

"We must challenge ourselves daily to promote equity, justice, and inclusion in our classrooms, programs, units, meetings, budgets, promotions, interactions, policies and procedures. I believe with all of us working together that a brighter day is on the horizon," says **Jonathan Grady**, senior associate vice president and dean of students, who leads the initiative.

**Teshia Roby**, associate vice president for learning and research, and **Cynthia Pickett**, presidential

associate for inclusion and chief diversity officer, serve as co-chairs.

To kick off the initiative, about 140 students, staff and faculty attended a launch symposium in December in the Bronco Student Center, and more participated via livestream. There was a collective excitement to begin the work, with an acknowledgement of the challenges ahead.

To transform the campus culture, specific and measurable action is necessary. This includes continuous education for all members of the campus community, as well as the development of action plans and recommendations at the divisional level across campus, all built into the multi-year strategy.

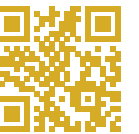
"My biggest hope for the future is twofold. I hope for an environment where our Black faculty, staff and

students are truly thriving at Cal Poly Pomona, and through that thriving, we are an example of how a community can come together to push through the tipping point of a movement that has long waited for this intentionality," says **Kaitlyn Sedzma**, chief of staff in the Division of Student Affairs and a member of the BTI working group.

To remain successful, the initiative will continue to invite involvement and collaboration from across the university, including students, faculty, staff, alumni, and CPP supporters and partners. This includes learning opportunity events, such as a movie screening and discussion during Black History Month, general feedback listening sessions and campuswide symposiums with guest speakers throughout the year.

**Across the board, students, staff, faculty and alumni look to the new initiative as a necessary step to make lasting and important change at Cal Poly Pomona.**

To learn more about the Black Thriving Initiative and join the mailing list, visit the website at [www.cpp.edu/bti/](http://www.cpp.edu/bti/)



"I'm excited and encouraged by the launch and comprehensive objectives of the Black Thriving Initiative! The enhancements that it brings our university can bless all. However, this initiative must be embraced as a long-term and permanent pursuit. It cannot be viewed or treated as a one-time project. We must be our brothers' and sisters' keeper or we deny the reality and teachings of our Creator."

**H. CARL CRAWFORD**  
79, marketing management  
Member, Alumni Association Board of Directors  
Founding member, Black Alumni and Friends Chapter



"I hope that the Cal Poly Pomona campus will be known by Black students and faculty as a great place to learn where the unique contributions of all are valued and where a culture of mutual respect prevails. From the campus survey results, the data supported that not all Black students and faculty feel supported on campus. Through the Black Thriving Initiative, we hope to strengthen the organizational culture to fully reflect our core values and achieve a positive learning environment for all."

**BETTY T. ALFORD**  
Professor, department chair and doctoral program director,  
Educational Leadership



"My hope for the future is that we will embody the full nature of equity, diversity and inclusion, especially for our Black students, faculty and staff. I hope for the elevation of voices in our community and for allyship to bridge gaps of knowledge, strength and love. Lastly, I hope for the continuation of awareness, action and accountability for all future Broncos to come."

**ASHLEY MASCARENHAS**  
Student, business management  
ASI Officer of Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion



"The Black Thriving Initiative kickoff event brought into sharp focus the fact that our campus has a lot of work to do if we want to be a truly inclusive environment. My greatest hope is that it provides a framework to own our past mistakes while forging a new path forward that makes all students, staff and faculty feel valued and welcomed at Cal Poly Pomona."

**MATT WALSH**  
Associate director, volunteer engagement,  
Alumni and External Relations

