Where Children Learn by Playing
Alumna’s generosity provides innovative space for Cal Poly child development majors to Learn by Doing

Inside 3: Alumnus receives honor / 6: Donors leave their marks / 8: Student goes abroad to make a difference / 10: The technology of the future, now at Cal Poly
Welcome

Your Impact 2016

You continue to bring Learn by Doing to life through your generosity. Learn by Doing is a vibrant part of a liberal arts education at Cal Poly and among the best ways for students to achieve mastery knowledge, but as you know, it requires investing in small class sizes and close faculty mentoring. In today’s world of decreased state funding, your gifts of money, internship opportunities and mentoring are essential to continue our legacy of Learn by Doing.

In this publication, we aim to tell the stories of donors and show the impact you can have on students. Supporters give to the College of Liberal Arts in a variety of ways, but one thing they all have in common is a passion for our students and Learn by Doing opportunities.

You’ll read about alumni who appreciate the influence Cal Poly has had in their lives, friends of the college who are inspired by our endeavors, former faculty who wished to leave a lasting impression, and one student who exemplifies how the opportunity of a lifetime can provide that margin of excellence to the academic experience.

As we celebrate the spirit of our supporters, we also turn our attention to the future and the steps it will take to sustain and build on our history of excellence. Consider this your invitation to join us as we work to create an environment that will spur imagination and interdisciplinary collaboration.

Best regards,
Douglas Epperson
Dean, College of Liberal Arts

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David Kerley III (Journalism, ’79) was named the 2015 College of Liberal Arts’ Honored Alumnus. Kerley is a correspondent for ABC News based in Washington, D.C., and contributes regularly to all ABC News broadcasts, including “World News Tonight,” “Good Morning America” and “Nightline.” Kerley began his career on the Central Coast after graduating from Cal Poly and has since traveled to every continent except Antarctica on behalf of ABC News. He’s covered presidential campaigns, natural disasters and many major breaking news stories. His in-depth reporting has included stories on the technology boom, genetically engineered crops, African-American Islam, American neo-Nazis, and the U.S. military. Kerley has been honored with national and regional Emmy Awards, a Peabody, and multiple Edward R. Murrow awards.

The Honored Alumni Award is the highest honor bestowed upon Cal Poly alumni by the university’s Alumni Association. The annual award recognizes one alumnus from each of the university’s six academic colleges.

“I saw these ceremonies when I was here 36 years ago and never thought that I would be honored by my university,” said Kerley, who returned to accept his honor and address the campus last November.

He credits Cal Poly with changing his career path and his life. Kerley has remained an active alumnus, sitting on the Advisory Board of the Journalism Department and contributing to the department’s endowment.

“The Journalism Department meant so much to me that when it fell on hard times and somebody asked, ‘Can you help?’ I joined a lot of my former colleagues who came out of a really halcyon time of the department in the late ’70s and early ’80s,” Kerley said.

Classmate and former colleague Kevin Riggs (Journalism, ’78) said he was thrilled when he heard Kerley was the honored alumnus.

“Dave is the real deal,” said Riggs, who was assistant news director at Cal Poly’s KCPR-FM when Kerley was news director there in the 1970s. “He is somebody who really does believe in the mission of journalism. And to be performing to a national and global audience the way he does really speaks to his abilities — and also to the education he got here at Cal Poly.”
Learn by Playing
Alumna’s gift transforms Preschool Learning Lab playground

When children in the Cal Poly Preschool Learning Lab climb to the top of their new playground equipment, they can see all the way across the campus. Through the eyes of a 4-year-old, it’s a little bit like climbing a mountain.

That’s exactly the idea, explained Learning Lab Director Patty Clarkson. Preschoolers need to be able to take risks within safe limits. “It builds self-confidence and resilience, and they become spatially aware of their bodies,” she said. Such an interactive space also allows for creative, dramatic play, such as when the children recently divided the playground tower’s platform into a living space and pretended they were a family of dogs.

The children at the Learning Lab have someone to thank for their new state-of-the-art outdoor learning space. The recently completed tower structure is the capstone of a nine-year project led by Cal Poly human development alumna Fran McIntyre.

The idea for the playground came to McIntyre in 2007, shortly after selling her business — an early childhood education company. She was looking for a way to give back to Cal Poly, the institution that had given her the skills and knowledge to launch a successful career. “For me, it was about completing the circle. Cal Poly helped me become successful, so I wanted to give back and help others.”

In addition to providing a high-quality preschool environment, the Learning Lab serves as a site for Cal Poly students to research child development and gain hands-on experience working with children. McIntyre knew the outdoor space did not give children many opportunities to engage in constructive play, which limited Cal Poly students’ ability to innovate in their work with the preschoolers. “We decided that we needed to find a way to redesign the playground so we could bring the curriculum of the Learning Lab outdoors,” she said.

With the help of landscape architecture faculty, McIntyre’s generous donation has transformed the preschool’s outdoor space into a varied natural environment, complete with hills, rocks, sand and playground structures. It’s now a space that lends itself to interactive learning, allows children to work on projects outside, and provides a dynamic space for Cal Poly’s child development majors to observe and engage with the preschool students as they learn and play. “Materials are designed to be taken in and out,” Clarkson said. “The idea is that the learning space should be fluid.”

When she started the project, McIntyre made it clear that giving back to future generations of educators was one of her major goals. At the same time, she wanted to honor the Cal Poly educators who helped put her on a path to success. In one of the corners of the playground is a small monument dedicating “Miss Josey’s Playground” to the memory of Professor Josephine Stearns, McIntyre’s mentor during her time at Cal Poly. “I made the donation and dedicated the playground in her name,” McIntyre said. “She taught me what high-quality childhood education is and the importance of the field.”

Thanks to McIntyre’s donation, future Cal Poly students will have the chance to interact with children as they play and learn in a unique space. “Fran is really giving back to educators,” Clarkson said. “Because of her, Cal Poly students can see an innovative version of what they’ll find in the workforce.”

“For me, it was about completing the circle. Cal Poly helped me become successful, so I wanted to give back and help others.”
— Fran McIntyre

Above: Children tend the playground’s new garden with Cal Poly students. Opposite page: Fran McIntyre at the renovated Learning Lab playground.
A LASTING LEGACY

Three donors share why they chose to leave a planned gift to Cal Poly

With a glance at the past and a look forward, you can begin to wonder what mark you’ll leave on this world. Three families chose to leave their legacies at Cal Poly — and invest in the future of our students — by making planned gifts to areas they are passionate about.

TO HONOR THE MEMORY — SUSAN CURRIER VISITING PROFESSORSHIP
Susan Currier was a beloved associate dean and professor of English, a student champion, and a lifelong philanthropist. When she was diagnosed with breast cancer, she and her family looked for ways she could have a lasting impact on the College of Liberal Arts. She and her husband, the late Max Wills, chose to create a legacy with endowed scholarships and the establishment of a visiting professorship.

The Susan Currier Visiting Professorship for Teaching Excellence makes it possible for the College of Liberal Arts to host a faculty member with a distinguished record of teaching. Selected visiting professors teach innovative courses on topics in various liberal arts disciplines and share their methods with faculty and others through workshops and presentations. In 2016, the college welcomed its fifth visiting professor in honor of Currier.

“I think Susan would be very proud of the professors that have come to Cal Poly in her honor,” said Debra Valencia-Laver, College of Liberal Arts associate dean, who worked closely with Currier during her last two years. “They each brought a passion for humanitarian concerns and shared with students and faculty effective ways to integrate that passion into the learning environment. Their interests in social justice and global issues have transformed Cal Poly in ways that were very important to Susan.”

TO SUPPORT THE INDUSTRY — GRAPHIC ARTS LIBRARY AND SCHOLARSHIPS
Print industry titan Raymond Prince isn’t an alumnus, yet he felt compelled to give to Cal Poly’s Graphic Communication Department.

“I chose Cal Poly for its excellent printing program and for having strong financial stewardship,” Prince said.

Prince endowed two scholarships in honor of two faculty members and made a bequest to perpetuate the growth of the world’s largest library on graphic arts technology and management. The library, the Raymond J. Prince Graphic Arts Collection, is housed at Cal Poly and includes more than 30,000 volumes.

Prince’s planned gift to Cal Poly gives him peace of
mind for his financial future while allowing him to pay it forward to the industry that gave him so much.

“I’ve met and worked with many great people,” Prince said. “This gave me an opportunity to give back to the industry that has supported me since 1958. “I’ve made the decisions and I’m at peace,” he continued. “My bequest is going to benefit students and faculty for a long, long time.”

**TO MAKE A GOOD INVESTMENT — JOURNALISM DEPARTMENT ENDOWMENT**

Ever since Blair Helsing (Journalism, ’75) left campus for the Bay Area, he’s stayed connected to Cal Poly.

As a member of the Journalism Department’s Advisory Board from 2011 to 2013, he witnessed firsthand the department’s commitment to innovation and to educating its students for the 21st-century workplace.

When he and his wife, Sharon Saffel, updated their will, they decided to entrust Cal Poly with a percentage of their estate directed to the Journalism Department’s endowment.

“Supporting this department is one of the best investments out there for ensuring that media channels in future years are populated with the most capable and discerning graduates, ensuring society is served by the best journalism possible,” Helsing said.

According to Helsing, no matter where you give, a gift to Cal Poly is a sound investment in the future.

“Cal Poly is a place where regardless of your major, you’re provided a great education,” said Helsing. “It’s clear that people in all different fields from Cal Poly go out into the world and make great things happen.”

To request sample bequest language or learn more about making a planned gift to the College of Liberal Arts, call David Cohune or Jacquelyn Hayes in the CLA Advancement Office at 805-756-6246 or visit plannedgiving.calpoly.edu.
Inspired by images of the Iraqi and Syrian refugee crises, Mehra Gharibian decided to do his part to make a difference.
Last December, Mehra Gharibian spent his winter break in Nicosia, Cyprus, at the Hope for Children refugee shelter. He was motivated to do so by the recent Iraqi and Syrian refugee crises that had touched him on a personal level. As a Middle Eastern American attending a university in California, with his family happy and physically together, Gharibian felt a responsibility toward families that were not as fortunate.

“The refugees I saw on my screen every day leaving Iraq and Syria seemed no different in situation or need than my family, who left Iraq under similar circumstances decades ago,” he said.

He found his opportunity to help with Generation Human Rights, a nonprofit program dedicated to supporting refugee youth around the world. Gharibian, an English and ethnic studies double major, wanted to help teenage refugees express their trauma through narrative expression and storytelling. To do so, however, he needed funding.

“When Mehra visited my office to tell me about this opportunity, his passion and commitment were palpable,” said Kathryn Rummell, English Department chair. “Many of us talk about wanting to help others, but Mehra was putting actions to his values. Helping him secure funding was a very small way that I could help him do that.”

Two English Department donors whose passions included helping students with experiences abroad supported Gharibian’s trip. “Throughout my trip, and now even more in retrospect, I recognize and appreciate the individuals at Cal Poly who made this experience possible,” he said. “I am forever grateful.”

While in Cyprus, Gharibian spent all day every day at the shelter, arriving before breakfast in the morning and leaving after dinner. He quickly got to know many of the boys, most of whom were nearing 18 years of age. In addition to the storytelling workshops he hosted, Gharibian took on projects to help them individually. He helped one teenager with his daily English homework. Another refugee aspired to attend a university in the U.S. after high school, so Gharibian worked with him to explore universities and scholarship opportunities. He also helped introduce the students to American culture. They decorated a Christmas tree together and discussed the cultural importance of the holiday in the U.S.

The trip had a profound impact on Gharibian and the young men he met. “Through my time at Home for Hope, I had the opportunity to befriend some of the most intelligent, motivated and resilient people I’ve ever met,” he said. “I hope that in addition to the workshops, tutoring and advising, I gave the boys hope for the future — perhaps one in which they settle in the West and have children who attend universities. And perhaps those children will return to fulfill their own responsibilities.”

Gharibian’s commitment to others is an example of the ways a liberal arts education can change lives. “This trip enabled Mehra to enact the humanistic values our program teaches: respect and empathy for others, commitment to social justice, and an understanding that one voice can make a significant difference. He was able to use his knowledge and skills to make a positive contribution to society,” Rummel said.

Gharibian served as an ambassador for the college and the university in his work on this project; in June, he received Cal Poly’s College of Liberal Arts’ Award for Contributions to the Objectives and Public Image of the University. This fall, he will attend UC Irvine to pursue a doctorate in visual studies with plans to become an educator.
A gift from a generous donor kick-started construction plans for an exciting new building that will place the College of Liberal Arts in the first explicitly interdisciplinary building on campus. The college will use the opportunity to create Expressive Technology Studios, a physical space dedicated to developing the educational intersection between technology, humanity and the arts.

“Our vision is to put Cal Poly at the forefront of expressive technology,” said Dean Doug Epperson. “The future of entertainment and storytelling for social change depends on artists and technologists working together to create new forms of expression.”

With its diverse project spaces, an environment designed to foster interaction, and state-of-the-art equipment, the Expressive Technology Studios will be home to innovative collaborations. Using the same professional hardware and software found in the entertainment industry, students will be able to create broadcast-quality video, special effects, virtual-reality experiences and digital games. Networking systems will support creative planning with teams on campus, across the state and around the world, allowing students to work directly with new corporate partners. From planning and producing, through post-production and distribution, students will have a complete hub where they can create a range of media, preparing them for professions ranging from animation to risk communication.

A large portion of the funding for the building is secured, but the college needs help from alumni and supporters to create the Expressive Technology Studios, which will open a new world of possibilities for Cal Poly students. The College of Liberal Arts aims to raise an additional $4 million by June 2017 to build the best facility possible. “We’re working on an accelerated timeline because the architects will finalize plans by the end of this year,” said Epperson. “And we are very eager to have a physical home for our expressive technology programs.”

To make a gift or to learn more about this project, contact:

Jacquelyn Hayes, Director of Advancement
jnhayes@calpoly.edu or 805-756-7052

David Cohune, Assistant Dean for Advancement
dcohune@calpoly.edu or 805-756-7056

Doug Epperson, Dean
dleppers@calpoly.edu or 805-756-2359

Top left: The YouTube Studios in Los Angeles.
Top right: Students working on a group project.
Bottom: Virtual setting created by students.
Below: The Expressive Technology Studios will foster student creativity and collaboration in sound design, virtual reality and more.

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<th>Recognition levels</th>
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Special thanks to the Dean’s Advisory Council for their contributions to the College of Liberal Arts.

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TOP 5 WAYS TO GIVE BACK TO CLA

1. Mail in Your Donation
   Use the envelope enclosed in this magazine to mail in a donation to the College of Liberal Arts.

2. Give Online
   Visit www.giving.calpoly.edu to make your contribution to the college or your favorite department or project.

3. Match Your Gift
   Double your support by leveraging your employer’s matching program at www.giving.calpoly.edu/matching.

4. Make a Pledge
   You can pledge to donate an amount of your choosing over a timeline of your choosing. For example, you could pledge to make gifts of $25 each month until you reach a total donation of $500 or $100 each quarter until you reach $1,000.

5. Plan Your Gift
   Leave a legacy on campus and include the College of Liberal Arts in your estate plans by visiting www.plannedgiving.calpoly.edu.