

Fall Quarter 2012

"So many books, so little time."
-Frank Zappa

The CRSP Sun

...Bask in our news!



COLLEGE READING SKILLS PROGRAM

A TRIO STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES PROGRAM LOCATED IN THE LEARNING RESOURCE CENTER

Director's Message

Welcome to another school year! I began this academic year receiving my "15 Years of Service" pin. A week or two later was actually my sixteen year anniversary. When I was hired sixteen years ago to work for the College Reading Skills Program, I had no idea what I was getting into. I did not realize that CRSP was a TRiO Student Support Service program and a sister program to other TRiO programs that I had participated in during high school (Upward Bound) and college (McNair) and had worked for during my four years of college (UB). That means that I have been involved with TRiO for over 20 years!

I am a product of TRiO and it has had a major impact on my life. Upward Bound took me away from home the summer before my senior year for six weeks and gave me a taste of the college experience and an internship at the State capitol. During the school year, I attended weekly UB tutoring sessions and my tutor guided me through the college application process. In college, the same UB program provided me with a tutoring job so that I could guide other low-income, potentially first-generation college students. The summer before my senior year of college, I participated in the McNair Scholars program and had the opportunity to experience courses I would not have taken on my own accord and to further develop a research question I had began the previous summer. A few months after graduating with my bachelor's degree, I began working for CRSP as a program advisor and learning about reading skills that I regretted not knowing about while in college. I eventually enrolled in the master's English program at Cal Poly and applied these strategies to my graduate courses. Now, I am in my eighth year as CRSP director and collaborate with the other eight TRiO programs on campus changing and guiding the lives of today's low-income and first-generation college students at Cal Poly. As we like to say in the TRiO community, "TRiO works!"

Welcome Back/Orientation

On September 21, CRSP opened its 2012-13 academic year slate of events with its annual Welcome Back/Orientation. With the help of EOP and the Office of Financial Aid in contacting potential participants, the turnout was the best ever. Over 100 students came to learn more about the program, fill out applications, arrange tutoring hours, and receive information about upcoming events. Several CRSP participants volunteered their time to inform new applicants about the program. The first 50 attendees received a "Survival Kit" that facilitated orientating students to the program and Cal Poly.

Book Club Corner

What would happen if fairy tales got it wrong? If witches are no more than healers and stepmothers are given a bad rap? Such was the case in Fall Book Club's reading selection: *The True Story of Hansel and Gretel: A Novel of War and Survival*, which placed two Jewish children at the center of the German occupation of Poland during World War II. Abandoned by their fleeing parents and forced to hide their identities in order to keep safe in Nazi territory, the children adopt the names "Hansel" and "Gretel" in order to mask their Jewishness. Outside the primeval Bialoweiza Forest, the children come across Magda, the town "witch." Will she be their savior? Or their "ogre"? Book Club members discussed the ways the author interweaved elements of the Holocaust with the story of the children and Magda's family, and through retelling the traditional fairy tale, turned it upside down.

Winter Book Club is planning to read *The Brief Wondrous Life of Oscar Wao* by Junot Díaz. Meetings will be held Thursdays during U-Hour of weeks 3, 5, & 7. Please contact CRSP if you are interested in joining.

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College Reading Skills Program In the LRC Library Rm. 2919

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FALL 2012

PEER TUTOR-MENTORS

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RICHIE CLEMENTE
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VANESSA REYNAGA
AMANDA RIGGLE
REINA VILLANUEVA
CONNIE YEH
MICHAEL ZHOU

PROGRAM HOURS

MON-THURS 8:00-5:00
FRI 8:30-4:00

The Mentor Has Landed

Fall Quarter's Professional Mentor Meeting on November 6 featured Martin Greco, the EDL ("Entry, Descent, and Landing") activity lead engineer for the recent Mars Science Laboratory ("Curiosity" rover) mission to Mars. Martin is a CPP alum who began working for JPL (Jet Propulsion Laboratory) in 2000.

Attendees received a multimedia presentation about the landing of Curiosity that provided insight they would not have gotten from media coverage. The presentation included a full-sized Curiosity Rover wheel to allow attendees to appreciate the size and weight of the vehicle. In addition to scientific and engineering details, Martin shared some of his personal story as a struggling first-generation college student who did not flourish at Cal Poly until he began to take classes that inspired him.

He encouraged the attendees to seek internships, as he did, because they allow students a chance to apply classroom learning and truly engage with their chosen major. He also stressed the likelihood of an internship leading to full-time professional employment, as his internship did. Martin interned with Dowty Aerospace in Duarte before joining JPL.

Over 60 CRSP students attended the session, each receiving some commemorative pictures of Curiosity Rover courtesy of NASA.

Live at Pompeii: CRSP Students Visit the Getty Villa for College Night

On Tuesday, November 13, CRSP students joined students from the ARCHES Student Support Services program on a chartered bus to the Getty Villa in Malibu. This was the second trip to a Getty Museum College Night; last spring, the two programs joined to take students to College Night at the Getty Museum at the Getty Center in Los Angeles.

College Night at the Getty Villa gave attendees an evening of art, music, food, and fun exclusively for college students. Attendees were able to explore the Museum's collection of Greek and Roman antiquities, as well as the special exhibition *The Last Days of Pompeii: Decadence, Apocalypse, Resurrection*.

One CRSP attendee, Christine Featherstone, reminisced about the behind-the-scenes tours as being her favorite part of the evening: "I went on three tours and found that they were so informative that I did not want the evening to end. The first tour was into the restoration and conservation department. We saw a marble sculpture from a small museum in Italy which they were retrofitting it to be earthquake safe. The next tour was on silver restoration and documentation on a large assortment of silver pieces found on a farm in France which dated back to the roman Empire. My favorite was the UCLA graduate program students who were working on their personal thesis's. We spoke to them about moral and ethical restoration of the pieces they were assigned to work on."

The event included free food and music. While no CPP attendees partook, event attendees were encouraged to wear togas.

Financial Literacy Workshops

CRSP collaborated with the ARCHES and the Educational Opportunity Program (EOP) this fall to provide students with important information about finances and financial management. Three workshops were provided throughout the quarter. First, Maria Ruiz of EOP guided students through their financial aid award package, showing them how to access information regarding their accounts through BroncoDirect. Second, Joy Tafarella of the Cal Poly Pomona Federal Credit Union presented a workshop on saving and budgeting. She introduced a number of helpful strategies for college students to manage their money and save to achieve financial goals. Finally, Joy Tafarella returned to present a workshop on credit. Attendees learned the basics of credit ratings, including the effect of loan repayment, credit card use, and failure to make payments. She stressed the importance of laying a healthy foundation of credit history now because of the benefits healthy credit can bring later, for big purchases and for employment in jobs involving financial management.

Tutor-Mentor Spotlight: Hannah Amante

Hannah joined the CRSP as a peer/tutor mentor in the fall quarter of 2011. She majors in English with an emphasis in literature. Why English? She “wanted to read good literature for homework and become a better writer.” She expects to graduate in June 2013. Following graduation, Hannah intends to teach English abroad and work as a freelance writer.

When asked what she likes most about working for the College Reading Skills Program, she responded that she most enjoys “laughing with students and coworkers. I love the warm, lighthearted environment.” Hannah’s favorite aspect of being a student at Cal Poly Pomona is “the people [she] has met and the opportunities to get hands-on experience in teaching, tutoring, and writing for publication.” Her favorite place to eat near campus is the Sugar Rush Café: “They have amazing coffee and tuna melts.”

When asked to respond to the one-word query, “Birds,” she responded, “Hummingbirds.”

Student Spotlight: Christine Featherstone

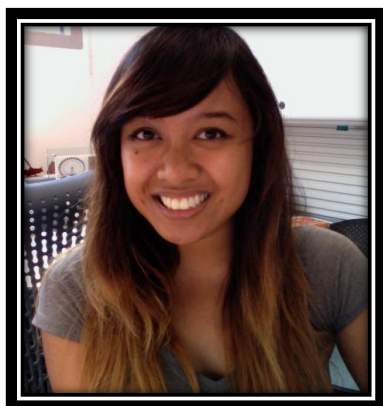
The CRSP Student Spotlight shines in this edition on Christine Featherstone. Christine is a senior psychology major who will graduate in June 2013. She came to Cal Poly Pomona because she felt “a sense of comfort, caring and enthusiasm,” and observed a “family” atmosphere on campus. She also finds the campus “beautiful and relaxing to be on, especially the koi ponds and fields.” Even driving to the campus from Orange County is enjoyable because she is “never disappointed in the view” at the crest of the hill looking down on Cal Poly from the 57 freeway. She would, however, welcome easier parking at that distant, idyllic institution.

Academically speaking, the best thing about Cal Poly, she reports, is that the professors and staff are “accessible and truly seem to want to help you.” As a psychology major, Christine enjoys the opportunity to “interact with people on a daily basis . . . learning what makes us all tick and finally learning that my intuitions or ‘gut feelings’ were correct and on target.” She adds, “this subject fascinates me more and more as I can apply what I am learning to my everyday life.”

Outside of her major, Christine is a “4-H leader, and rais[es] puppies for Guide Dogs for the Blind.” If that doesn’t sound like enough, she adds, “I also have four children I am very fond of.” An “adventurer,” Christine loves to “travel and explore new places, whether in the next city or around the world.” An avid reader, she has no favorite book but does particularly enjoy historical fiction.

Her advice to CPP students is to “get involved on campus.” She continues, “if you do not like what you are doing, find something else; there are so many students like yourself, you just need to put yourself out there to find them.” Additionally, she stresses the importance of getting to know professors: “You will need letters of recommendation one day and the best letters are written by the professors who really know you, not just your grade.”

“Ask questions,” she says. “No one will think less of you or laugh at you for asking.” As a final note, Christine offers, “Most of all, enjoy your time here; it will go far too fast.”



*CRSP Tutor/Mentor,
Hannah Amante*



*CRSP Student,
Christine Featherstone*



You would think we were giving away free Orange Juliuses, but in fact these students are in line to attend the Welcome Back/Orientation event!

Fall 2012 Event Pictures



CRSP Tutor, Richie Clemente and CRSP Student, Oscar Ledezma "battle" at College Night.



LRC Director, Tracy McDonald and CRSP Advisor, Cindy Greco at the Getty Villa.



Joy Tafarella presents the "Credit Builder" workshop.



Cal Poly Alum and EDL lead, Martin Greco presents to CRSP students at the Professional Mentor Meeting. (Note the rover wheel on the floor.)



Martin Greco meets with CRSP tutors, Michael Zhou and Chris Marin after his presentation on the Mars Science Laboratory project.



(L to R) Amanda Riggle, Zunaira Tariq, Sandra Escoto, and Robert Matranga discuss the second half of The True Story of Hansel and Gretel at the Book Club meeting.