



Cal Poly Pomona

KELLOGG HONORS COLLEGE

KHC NEWSLETTER

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Photo Essay of Italy International Field Trip • p. 2

Venice p. 2

Florence • p. 6

Naples • p. 8

Rome • p. 11

KHC Signs Partnership with Harvard • p. 14

KHC Student Publishes Research • p. 14

Ella Shepherd Shares her research journey • p. 15

Congratulations KHC Graduates • P. 16

KHC In the News • p. 19



CIAO ITALIA!

DR. CLAUDIA GARCÍA-DES LAURIERS, KHC DIRECTOR

KHC's world tour this academic year continued with a *grand tour* of Italy! Dr. Hilary Haakenson and I led an international tour of Italy focused on art, culture, environment, food, and the regional diversity of Italy. Dr. Haakenson is a professor of Integrative General Education and an expert in the art, politics, and history of Italy. As KHC Faculty Fellow, she coordinated a trip highlighting some of the areas of her research and introducing students to the wonderful country of Italy. For me it was a treat to see KHC students grow through this wonderful

international experience. As an archaeologist and art historian myself, it was wonderful to see sites and monuments that have formed an integral part of my training up close. The impact of a Carravaggio painting just cannot be replicated by photos!

In this issue, we will share experiences from our Italian adventure, celebrate the Class of 2026, and celebrate our amazing community of students.

Our journey begins in Venice...



Riding the Vaporetto



First Views of the Grand Canal



Venice is a walking or boating city, no cars.



Sta. Maria della Salute was dedicated after a 1630 outbreak of the plague. Our experiences of the Covid Pandemic, sheds new light on this historical monument.



Exploring the city in a gondola.



Piazza San Marco, Venice



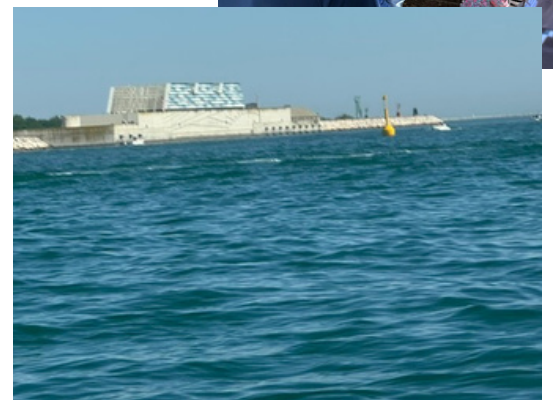
Dr. Luca Zaggia of the Istituto di Scienze Marine, Consiglio Nazionale delle Ricerche, Venezia, Italy gave us a tour of the lagoons surrounding Venice and we saw firsthand how engineering, climate science, and European collaborations are addressing climate change. Venice is one of the places at high risk of rising oceans and global climatic shifts creating extreme weather patterns. His lecture provided us food for thought on the complexities and real-world effects of climate change around the world.



Natural Salt marshes are habitats for sea birds and important parts of the local ecosystem.



San Erasmo Island
1841 sea wall replaced with
new higher structures



MOSE, a series of 78 gates built to protect the lagoon from the Adriatic Sea when tides rise in an attempt to minimize flooding of Venice.



A Brief Stop in Burano



Exploring the Palazzo Ducale, Venice



BUON APPETITO

“The highlight of the trip for me was seeing so many famous landmarks and cities that I had only learned or read about when I was younger. Being able to see things like the Colosseum, Michelangelo's David, and St. Mark's Square in person for the first time felt surreal. Also, being able to share this experience with such as an amazing group of people was awesome. We went from complete strangers to friends over those ten days. I'm truly grateful to have gone on this trip with such a great group.”--*Anthony Theodorou, KHC Student*



“Traveling to Italy for study abroad has been a life-changing experience. I discovered so much about the world around me while also learning new things about myself. My classes so far have put a heavy emphasis on science, so I had very little experience with the arts before this trip. This study abroad program has gifted me with a greater appreciation for art and history, motivating me to pursue opportunities that continue to make me a more well-rounded person. Additionally, experiencing how Italians live their day-to-day lives was like a breath of fresh air. There was a strong sense of community and camaraderie among people that you could feel as you walked the streets and saw friends laughing together. The highlight of this trip was a cooking class we took in Florence, where we learned to make pasta and tiramisu. We sat around a large table and laughed as we made a meal to share. Overall, I feel so grateful that I had this opportunity to travel, and it has inspired me to continue to travel to expand my knowledge about other cultures and people around the world.”--*Jessica Staneck, KHC Student*

“For me, the highlight of the trip was being able to experience Europe for the first time and to make close friends along the way. I didn’t expect to get as close as I did with some of the other students who were on the trip, and now we share a special bond because we experienced a new place together.”--

Kayla Carbajal, KHC Student



“The highlight of the trip for me was hiking Mount Vesuvius right after we toured Pompeii. It was surreal to see the fall of such a lively society by a force of nature. The views on Mount Vesuvius were breathtaking and motivated me to take more adventures on hikes in California to see how beautiful nature is.

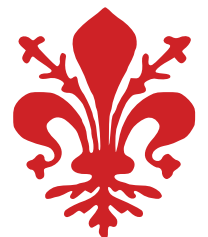
Another highlight for me was learning about Italian food and being immersed in the culture and history. It felt very heartwarming and grounding. I learned a lot about myself and about Italy just by walking the cities and interacting with people there while getting tiramisu gelato and paninis from small, family-owned shops.”--*Rana Soussan, KHC Student*



EXPLORING RENAISSANCE ITALY IN FLORENCE



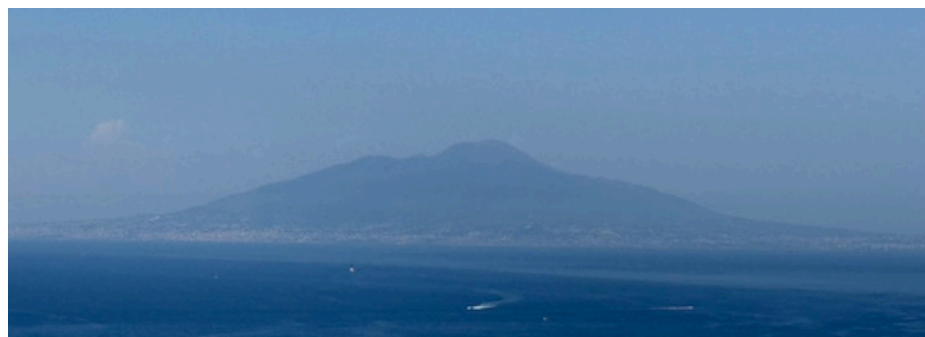
Our visit to Florence began with a tour of the Basilica of Santa Croce. This church is the burial place of Italian luminaries such as Galileo, Michelangelo, Machiavelli, among other important historical figures. In terms of art history, it provides an example of early Renaissance art with frescoes by Giotto and the Pazzi Chapel by the great architect Brunelleschi.





 Firenze





Napoli

Pompeii and Vesuvius



"I feel like a changed woman!"
--Rana Soussan after hiking to the
top of Mt. Vesuvius

“You have to walk the land. You have to see the elevation for yourself, the color of the soil. You have to discover that the ravine is really a valley and that the stream is, in fact, a river winding south from a glacier in the mountains’ (Ta-Nehisi Coates, 2024). In the message by Ta-Nehisi Coates, this quote is a part of his greater theme that, to be true writers or truth seekers, you must physically see the subject in the world to truly have clarity or uncover what you’re writing about. Physically going to places can help justify or explore what is true and uncover culture and people who are being, or are, erased, and that will help prevent erasure. He argues that you will always have bias or an unjust perspective if you’ve never actually seen or experienced it.

It’s important because it expands your worldview and gives you a greater purpose and belongingness in the matter in order to truly know and talk about it, which going to Italy did for me. Additionally, as we know, knowledge is power, and we can’t always know the truth of what is happening in a place unless we go and see. Additionally, traveling is personally important to me as it fulfills a sense of purpose because, in the Quran, we believe that Allah told us to go and see His creation and gain knowledge.”--**Rana Soussan, KHC Student**



“Educational travel is important because there’s so much to learn from each country’s culture that you might not get from just visiting on vacation. Actually taking the time to explore places with history while learning about that place’s past at the same time leads to that experience staying with you for longer.”--**Kayla Carbajal, KHC Student**



“One of my favorite parts of the trip was getting to know all of my fellow honors college students; before going on the trip I really didn’t know anyone that well, but through all our adventures I made some great friendships. I also really enjoyed each tour we participated in, as I was able to learn about historical sites that have been on my bucket list to visit. Also, traveling abroad is so important because you get to immerse yourself in a completely new place and take in a new culture, learn how different people live their lives, and gain an appreciation for each place you visit.”--**Isabella Hidalgo, KHC Student**



“Educational travel is important for students because it helps build a global perspective by exposing us to different cultures, lifestyles, and viewpoints. It also allows us to connect what we learn in the classroom to real-world experiences. This makes learning more engaging, hands-on, and memorable.”--**Anthony Theodorou, KHC Student**





VATICAN CITY





R ME



KHC Signs Partnership with Harvard

Harvard's Division of Continuing Education and the Kellogg Honors College recently signed a partnership program that will bring 3 CPP Honors students to Harvard to participate in their Global Partners Program. In this program, students from around the world come to Harvard to attend summer school classes, networking events, excursions, and other enrichment activities. This year the Harvard Global Partners Program will also include US students from selected honors programs. Kellogg Honors College was selected to participate in this pilot with the hopes of continuing and expanding our participation in the future. Andrea Urbino, KHC Student from the College of Business, Kimora Morely, KHC Student from the College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences, and Alyssa Justice from the College of Science will be our ambassadors for this program. Thanks to KHC and the Office of Academic Innovation all three students will be fully funded to participate in this pilot. KHC hopes to work with our partner to expand this opportunity to more CPP students in the near future.



Pictured Left to Right: Dr. Claudia García-Des Lauriers, Director, Kellogg Honors College, Cal Poly Pomona; Andrea Urbino Alva (KHC Student, Business), Kimora Morley, KHC Student, Political Science



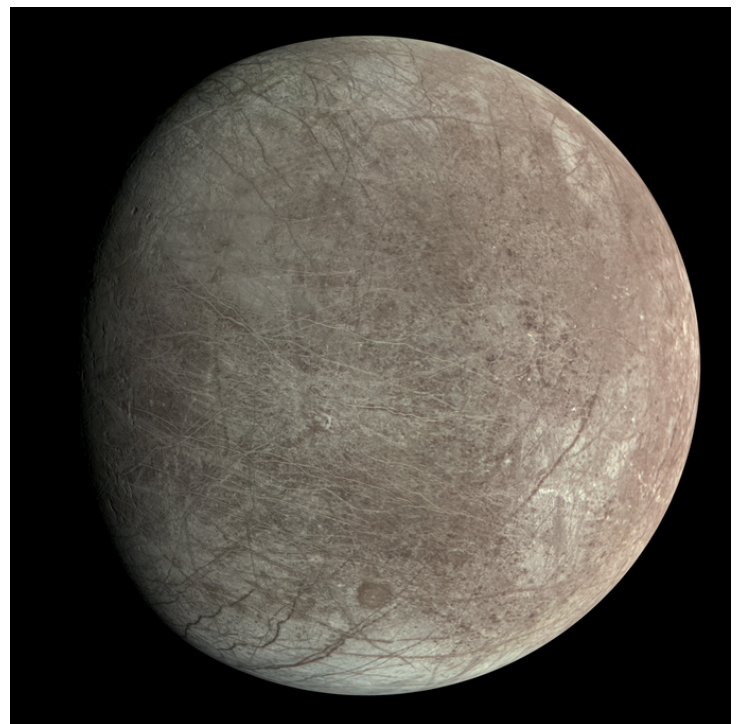
Pictured Left to Right: Thomas Garriepy, Senior International Officer; Dr. Nancy Coleman, Dean, Harvard Extension and Continuing Education; Dr. Claudia García-Des Lauriers, Director, Kellogg Honors College, Cal Poly Pomona; Rob Haley, Assistant Director, Global Engagement



KHC Student Publishes Research

KHC students are required to do an engaged learning experience. For most this means conducting research. Some KHC students find that research is rewarding and will become a critical part of their future career path. Students who engage in research early can spend enough time on the projects that they not only present their work at conferences, but may also publish in academic journals as undergraduates. KHC Student Jason Sioeng, is a co-author on a publication related to the mapping of Europa. Check out his publication!

Kempf, S., Tucker, S., Altobelli, N. et al. SUDA: A SURface Dust Analyser for Compositional Mapping of the Galilean Moon Europa. Space Sci Rev 221, 10 (2025). <https://doi-org.proxy.library.cpp.edu/10.1007/s11214-025-01134-0>

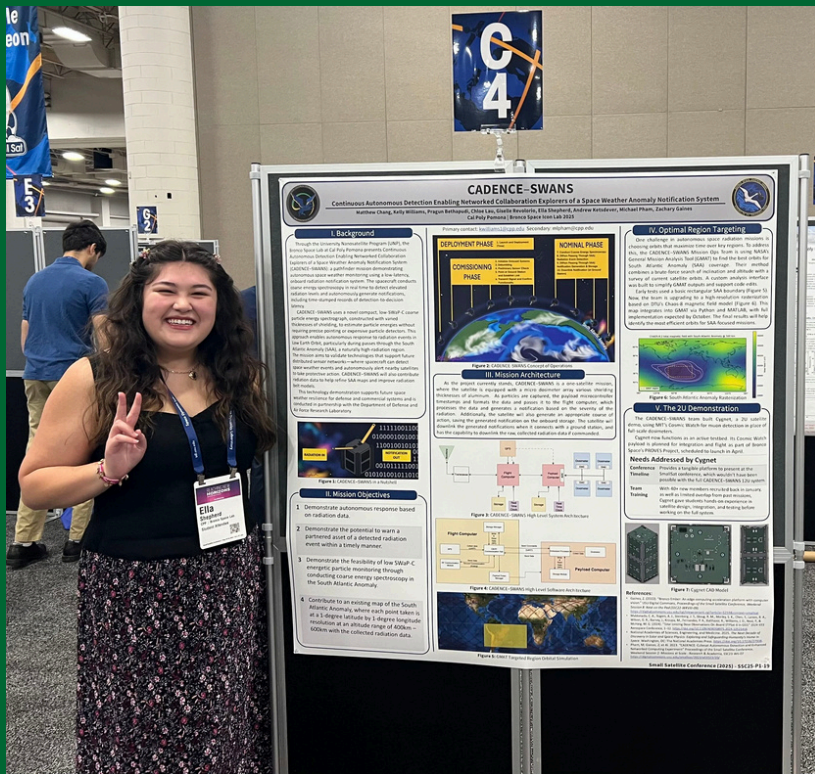
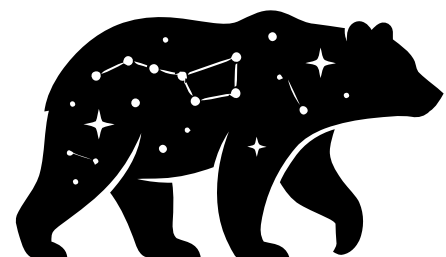


This is Europa in true color, cropped from Juno's flyby of Europa at Perijove 45
Photo by: NASA/JPL-Caltech/SwRI/MSSS/Kevin M. Gill
Wikimedia commons, [CC BY 2.0](#)

Ella Shepherd shares her research journey

Ella Shepherd is a KHC student graduating this May 2026 with a B.S. in Computer Engineering. She is Mission Operations Team Lead for a current Bronco Space Mission: CADENCE-SWANS (Continuous Autonomous Detection Enabling Networked Collaboration Explorers of a Space Weather Anomaly Notification System). Ella was hired in January 2025 at the beginning of the mission and was officially promoted to Mission Ops Team Lead in September 2025. She has since been contributing to operational coordination, coding, program management of the Mission Ops Team, mission branding, CONOPS, orbital simulation testing, and primary research paper authorship.

In May of 2025, she was accepted and received a scholarship for summer research at the Bronco Space Icon Lab through the STARS and Engage Research Experiences for Undergraduates Scholarship Program. As an undergraduate researcher, she designed and illustrated the CADENCE-SWANS Mission Patch and CONOPS Imagery for the CADENCE-SWANS 2025 SmallSat Conference poster. She was also the primary author for an article for the STARS and Engage Summer 2025 Research Paper published in Bronco Scholar. In January 2026, the paper was submitted for publication: “An Open-Source Analytical Method for Determining Optimal Satellite Orbits for Region Targeting”, and she will be presenting at the 2026 IEEE Aerospace Conference in Big Sky, Montana.



Click the icon to learn more about the Bronco Space Lab



Congratulations KHC Graduates

2026

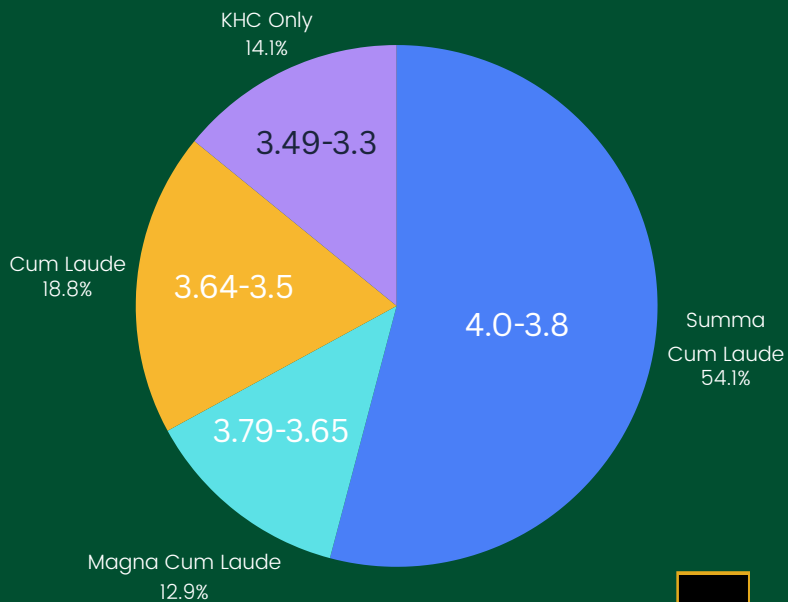
Camille Abe, B.S. landscape Architecture
 Emilee Acosta, B.S. Geography
 Adrian A. Alog, B.S. Biology
 Johnny Tai Alpuerto, B.S. Mechanical Engineering
 Andrea Avalos Lujan, B.S. Apparel Merchand & Mgmt
 Arshia Bose, B.S. Biotechnology
 Juan Bosque, B.S. Aerospace Engr
 Joshua Boucher, B.S. Computer Science
 Sky Bradley, B.A. English
 Madison Carranza, B.S. Animal Science
 Julia Chaidez, B.S. Computer Science
 Victoria Cubias, B.S. Animal Science
 Isabelle De Freitas Beline, B.S. Computer Info Systems
 Emma Duran, B.S. Animal Science
 Seth Foiles, B.S. Aerospace Engr
 Lucy Gamboa, B.A. Sociology
 Jayce Gooding, B.S. Animal Science
 Jordan Gutierrez, B.S. Electrical Engr
 Evan Hamrick, B.S. Animal Science
 Wren Hemig, B.S. Animal Science
 Makayla Hernandez, B.S. Civil Engineering
 Randy Hernandez, B.S. Biotechnology
 Hannah Herrick, B.S. Plant Science
 Long H. Hoang, B.S. Computer Science
 Areesha Imtiaz, B.S. Computer Science
 Arabella Ishkhanian, B.S. Animal Science
 Tyler Jones, Bachelor of Architecture - Env Design
 Elaine Lily Kaddis, B.S. Civil Engineering
 Kuuipo Kalipi, B.A. Psychology
 Darren Kao, B.S. Biology
 Benjamin Kittaka, Bachelor of Architecture - Env Design
 Caroline Kwan, B.S. Mechanical Engr
 Lindsey Lam, B.S. Communication
 Chloe Lau, B.S. Mechanical Engr

Andy Le, B.S. Mechanical Engineering
 Anju Leach, B.S. International Business
 Samuel Lena, B.S. Civil Engineering
 Gloria Li, B.S. Biology
 Jucinda Lopez, B.S. Hospitality Management
 Lorenzo Madayag, Bachelor of Architecture - Env Design
 Antony-Mina Makar, B.S. Electrical Engr
 Aadi Mehta, B.A. Political Science & B.S. in Communication
 Theneza Ross Mehtra, B.S. Biology
 Timothy Mijares, B.S. Mechanical Engr
 Justin Mills, B.S. Civil Engineering
 Justin Montes, B.S. Chemistry
 Tanya Patel, B.S. Computer Science
 Spencer J. Richards, B.S. Mechanical Engr
 Joshua Salvador, B.S. Civil Engineering
 Nathaniel Santella, B.S. Computer Engr
 Angela Santos, B.S. Computer Science
 Nicole Sarabia, B.S. Anthropology
 Ella Sheperd, B.S. Computer Engr
 Emmett Sloan, B.S. Industrial Engineering
 Sara Snyder, B.S. Geography
 Elliot Summers, B.A. Psychology
 Eli Tolentino, B.S. Computer Science
 Andrew Tran, B.S. Chemistry
 Cristian Vargas, B.S. Electrical Engr
 David Vargas, B.S. Computer Science
 Melissa Wadley, B.A. Liberal Studies
 Ryan Wei, B.S. Computer Science
 Kennedy Williams, B.S. Civil Engineering
 Steffany Wong, Bachelor of Architecture - Env Design
 Robin Yeh, B.S. Accounting
 Kaitlin Yen, B.S. Computer Science



KHC Graduates 2026

Class of 2026 GPA • 3.77



Andy Le, Julian McPhee Scholar and Co-Valedictorian, College of Engineering



GRADUATE



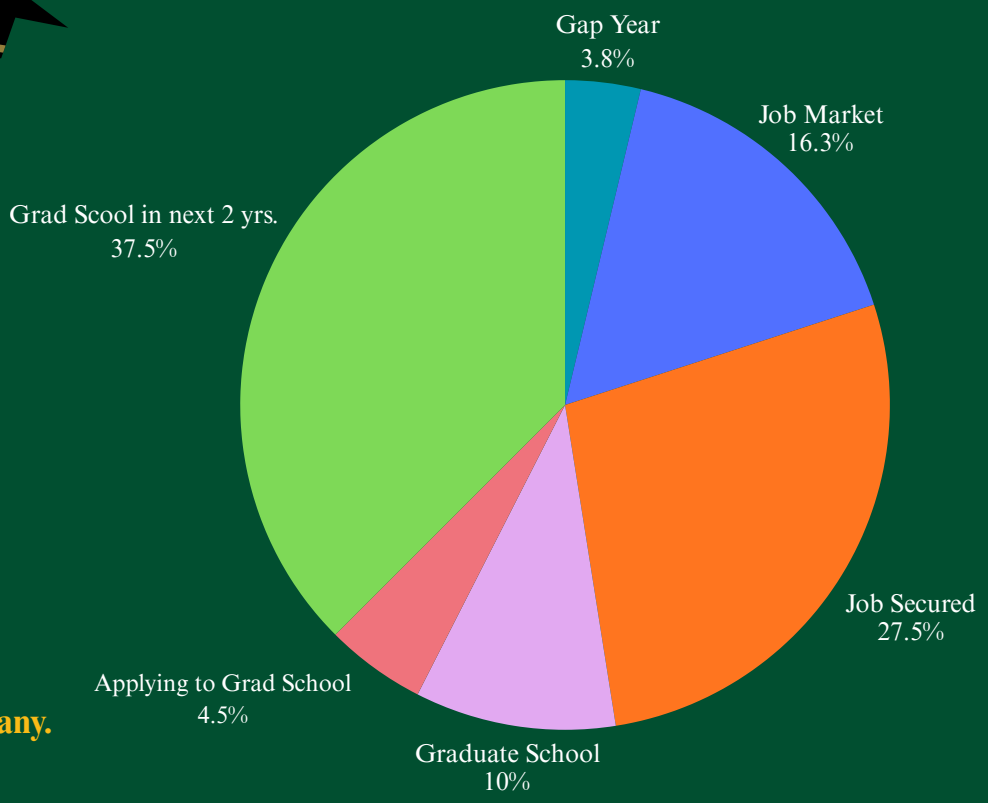


KHC Graduates 2026

Average Years to Graduation	
All	3.87
FTF	4.05
Transfer	2



Post Graduation Outcomes



KHC Grad Samuel Lena
 will be trying out for professional
 soccer teams in the US and Germany.
 Good luck, Samuel!

KHC in the News

Click on the icons on the left to read about some of the newsworthy activities that KHC students and staff participated in.



Student Entrepreneur Brings New Ice Cream Idea to Campus Shelves

CPP News--KHC Student, Jucinda Lopez featured



Engineering His Future: Graduate Turns Opportunity into Impact

CPP News--KHC Student, Justin Mills featured



Four Students, Three Years, One Kellogg Honors College Journey Together

CPP News--KHC Students, Kuuipo Kallipi, Lindsay Lam, Tanya Patel & Robin Yeh featured



Side Hustles: How to get a second income & land a job

Poly Pulse--KHC Student, Crystal Duran, talks about her business venture, p. 32



10,000 steps a day: How to walk them around campus

Poly Pulse--KHC Student, Lindsay Lam authored work, p. 44



7 must-try Boba Places within 10 miles of Campus

Poly Pulse--KHC Student, Lindsay Lam authored work, p. 54



ASI Election Results

KHC Student Elected to ASI office, Kimora Morely (ASI VP),



Cal Poly Pomona Class of 2026 Urged to Dream, Do, and Become

CPP News--KHC Student, Ande Le selected Julian McPhee Scholar for the College of Engineering



AMM Student Brings CPP Style to NYC

Poly Post--KHC Student, Andrea Avalos featured



This is not the end

Poly Post--KHC Student, Aadi Metha author, quotes from Tim Mijares and Andrea Avalos

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