Cal Poly Pomona
KELLOGG HONORS COLLEGE

KHC NEWSLETTER

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Happy New Year From Singapore! • p. 2

Singapore the Garden City • p. 3

Singapore as an Urban Landscape • p. 4

Joshua Salvador Interns at the Port of Long Beach• P. 5

Singapore: Serving the Global Community • P. 6

KHC Student, Kimore Morley Reflects on her Pannetta Internship • P. 9

Singapore: Museums of Nature and History • 10

Singapore: A multicultural city • 11

From KHC to Disney Imagineer, Emmet Sloan Interns at the Happies Place on Earth • P. 12

Singapore Hawker Markets • 13

Final Reflections on Singapore • 15

KHC Engineering Students attend the Society of Hispanic Professional Engineers (SHPE) Conference • P. 15

Tireni Oyenusi Reflects on his Summer Internship • P. 16

OAI Winter Institute Features KHC • P. 17

Fundraising for Inclusive Academic Excellence • P. 17

Scan or Click to see more highlights from our trip

IN THE YEAR OF THE HORSE

DR. CLAUDIA GARCÍA-DES LAURIERS, KHC DIRECTOR

Happy New Year! At KHC, 18 students rang in the new year in Singapore. This international field trip, led by Dr. Renford Reese of the Political Science Department and I, was not only a spectacular engagement with a new country, culture, and nation-building experiment, it was an opportunity to grow, self-reflect, and serve. Our community expanded its geographic scope, as did our service to that community. In this issue, we will feature many photos and details of our trip, but also celebrate all of the incredible achievements of our honors students.

In this year of the horse, I resolve to continue opening up opportunities for our honors students, build collaborations across CPP and beyond, strengthen our community, and innovate to support inclusive academic excellence. Join me on March 18-19, 2026, in raising funds for KHC Enrichment grants that make our mission of inclusive academic excellence possible. Much of what you will see in this issue of the KHC Newsletter is possible through providing students with enrichment grants for travel.

A JOURNEY TO REMEMBER

Riya Naik, Victoria Mendoza, Tanya Patel, & Alexandria Stastny

LAX to SFO to Singapore
18 hours

Being greeted by The Jewel made the long journey so worth it!

HAPPY NEW YEAR FROM SINGAPORE!

New Year's Eve, Singapore, Marina Bay Sands Fireworks Show
Left to Right: Ben Kitaka, Andrew Ton, Dr. Claudia Garcia-Des Lauriers, Keneyia Hall, Kenneth Butler

"...[T]he whole trip from start to finish felt like a dream to me, and it's tough to isolate the highlights because everything was special and unique to me in its own way. Regardless, some moments shone above the rest. One of the main highlights for me was experiencing the New Year's Eve fireworks show at Marina Bay Sands. I have never gone to a New Year's Eve celebration before, let alone in Singapore, and it was really cool to ring in the new year surrounded by my peers and in one of the most exciting locations in the world."--*Mihir Bhanji, KHC Student*

SINGAPORE, THE GARDEN CITY

Trip Participants, Group Photos, Gardens by the Bay
Back Row, Left to Right: Tomas Chester, Dr. Claudia Garcia-Des Lauriers, Riya Naik, Victoria Mendoza, Angela Tsang, Daniel Vaca, Carolina Caro, Keneyia Hall, Corinne Alexander, Ben Kittaka, Andrew Ton, Ted Hong
Front Row, Left to Right: Kenneth Butler, Alexandria Stastny, Tanya Patel, Kennedy Williams, Nathaniel Santella, Mihir Bhanji, Annika Lao, Andy Le, Dr. Renford Reese

Chihuly Sculpture,
Gardens by the Bay

National Botanic Garden

Orchid Diplomacy, Princess Diana Orchid

"The country of Singapore was more beautiful than I could have ever imagined."--*Riya Naik, KHC Student*

"...[O]ne of my favorite attractions was the National Orchid Garden, seeing all the variations and rare types of orchids that were specifically curated, and then assigned to famous individuals, was just really impressive. Also, I loved how much time and consideration went into creating these flowers and presenting them to certain important individuals."
--*Victoria Mendoza, KHC Student*

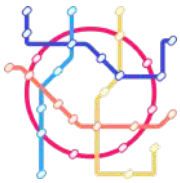
Learning about Orchid Cultivation

Dr. Renford Reese & Kenneth Butler,
Kola Nut Tree dedicated to Nelson Mandela

SINGAPORE AS AN URBAN LANDSCAPE

"Singapore has a different set of rules that affect how its people operate in their day-to-day life, and having the opportunity to participate in a society and see the inner workings of it, including the food, nightlife, education, and even their public transportation, was truly a valuable experience to behold in person."
--*Angela Tsang, KHC Student*

"Another highlight was being constantly starstruck by the incredible architecture and built environment Singapore has developed. I would certainly describe their master planning as masterful and their architecture equally so. There were countless times where I'd be staring out the window or turning a corner and almost be jump-scared by these famous buildings I had obsessed over online or only seen in books."--*Ben Kittaka, KHC Student*



"The MRT was amazing, made the trip more fun, and made it easier to travel to various places. The MRT never failed to take us where we needed to go in a timely fashion. It was very clean and everyone was very nice when we may have gotten lost."
--*Alexandria Stastny, KHC Student*

JOSHUA SALVADOR INTERNS AT THE PORT OF LONG BEACH

Beginning in the Spring of 2024 of my 2nd year, I had the privilege to join the Construction Management Division at the Port of Long Beach as an Engineering Intern. Working out of the 2nd busiest Cargo Port in the Western Hemisphere has not only shaped my passion for Civil Engineering, but it has also opened up various opportunities for me after graduation.

Throughout my internship, I supported numerous multi-million-dollar Capital Improvement Initiatives to improve the Port Complex's efficiency and productivity. The projects include the addition of one and a half miles of new railroad track across Terminal Island, the expansion of a port terminal within Pier E, installation of Zero-Emission Electric Charging Stations, and the management of a Rubble/Recycling site. Each of these projects can include field and site meetings, quantity takeoffs, cost estimation, contractor coordination, document controls, and monthly payment applications.

Working on large-scale projects has been an exciting process. I have witnessed projects going from a beginning concept on paper to final completion in real time. As I celebrate 2 years at the port and nearing graduation this May, I want to express my appreciation to my coworkers, professors, and the KHC for supporting me in my professional and personal growth so far, and I am excited for what the future has in store. Go CPP! --*Joshua Salvador, KHC Student*

SINGAPORE: SERVING THE GLOBAL COMMUNITY

"Volunteering at Willing Hearts was such a life-altering experience, truly."--*Andy Le, KHC Student*

KHC Students meeting the founders of Willing Hearts

"Looking back at the whole Willing Hearts volunteer work, it really was an immersive way to experience a tiny bit of Singapore culture. It sheds light on how citizens are encouraged to work for the nation as a whole and reinforces the social contract idea between them and the government."--*Nathaniel Santella, KHC Student*

Over 3 mornings, KHC students helped pack **30,000 meals** for food insecure people in Singapore at Willing Hearts.

"Before starting, I saw the Singapore flags hanging above the entrance to the facility, which gave me the impression that the volunteer work done by Willing Hearts is representative of Singapore's willingness to help feed the needy."--*Andrew Ton, KHC Student*

SINGAPORE:
SERVING THE GLOBAL COMMUNITY

"I had an amazing time at Willing Hearts, and the very first day had a huge impact on me."--Kennedy Williams, KHC Student

"I feel like I have grown in many ways in just a short period of time. One of the most impactful things for me was my time spent at Willing Hearts. This was definitely a time when I had to practice a good amount of humility."--*Corinne Alexander, KHC Student*

"One of the most significant highlights of the trip was the volunteer opportunity at 'Willing Hearts.' Willing Hearts was especially impactful for me because I have always wanted to cook for large groups to bring comfort and happiness. Cooking has always been something I associate with connection and comfort, and I truly believe that food is one of the simplest ways to make people feel safe and happy."--*Tomas Chester, KHC Student*

"Packing those meals really opened my eyes to see how many different individuals in the community are struggling with food insecurity... I feel like that was really impactful, and ... inspired me to take more action in my own community..."
--*Victoria Mendoza, KHC Student*

SINGAPORE:
SERVING THE GLOBAL COMMUNITY

KHC Students took a walk, had breakfast, good conversations, and played board games with seniors at Care Elderly.

"I got to take a walk with an elderly woman named Yetty who was looking for company. We took a walk and had a sweet talk. It was the first conversation I truly had with someone local to Singapore. We talked about the weather, how it's different in Singapore, and I told her about the different weather in the United States year-round. I gave her a postcard showing a nice field with some horses, and snowy mountains in the background."--*Daniel Vaca, KHC Student*

KHC STUDENT, KIMORA MORLEY REFLECTS ON HER PANNETTA INTERNSHIP EXPERIENCE

Being a Panetta Intern was a dream come true– I had the opportunity to see the inner workings of government beyond the classroom. I worked on press releases for my congressman, gained insight into different career paths within my major, and made lifelong connections on and off Capitol Hill. I attended lectures on human rights at Georgetown University that strengthened my knowledge of global human rights issues. I also visited surrounding states, such as Maryland and New York, where I learned about grad school programs. This experience as an intern left me feeling inspired, informed, and excited about the opportunity to return to Washington, DC, in my future endeavors.
--*Kimora Morley, KHC Student*

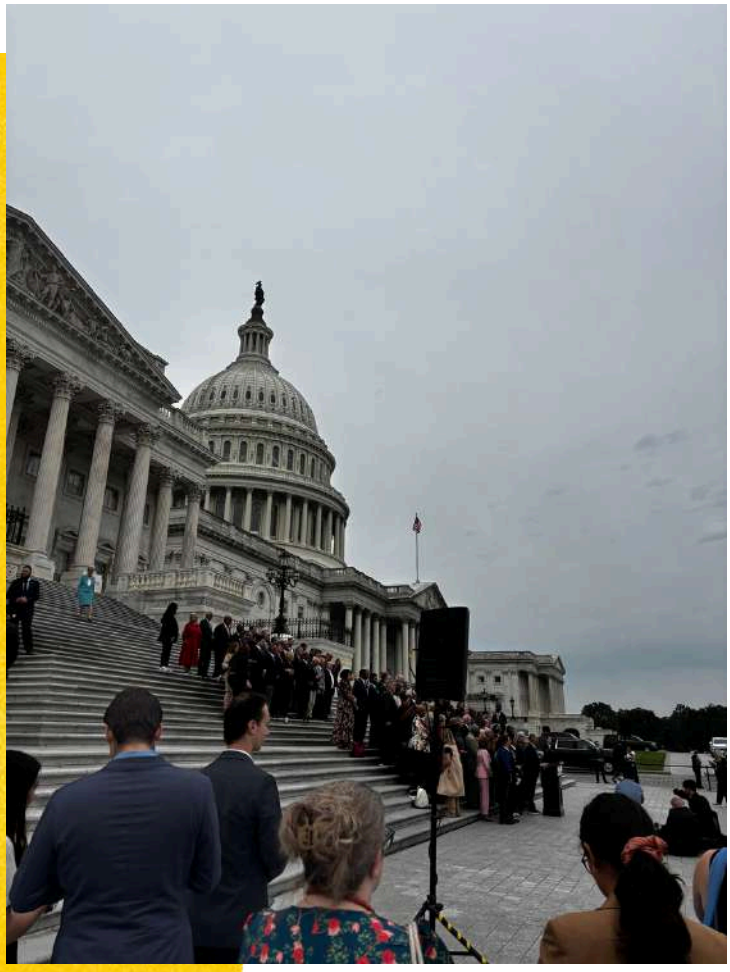


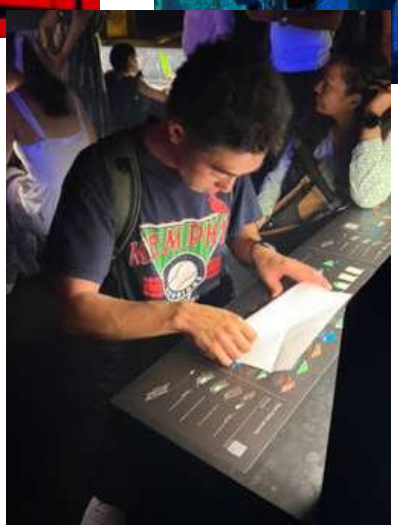
Image Details:
I included my final photo on the Capitol steps, a photo of Democratic leaders addressing the Republican Party days before the Government Shutdown (Rep. Hakeem Jefferies was speaking in that photo), and a photo with Hon. Secretary Leon Panetta and CEO Sylvia Panetta

SINGAPORE: MUSEUMS OF NATURE AND HISTORY

Natural History Museum

"...[T]he Art Science Museum, the Natural History Museum, the City Gallery, as well as educational places such as the Gardens by the Bay, the Oceanarium, and the botanic gardens... were wonderful displays of the emulsion between beauty, art, science, and education."--*Angela Tsang*, *KHC Student*

Singapore Science and Art Museum



National Museum of History

SINGAPORE: A MULTICULTURAL CITY!

China Town

Kampong Glam

Little India

"As an Indian myself, the Little India area was eye-opening, and I talked to multiple people there who knew my language and even gave me discounts because of it. They were all super friendly, and the food was mind-blowing."--*Tanya Patel, KHC Student*

"Visiting all the ethnic quarters was another highlight for me on this trip. I really enjoyed visiting the Buddhist temple and being able to admire the artistry and holiness of the temple. Furthermore, wandering around Chinatown and checking out all the cool shops and things to buy was very nice. Kampong Glam was really interesting to check out, especially Haji Lane and seeing the large mosque at the center of the area. Little India had some really good food and had nice sweets to try as well. I liked visiting the ethnic quarters because I liked experiencing all of the diversity and different cultures Singapore had to offer, and it represents what Singapore is all about as a country of immigrants."--*Mihir Bhanji, KHC Student*

FROM KHC TO DISNEY IMAGINEER, EMMET SLOAN INTERNS AT THE HAPPIEST PLACE ON EARTH

KHC Student, Emmet Sloan

I had the incredible opportunity to work at the Disneyland Resort this past fall semester as an Industrial Engineering Intern. It was a rewarding experience both as a lifelong fan of the resort and as an aspiring industrial engineer.

I've been interested in the theme park industry since before starting college, so this internship truly felt like a dream come true. From August to December, the parks transition from Halloween to the Holidays—an unforgettable transformation. My work took me everywhere from collecting data at attractions like Pirates of the Caribbean to conducting overnight shift studies at a roller coaster, to simply walking through the parks between daily objectives. Every day brought something new.

Much of my work focused on improving the guest experience and asking, "How can we make this even better?" The internship provided valuable opportunities to apply the skills I have been developing at Cal Poly Pomona. The work challenged my data collection, analysis, and presentation skills, and gave me a new appreciation for the incredible amount of behind-the-scenes work required to operate the Disneyland Resort each day. Through this experience, I got to learn how much work goes on behind the scenes to make Disney magic.--*Emmet Sloan, KHC Student*

Emmet Sloan and Winnie the Pooh

KHC Student, Emmet Sloan,
Industrial Engineering Department Fun Run

SINGAPORE HAWKER MARKETS

"I tried many new foods that I never thought I would have the chance to try. I also enjoyed the Hawker Centers where I got to try many different foods at the same time."--*Alesandria Stastny, KHC Student*

Maxwell Market

Lau Pa Sat

Tekka Center

"[T]he food was mind-blowing. Chinatown and Kampong Glam were also huge highlights of my trip."--*Tanya Patel, KHC Student*

FINAL REFLECTIONS ON SINGAPORE

"Overall, this trip to Singapore was far more than a vacation with my peers; it was a meaningful experience that fostered service, personal growth, and a broader global perspective. Through volunteering, cultural immersion, and moments of reflection, I gained a deeper appreciation for both the opportunities we have in the United States and the realities beyond our nation's borders."--*Tomas Chester, KHC Student*

"Be ready to embrace and experience cultures, food, and rules that might be completelyforeign to you because everything you make an effort to understand makes you a more caring and cosmopolitan person."--*Ben Kittaka, KHC Student*

"I felt like this trip opened my eyes up to what's in this world, and not just where I live."--*Daniel Vaca, KHC Student*

"There is so much information contained all over the world, found in the people you meet, places you visit and the foods you eat, and travel is one of the best ways to absorb it and truly learn about yourself and the world around you."--*Angela Tsang, KHC Student*

KHC ENGINEERING STUDENTS ATTEND THE SOCIETY OF HISPANIC PROFESSIONAL ENGINEERS (SHPE)CONFERENCE

Last semester, with the help of the KHC enrichment grant, I attended the SHPE 2025 National Convention in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. It was here that I attended several industry-led workshops as well as company tours. Throughout the convention, I had the valuable opportunity to meet one-on-one with industry professionals in a meaningful way. The change of scenery from California to Philadelphia was also very fun to explore during my free time, and I was able to visit many interesting historical and cultural places. As a consequence of this experience, I was able to land my first engineering internship for this summer! I am very grateful to the KHC for this opportunity!--*Gabriel Contreras Delgado, KHC Student*

My name is Crystal Duran, and I am a third-year mechanical engineering student as well as the Internal Vice President for the Society of Hispanic Professional Engineers (SHPE). Last fall semester, with the support of the KHC, I had the opportunity to travel to Philadelphia, PA, to attend the SHPE National Conference. This event provided valuable networking opportunities with other students and industry professionals, along with unique workshops and company tours. The conference not only exposed me to a wide range of careers in STEM, but also allowed me to travel and explore a new part of the world. I am thankful for the support from the Kellogg Honors College for aiding me in this experience.--*Crystal Duran, KHC Student*

TIRENI OYENUSI REFLECTS ON HIS SUMMER INTERNSHIP

Last summer I was able to secure my third internship as an Operations Engineering Intern at Shultz Steel, a PCC subsidiary specializing in forging and metal work in South Gate, CA. Under my supervisor, Johana Nuno, I learned so much about how to manage multiple operations on the factory floor and how to lead the people that comprise them. Some of my major tasks included:

- Recording video footage capturing forge & furnace processes that will be used to train hundreds of future steelworkers.
- Using my Syteline expertise to fill out Daily Production Reports, enabling my supervisor to always have current data models.
- Utilizing my R&D skills to analyze current die grinding methods, leading to the conclusion that a different shaped bit could increase efficiency and workflow on the conditioning floor by a large margin.

I am proud of the work that I was able to do and the skills I was able to add to my toolkit from this internship. Looking ahead to graduation, I will be sure to apply all that I gained from this experience to my budding career --*Tireni Oyenusi, KHC Student*

Congratulations to KHC Freshman, Damian Hernandez, who will be working as a Field Engineer Intern for Kiewit in Pheonix, Arizona this summer!

OAI WINTER INSTITUTE FEATURES KHC

Scan to read more about the OAI Winter Institute

Every year the Office of Academic Innovation sponsors faculty and staff development during Winter and Summer Institutes. This year the Winter Institute "Cultivating Partnerships for Inclusive Academic Excellence" featured the work of the Kellogg Honors College. Panelists included KHC students, Dr. Suketu Bhavsar, Director Emeritus of KHC, Dr. Sandra Perez, Honors College Director, CSULB and Dr. Ellen Bell, Honor Director from Stanislaus State. Our key not speaker was Dr. Graeme Harper, Director of the Donna and Walt Young Honors College, Oakland University and President of the National Society for Minorities in Honors. The conference was inspirational and highlighted the potential for collaborations across campus units as a way to better serve our students and foster inclusive academic excellence.

Click the icon to see a Recap Video

Click the icon to see the Winter Institute Web Page

FUNDRAISING FOR INCLUSIVE ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE

DONATE ♥

March 18-19, 2026
Broncos Give Campaign

KHC will be raising money for enrichment grants for students to support travel, research, and other high-impact activities. We raised over $2700 in our fall campaign. Let's try to reach $5000 in this coming campaign. This newsletter shows the impact your donations have on student success so mark your calendars and bookmark the donation link! Help KHC support inclusive academic excellence!