Berkeley tops Forbes ranking

“The ever-growing reputation of the West Coast as an innovation and jobs hub ... now has the higher educational cred to match,” said a recent Forbes story. Over 30 of the Best Value Colleges in the West 2016 are in California alone — and Berkeley was crowned No. 1.

promise.berkeley.edu/forbes

Three alumni win Pulitzer Prizes

Viet Thanh Nguyen ’92, Ph.D. ’97 won the Pulitzer Prize in fiction for his debut novel, The Sympathizer, a thriller/political satire about a double-agent who moves to Los Angeles after the Vietnam war. In addition, T. Christian Miller ’92 and Soumya Karlamangla ’13 — both of whom cut their journalistic teeth at the Daily Cal — won Pulitzers for their news coverage of, respectively, rape and the terror attack in San Bernardino last December.

promise.berkeley.edu/pulitzer

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More applicants, residents

For the first time ever last fall, Berkeley broke the 100,000 mark for the number of admission applications received. We’re also deepening our California roots. As part of a three-year plan to increase in-state undergraduates at all 10 UC campuses by 10,000 students, Berkeley will enroll an additional 750 new freshmen and transfer students from California.

promise.berkeley.edu/residents

Monster black holes

A near-record supermassive black hole — equal to 17 billion suns — was discovered in a sparse area of the local universe. These monster objects, more commonly found in crowded areas, may be more prevalent in quieter galaxies than once thought, according to Berkeley astronomers.

promise.berkeley.edu/blackhole

Commitment-makers overtake campus

More than 1,200 students from around the world (including 150 from Berkeley) joined a parade of luminaries at UC Berkeley in April for the Clinton Global Initiative University. Chosen for their detailed solutions to climate change, poverty alleviation, and other pressing challenges, the students made a “commitment to action” that shows the potential for lasting change. Watch inspiring presentations at promise.berkeley.edu/cgiu
Ballot on the Berkeley efforts to amend the election process
In a democratic society, our vote is our voice, a chance to choose our leaders and influence the issues that affect our lives and towns. To that end, electoral systems should be free, fair, and accessible.

But recent elections have bred dysfunction — from faulty machines and long lines to corrupt financing and questionable voting restrictions. These problems serve as a wake-up call to protect the integrity of elections and restore confidence among voters.

With the 2016 election — arguably America’s wildest one yet — right around the corner, this issue of The Promise of Berkeley shares stories about people who are seeking insights and answers to improving the election process. Students who are following their Freedom Summer forebears to empower voters in North Carolina. Professors researching different factors that influence for whom and how we vote. An alumna who prevails over the nonstop news cycle to bring NPR listeners daily coverage from the campaign trail.

Though a perfect democracy may be a myth, Berkeley is doing what it can to bring election fairness and effectiveness to the forefront, while fulfilling its public mission to help prepare and engage the citizens of our society.
A time when African Americans were barred from the polls, Berkeley students joined other students and activists from around the country to promote and expand voting rights in Mississippi. That effort, the Freedom Summer of 1964, remains an iconic moment in the Civil Rights Movement, as well as a spark that ignited the Free Speech Movement at Berkeley later that year. Fast forward about 50 years, and history seems to be repeating itself.

Since 2010, North Carolina has enacted a series of laws that have restricted access to the polls, such as eliminating same-day registration and reducing the early voting period. While these laws are being challenged in the courts, about 10 Berkeley students will head to North Carolina this summer to participate in community service and collaborate with local organizations on voter education and outreach.

“The right to vote is at the heart of democracy,” says Sandra Bass, director of the Public Service Center, which is sponsoring the trip. “Protecting this right is essential to inclusive and representative governance, so we’re excited to support community leaders who are mobilizing to ensure that all North Carolinians have access to the ballot.”

Upon the students’ return, they’ll share their experiences to encourage and inspire others to get involved. Like their forebears of the first Freedom Summer, these volunteers are turning their ideals into action, learning from the frontlines of the ongoing struggle for equality.
Whiile studying social work at Berkeley, U.S. Representative Barbara Lee M.S.W. ’75 interned in the office of then-Representative Ron Dellums, kickstarting a career in politics that led her to Congress in 1998. She credits the program that sent her to Washington, Cal in the Capital (CITC), with changing her life.

Believed to be the oldest internship program in Washington, CITC celebrated its 50th anniversary last October. Since its inception, it has placed more than 3,500 summer interns in more than 400 government agencies, nonprofits, think tanks, and other D.C. organizations. Together these interns have provided an estimated 1.6 million hours of public service.

J. Michael McGinnis ’66, a health policy leader through four presidential administrations and the Leonard D. Schaeffer Executive Officer of the National Academy of Medicine, founded CITC as an undergraduate.

“When I was a student, the East Coast was a foreign country. A number of my fellow political science classmates were interested in working in D.C., and I decided to broker the connections,” says McGinnis. He remains an active supporter today. He and his wife host a picnic for the interns every summer.

Though the emphasis has shifted from interning with Congress to landing a spot in interest groups or nongovernmental agencies, the high caliber of the students and their dedication to public service and government remain.

“Many of them come back to D.C. to stay,” says McGinnis.
Covering campaigns: A reporter’s perspective

Tamara Keith ’99, M.S.J. ’01, a White House correspondent for National Public Radio, has covered a wide range of stories, from business to natural disasters to politics. She first reported on presidential campaigns in 2000. She majored in philosophy as an undergraduate and, at age 19, became the youngest enrollee in the Graduate School of Journalism. Keith took time off the trail to share her insights and memories.

How is covering the 2016 campaign different than when you first started?

In 2004, I was a local reporter for WOSU in Columbus, Ohio, and for a weekend, I followed the Kerry campaign on a bus tour. I remember going into a filing center and being amazed that all of the national press were using Wi-Fi. Wi-Fi! It was cutting-edge technology. My laptop didn’t have that capability.

Now we don’t need filing centers. I’m filing radio pieces and going live from moving busses and airplanes. I can record my voice tracks into my iPhone and upload it in a few seconds.

How has media coverage changed over the last few campaigns?

Things like Twitter and even Snapchat have changed the pace of the news cycle to the point where there simply is no downtime for the candidates or the people following them. It means things that would have gone virtually unnoticed before can blow up into full-on scandals in minutes.

How did Berkeley prepare you for this work?

In both undergrad and grad school, I was also working nearly full time and didn’t have much time to put things off. I developed this helpful but unusual habit of not procrastinating that has served me well.
Majoring in philosophy helped me break down arguments and think about carefully formulating questions. This skill works for keying in on what a politician isn’t saying.

The first class we took in grad school was J-200, and our professor required us to file a story on deadline every day ... at least. Now, covering the White House and campaign, that’s essentially my life. I can’t think of a better preparation. I also had the best political reporting professor a girl could ask for.

Tell us about a memorable campaign moment.

It’s kind of a blur, but in terms of daily election coverage, I am most proud of the story I did last summer in Missouri. Hillary Clinton was speaking at a church near Ferguson, and in the midst of her prepared remarks, she said, “All lives matter” — a phrase critics use of the Black Lives Matter movement. While she said this without malice, it upset folks who felt like she just didn’t get it and wondered why she would use a phrase meant to undermine the movement. It was a case of growing pains for a candidate trying to get right with an important political force.

There are also a lot of times when I am completely exhausted. I’ve been in four states in two days and yet somehow, when I sit down at the microphone, I’m coherent and even happy with the reporting I’m able to share with our listeners. It’s a small thing, but it’s invigorating and semi-miraculous. And in those moments it’s all worth it. ■
Candidates hoping to engage voters of color can keep their emojis and hashtags — or at least pick up the phone once in a while.

A recent Berkeley study says old-fashioned tactics, such as door-to-door canvassing and phone banking, are crucial to mobilizing California’s diverse electorate. The findings, headed by Lisa García Bedolla, a professor in the Graduate School of Education and political science department, could have powerful implications for future elections.

Technology, the team found, isn’t always effective on its own. Texting has an inconsistent impact with voters of color, and social media failed to increase Latino and youth turnout. The report stressed the importance of outreach that is both culturally competent and contextually appropriate: New technologies can be layered with more personal approaches tailored to different audiences, and must be constantly tested and updated.

García Bedolla and her coauthors concluded that finding the most effective strategies for moving voters of color to the polls “is essential for California’s electorate to reflect its population.” Berkeley’s Signatures Innovation Fellows Program agrees: Just before press time, García Bedolla was selected as a 2016–17 fellow and received funds to create a startup that will provide data and technical support to different voter and civic engagement entities across California. ■
Do voters prefer well-behaved women?

The presidential nomination bid of Hillary Clinton may be grabbing headlines, but the numbers tell a different story: Women hold just 19 percent of Congressional seats and 24 percent of elected state legislative offices, and no woman has yet shattered the Oval Office’s glass ceiling. Thanks to Berkeley political science graduate student Rachel Bernhard M.A. ’14, Ph.D. ’18, new information may help female candidates at any level understand why.

According to Bernhard, liberal and conservative voters use gender stereotypes quite differently from one another. Her research explores responses to hypothetical expressions of sex and gender — e.g. photos of candidates in pink or blue shirts, biographies that included Little League coach or literacy program volunteer — and examines how those responses vary with American voter ideology.

Bernhard finds that not only do conservative voters strongly prefer political candidates who are masculine, male, or both, but the more conservative they are, the stronger their preferences. Women and more feminine candidates fare just fine with a strongly liberal electorate. It is not yet clear whether this difference is due to attitudes about the proper roles for women and men or about voters’ preferences for masculinity in leadership.

Bernhard cautions that more work is needed to understand voter behavior, and that stereotyping should not be seen as inherently negative, since all societies segregate gender roles based on sex. Rather, stereotyping is a process of categorization and organization.

“The takeaway,” she says, “is the information people think is relevant to choosing a good leader is more complicated than anyone realized.”
Can technology increase public engagement by tapping the collective intelligence of voters? Yes, according to the California Report Card (CRC), a mobile-friendly tool created in 2014 as an alternative to opinion surveys and social media channels often dominated by partisans.

The CRC invites California voters to grade issues facing the state, as well as suggest emerging issues. Since its launch, more than 22,000 people in all 58 counties have assigned grades to what they think is important.

Developed by Berkeley’s Center for Information Technology Research in the Interest of Society (CITRIS) and the office of Lt. Governor Gavin Newsom, the CRC uses the latest IT and mobile technology to connect constituents with state leaders and build new bridges between Spanish- and English-speaking communities. Notably, the CRC rapidly translates between English and Spanish and seeks to reach the 30 percent of residents who speak Spanish at home.

“If you don’t have active citizen engagement, you’re not a highly functioning or a real democracy,” says Lt. Gov. Newsom in a CRC video. “A democracy is only as good as its active participants, and it’s something I think technology can substantially aid us in once again rediscovering.”

When the first report card revealed statewide concern on disaster preparedness, CITRIS responded with QuakeCAFE, a new platform that allows people to assess their own preparedness. It also enables you to rate ideas on how the state can help people get ready for a major earthquake through education, incentives, inspections, and other areas.

Visit californiareportcard.org to grade timely issues, or quakecafe.org to check your earthquake readiness.
### THE CALIFORNIA REPORT CARD
(based on 50,000 grades)

<table>
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In modern politics, do personalities matter more than platforms? Jack Glaser, a professor and associate dean at Berkeley’s Goldman School of Public Policy, has studied this question for years. Here he describes the interplay between how candidates make us feel and how we vote.

**How much of our decision making as voters relates to emotion versus logical thinking?**

It is relatively small compared to party identification and ideology. That said, emotion will be more influential in primary elections, whereas party identification is held constant — the candidate who’s best at playing upon the emotions of voters will tend to prevail. In either case, voter decision making (like most decision making) is usually based on shortcuts, and rarely based on a thorough, careful consideration of candidates’ positions and qualities.

**Are some candidates better than others at leveraging emotion to connect with voters?**

This has to be the case. I think the evidence is mostly anecdotal, but it is compelling. For example, Ronald Reagan really knew how to emotionally connect with his audiences, and it is probably not a coincidence that he had been a professional actor. Bill Clinton knew how to say, “I feel your pain.”

Regarding the current election, I’ve heard a compelling analysis that points out that Donald Trump is primarily an entertainer, having been on his reality show for so long. He does seem to keep people’s attention and entertain them, and clearly leverages anger and fear effectively, as well as hope. In fact, contained in his “Make America Great Again” slogan is the full emotional spectrum, because it implies that America has fallen (fear and anger) but promises greatness (hope). None of the other candidates is nearly as effective on an emotional level.
Associate professor Laura Stoker has learned that voting behavior is shaped by how and when voters are raised as much as by their own individual ideals. The bulk of her work focuses on political socialization — how political orientations develop in childhood and change, or solidify, over one’s lifespan.

“I look at the parents’ partisan and ideological leanings, and if the children pick them up,” says Stoker, who teaches a political psychology course in the College of Letters & Science. “If you have a fairly engaged political family, your political identity starts to form in the pre-adult years.”

Stoker’s research also points to another milestone on the voter development path: the first election a voter encounters as an adult. “If the tides of the time are waxing one way or another, then the young people coming into the electorate tend to reflect those partisan tendencies,” she says. “Young people whose first election was during the Reagan period were more likely to eventually identify and vote as Republican. Similarly, there’s an expectation that young people who came into the electorate in 2008 are more likely to vote Democrat, and then identify as and stay Democrats.”

Less common now, Stoker says, are voters with bipartisan understanding, which she points out occurred more frequently among voters in the 1970s and 80s. “There’s more antipathy for the opposing party on the part of ordinary voters,” she says. “Today there’s strong partisanship in the electorate — and there’s nothing more important to voting than partisan identity.”
There’s no perfect way to count votes. “Hanging chads,” machine failures, and voter fraud are among many recent obstacles that have made it tough to confirm election results. But Philip Stark, associate dean of mathematical and physical sciences and professor of statistics, has developed a pioneering approach that’s ensuring the process is accurate.

In 1965, California passed a law that mandated audits before verifying election results. But it only required that 1 percent of ballots be counted by hand and didn’t offer solutions to problems that may arise. Stark’s system, called a risk-limiting audit, uses statistics to prove that the announced winners really won, regardless of how close the race was.

When Stark first started thinking about this, he realized the important question was not how many ballots to audit — but rather when to stop.

“That insight was key,” Stark says. “A risk-limiting audit has a big chance of correcting a faulty outcome, but inspects as few ballots as possible when the outcome is right to keep costs down. It stops only when there’s strong evidence that counting every ballot wouldn’t change who won.”

Stark’s work has led to new laws in California and Colorado, and his methods have been tested in about 20 counties in California, Colorado, and Ohio. He is also helping Travis County, Texas, develop a system that would let voters confirm their votes were included correctly in the total.

Joseph Stalin said, “It doesn’t matter who votes. What matters is who counts the votes.” Stark’s work increases election trustworthiness by ensuring that votes are counted as cast. ■
“A person, other than a small contributor committee or political party committee, may not make to any candidate for elective state office other than a candidate for statewide elective office, and a candidate for elective state office other than a candidate for statewide elective office may not accept from a person, any contribution totaling more than three thousand dollars per election.”

Huh?

California’s Political Reform Act (PRA) is a national model for campaign finance regulation. But as this excerpt demonstrates, it’s also cumbersome, confusing, and sometimes contradictory.

This spring, California’s Fair Political Practices Commission (FPPC) recruited a team of UC Berkeley and UC Davis law students to tackle the herculean task of rewriting the law so that anyone can understand it. The FPPC hopes a simplified act will encourage citizens to run for office, rather than run from its complexity.

Under the guidance of David Carrillo, executive director of Berkeley Law’s California Constitution Center, the students are focused on clarifying the act’s language and organization. The project is a unique opportunity to gain professional-level experience with statutory code, government agencies, and collaboration.

“Hearing everyone’s perspective and seeing where people have similar ideas or come up with different ways to approach an issue shows the benefits of working in a team,” says Berkeley Law’s Anna Tsiotsias J.D. ’17.

Carrillo says that while the revision could get derailed on the way to the governor’s desk, that’s not to say it isn’t worth trying. If some version of the students’ work is enacted into law, they could have a real-world impact on California’s democratic process.
After three years of construction and the successful completion of a $105 million campaign, the Berkeley Art Museum and Pacific Film Archive (BAMPFA) opened its new home in January to a global chorus of “oohs” and “aahs.” Combining a sleek stainless steel-clad structure with a renovated 1939 printing plant, the 83,000-square-foot center is flooded with light and meandering, open spaces that invite guests to get lost in wonder and thought as they discover works that cross genres and time.

Lost in the garden

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One piece that’s easy to get lost in is The World Garden, a dramatic 60-by-25-foot mural that seizes guests’ attention as soon as they enter the museum. Part of the inaugural exhibition, Architecture of Life, and the first in a biannual rotation of projects on the epic Art Wall, this ink mural was created in just five days by renowned Chinese artist Qiu Zhijie. A visual compendium of garden motifs from around the world, it focuses on natural features as symbols of the human condition — but with a satirical view of contemporary society.

On view through mid-July 2016. bampfa.berkeley.edu
Maribel Patino ’14 once spent summers placing stickers on watermelons to help support her farmworker family in Lamont, California. Today she is headed to UC San Diego to pursue joint M.D. and Ph.D. degrees — and credits the Bergeron Scholars Program for empowering her to chase that dream.

Launched at Berkeley in 2012, the program aims to help more women flourish in science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) by pairing promising students with professional women at the top of their fields to serve as mentors. So far, 20 students with financial need have benefited from its scholarship, academic, and career resources.

“I got to meet a network of women who are successful in STEM, which was very reassuring,” says Patino, who discovered a passion for neuroscience at Berkeley. “Being a female, particularly a Latina female, sometimes I felt I was the only person who looked like me.”

The Bergeron program supported Patino’s award-winning research on traumatic brain injury and her travel to present it at conferences nationwide.

Mentors such as Genentech Vice President Wendy Young applaud the program. “I think it’s important that young women have female role models,” says Young, whose mentee, Nichole Johnston ’14, is seeking her Ph.D. in molecular biophysics and biochemistry at Yale.

The program’s founders, Silicon Valley executives and former Cal parents Sandra and Douglas Bergeron P ’13, are seeing their vision come to life.

“Being a Bergeron scholar does more than help high-achieving students pay for an education. It cultivates the know-how and confidence a young woman will need to excel in her desired field,” Sandra says.

Sandra Bergeron (third from left) with mentors
On November 19, 2015, you showed us how Berkeley helps you reach higher and imagine further by ensuring that Big Give — our second annual 24-hour fundraising blitz — was a soaring success. Thank you for keeping Berkeley the No. 1 public university in the world. Visit BigGive.berkeley.edu to see the results.

8,149 DONORS MADE
8,149 GIFTS
5,538,649 TOTALING

$5,538,649

WHO BENEFITED BIG

42.8% UNRESTRICTED SUPPORT
27.4% STUDENTS AND FACULTY
23.4% PROGRAMS
6.4% CAMPUS IMPROVEMENTS

WHO GAVE BIG

7,092 CALIFORNIA DONORS
1,415 NON-CALIFORNIA U.S. DONORS
224 INTERNATIONAL DONORS
1,887 FIRST-TIME DONORS

501 FUNDS SUPPORTED
To attract and retain top-flight faculty across all 10 campuses, University of California President Janet Napolitano announced a $50 million matching fund program in 2014 that aims to establish 100 new endowed faculty chairs within five years. Seizing the opportunity to support excellence, Berkeley donors have quickly stepped forward. In less than two years, five out of an anticipated eight chairs have been created at Cal, and a sixth chair is in progress.

Thanks to the Presidential Match for Endowed Chairs, which matches up to $500,000 per chair, Berkeley will benefit in a range of diverse academic areas. Each chair, which honors the interests of its donor, will provide funds, in perpetuity, for scholarly, salary, and graduate fellowship support. While faculty appointments are still pending, the new chairs are:

- The Bita Daryabari Presidential Chair in Iranian Studies, thanks to Bita Daryabari (see sidebar)
- The Quantedge Presidential Chair in Economics, supported by Quantedge Capital
- The Thomas M. Siebel Presidential Chair in the History of Science, funded by the Thomas and Stacey Siebel Foundation
A chair to honor her Iranian roots

As Bita Daryabari grew up in Tehran, she was surrounded constantly by Iranian literature and poetry. She treasured the days spent reading Farsi books or memorizing the writings of 13th-century poet and scholar Rumi.

“It is a part of your life, your culture,” the former computer scientist and telecommunications manager-turned-humanitarian and philanthropist says about her $5 million gift to Berkeley to further the study of Iranian history, languages, literature, arts, and culture.

Though Daryabari’s parents sent her as a teen to freely pursue her education and interests in the United States, she maintains close ties, love, and a devotion to her home.

The Bita Daryabari Presidential Chair in Iranian Studies, financed by her contribution and $500,000 from the University of California Presidential Match for Endowed Chairs, will support a faculty member in the Department of Near Eastern Studies, preferably one whose teaching and research focus on ancient Iran.

Daryabari hopes her gift — one of many to different universities to bolster Iranian studies in higher education — will help Berkeley students who are part of the Iranian diaspora learn more about their heritage.

Non-Iranian students can benefit as well, she says, adding that learning about another country’s culture and history can do more than increase knowledge. It can open hearts and minds to new understanding, respect, and peaceful solutions to problems.
What sets Berkeley’s Library apart?
Its collections, its people, and its place on the best public research university campus in the world.

Why do we need libraries today?
Oh, so many reasons! The shortest answer is that libraries are service institutions (not book depositories) that bring people together with resources they need to build a better world. Finding, evaluating, and using high-quality information, with a critical eye, is an enormous challenge for everyone faced with the flood of mostly low-quality information.

We are here to help people learn to be their own librarian and guide them when they need an expert partner. Our librarians teach information literacy and research skills, such as how to use digital mapping systems or edit videos, across the campus. We should greatly increase our efforts so that every Berkeley graduate is 21st-century information literate.

Last October, Berkeley welcomed Jeffrey MacKie-Mason, an expert in online information, as the new university librarian. A transplant from the University of Michigan, where he most recently served as dean of the School of Information, MacKie-Mason explains why libraries remain so important in our emerging information age. He also describes his vision for sharing Berkeley’s famed collection and revitalizing Moffitt Library, a crucial resource for undergraduates.
What are your other top goals?

We have one of the best collections of any research library in the United States. Books, photographs, manuscripts, illustrations, videos, audio recordings, maps, journals, pamphlets, and on and on. **We should be doing everything in our power to set those treasures free, by digitizing everything and making them publicly available** whenever copyright doesn’t interfere.

The role of a university library is also to provide “common goods” — assets that individuals may not be able to afford themselves, but need to become educated citizens in the modern world. And as information technology changes, the campus community needs access to new tools and resources. We’re investing in a maker space, where we’ll have 3D printers and other tools for combining technology and information with creativity to make things. We also have lots of computers that anybody can use, and we lend laptops. Given Berkeley’s emphasis on access, that’s important.

What’s happening at Moffitt Library?

We are Berkeley’s primary provider of public, open, shared learning space, which students need more than ever. Phase 1 of the Moffitt renovation will provide more places for both quiet and collaborative learning, and will be open 24/7. (Now underway, this $17-million project is revamping two floors and a plaza.)

With Phase II, once funded, we envision adding learning and discovery labs, media production centers, interactive video walls, and even a place where students and faculty can go to ask “How do I?” questions.

What are you reading?

*A Little Life*, by Hanya Yanagihara. Very powerful, very painful.

Do you have a favorite spot?

When I need quiet time to think, I “hide in plain sight” in the Morrison Library, which is a gem.

Follow MacKie-Mason at madlibbing.berkeley.edu or the Library on Twitter @ucberkeleylib
Robert Porter ’40 grew up in an era before managed health care, when doctors occasionally treated patients in exchange for things like eggs or pies. Witnessing that generosity later influenced his career and philanthropy. In December, Berkeley received a landmark bequest from Porter valued at more than $14 million — the single most generous estate gift to the university in a decade.

As a Berkeley undergraduate, Porter studied zoology and chemistry — the premed curriculum at the time. He earned an M.D. from UCSF, then treated World War II soldiers with brain injuries and psychological trauma at an army hospital in West Virginia. There he met Mary Kay Thornton, a Red Cross worker whom he later married.

After the war, Porter spent 60 years in New York as a child and adolescent psychiatrist and faculty member at Mount Sinai Hospital. Described as a dedicated practitioner and passionate mentor, he died in 2014 at age 95.

Ensuring his legacy would live on for future students, Porter designated his gift to the School of Public Health, Goldman School of Public Policy, and College of Natural Resources. Each unit has established an endowed fund in his name to provide sustained revenue for critical priorities.

“We are incredibly grateful for Dr. Porter’s prescient gifts,” says Goldman School Dean Henry E. Brady. “These lasting endowments have the potential to support exceptional students and to transform big ideas into tangible realities.”

While Porter’s generosity is an extraordinary example of an estate gift, planned gifts of all types and sizes make a difference at Berkeley. Learn more at planyourlegacy.berkeley.edu
Entrepreneurs pay it FORWARD

Stephen Torres ’07 has an audacious goal: 5 million more homes going solar by 2018. He turned his vision into a bold solution when he started Sunible, a company to guide homeowners on the path toward using solar power. Today Sunible is growing, and Torres is paying forward his success with a pledge to support his alma mater.

Torres joins nearly 200 graduates who have taken the Founders’ Pledge — a non-binding agreement by alumni working in the dynamic tech community to make a meaningful gift to Berkeley if and when their startups become financially successful. In return, Berkeley helps members recruit the best talent by connecting them with current students; organizes networking events; and spotlights their achievements through social media, product showcases, and other opportunities to increase their visibility.

“For me, Berkeley was the best thing ever — the professors helped me cultivate an entrepreneurial mindset. And I wanted to give back,” says Torres. “The Founders’ Pledge is a great way to invest in Berkeley, and the events bring tech leaders back to campus to hone their trade and make connections.”

Those connections continue to serve Torres well. Sunible was recently acquired by Domino, a green-energy service group created by fellow alumnus Tom Dinwoodie ’91.

Since the Founders’ Pledge launched two years ago, its members have given about $1.5 million to Berkeley. They, too, gain a leg up toward success through the relationships that Berkeley helps facilitate — while building upon the spirit of innovation that is fundamental to our history.

founderspledge.berkeley.edu
James “Jim” Simons Ph.D. ’62 never wanted to be a fireman or a football star. Even as a child, he loved math. “I liked continually multiplying things by two, although by the time I got to 1,024, I’d had enough,” he said in a video by Numberphile. The same impulse that rendered him bored at 1,024 has drawn him down a lot of paths — leading him to becoming Berkeley’s 2016 Alumnus of the Year.

Simons earned his Ph.D. at Berkeley in mathematics at age 23, then started teaching at MIT. A few years later, his life took a left turn when he began cracking codes for the Pentagon. Appalled by a 1967 New York Times Magazine article that talked about how great things were going in Vietnam, he wrote a letter to the magazine that disagreed — and, unsurprisingly, lost his job soon thereafter.

Simons reentered academia as the chair of mathematics at Stony Brook University on Long Island. While there, he and Berkeley’s Shiing-Shen Chern co-published what is now called the Chern-Simons Invariant, an early proof defining the inextricable link between physics and geometry that has since had an immeasurable influence on theoretical physics.

Simons soon reached 1,024 again and left academia in 1978 to start what became Renaissance Technologies, an early pioneer in quantitative trading. “We didn’t hire anyone who had worked on Wall Street before,” he told California magazine. “We hired people who were very good scientists but who wanted to try something different. And make more money if it worked out.”

It worked out: He managed one of the world’s most successful hedge funds and has been called “the world’s smartest billionaire.”
left turns

Seven years ago, Simons started navigating his latest left turn — into retirement and philanthropy. He and his wife, Marilyn, oversee the Simons Foundation, which has invested millions in math and science research and education, including groundbreaking work in the study of autism. In 2012, the foundation established Berkeley’s Simons Institute for the Theory of Computing, which brings top researchers from multiple disciplines together to explore the nature and limits of computation.

Family traditions

Simons has clearly influenced his family. His daughter, Liz ’82, told California magazine, “When I was growing up, he made sure we all understood the importance of thinking about other people.” She and her brother Nat ’89, M.A. ’94, as well as their respective spouses, Mark Heising ’80, M.S. ’83 and Laura Baxter-Simons ’89, M.A. ’94, support a range of Berkeley causes, including nanosciences, physics, solar energy, journalism, and early childhood care and education. And granddaughter Caitlin Heising supports the greater good by working at a San Francisco human rights organization.

Among Simons’s other grandchildren, Matthew Heising is a graduate student in astronomy at Harvard. High school junior Evan Simons shows a penchant for business: His first business deal was renting a tie to his grandfather for a wedding. And Alison Simons, a high school senior and self-described “math person,” recounts her grandfather’s captivating explanation of the fourth dimension: He used various measurements of a circle, an appropriate symbol for a man whose many left turns have always revolved around a strong center — math.

CONGRATULATIONS!

UC Berkeley and the Cal Alumni Association congratulate the recipients of the 2016 Achievement Awards, which will be presented at the Berkeley Charter Gala in May.

- James “Jim” Simons Ph.D. ’62, Alumnus of the Year
- Michael G. Harris ’64, M.Opt. ’65, O.D. ’66, M.S. ’68, Berkeley Founders Award
- Randy Schekman, Fiat Lux Faculty Award
- Bruce Beasley M.A. ’62, Ginger Ehn Lew J.D. ’74, and Johnathan Rodgers ’67, Campanile Excellence in Achievement Award
- Benito Delgado-Olson ’07 and Connor Landgraf ’13, M.Eng. ’14, Mark Bingham Award for Excellence in Achievement by Young Alumni

awards.berkeley.edu
1. Megan Breazeale '17 and Hayley Hooson '17 speak with Chris Silbermann '89, president of International Creative Management, following his talk to participants in the Berkeley Connect mentoring program.

2. Chevron Corporation representatives Alyssa Roche '87, Cynthia Murphy, Shariq Yosufzai, and Georgieanna Scheuerman Ph.D. '80 present Chevron’s annual gift to UC Berkeley to Vice Chancellor Harry LeGrande, Oscar Dubon, and Marvin Lopez from the College of Engineering.

3. Donors gathered at Doe Library in January for the Luncheon in the Library.

3–4. Cynthia Lohr (left) and Emily '95 and Lawrence '92 Lohr (right) of J. Lohr Vineyards pose with Elise Woods (second from left) and the event’s featured author, Annie Barrows '84 (center). The Lohrs donated wine for the donor recognition event.

4. Library board member John Gage ’75 (left) and university librarian Jeff MacKie-Mason.

Making connections
5. Gary S. May M.S. ’88, Ph.D. ’91 (third from right), engineering dean at Georgia Tech, delivered the 2016 Ernest S. Kuh Distinguished Lecture, speaking on diversity in science and engineering. With May and Shankar Sastry M.S. ’79, M.A. ’80, Ph.D. ’81, dean of the College of Engineering, are students Saaleha Bey, Dominique Fernandez, Haile Shavers, Phil Hunt, and Camille Harris.

6. Eric Schmidt M.S. ’79, Ph.D. ’82, executive chairman of Alphabet Inc. and former CEO of Google, discusses his experiences in academia and industry with Chancellor Nicholas B. Dirks at a February event in Zellerbach Hall.

7. Marina Gracias ’80, J.D. ’83, M.B.A. ’99 and her husband, Bernard Martis, enjoy the Benjamin Ide Wheeler Society’s winter event, held at the new Berkeley Art Museum and Pacific Film Archive.

8. Kenneth Bamberger, faculty director of the Berkeley Institute for Jewish Law and Israel Studies, attends an alumni reunion in Tel Aviv, Israel, in January.

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Reunion and Parents Weekend at Homecoming
FRIDAY, SEPT. 30–SUNDAY, OCT. 2

Come back to Berkeley! Reunion and Parents Weekend at Homecoming is UC Berkeley’s premier annual gathering for thousands of alumni and parents. Enjoy three days of parties, family events, faculty seminars, special tours, museum and library open houses, the Homecoming football game, and much more. Visit homecoming.berkeley.edu starting July 1 to register, or call 888.UNIV.CAL.
9. Catherine Wolfram, faculty director of the Energy Institute at Haas, speaks with solar energy pioneer Yosef Abramowitz about sustainable development in Israel and Africa. The event was sponsored by the Berkeley Institute for Jewish Law and Israel Studies, the Masters in Development Practice Program, and the Blum Center for Developing Economies.

10. Student speaker Jonathan Soormaghen ’15, professor and keynote speaker Robert Reich, associate professor of political science Ron Hassner, and Chancellor Nicholas B. Dirks listen as Christina Ashley Swindlehurst-Chan ’15 sings the national anthem at the December commencement ceremony at Haas Pavilion.


12. Steve and Pam Hendry, Cal Parents Board co-chairs and members of the Brilliance of Berkeley honorary committee.

13. Panelist Janine Jones-Clark ’86 and Oski.

14. The event drew approximately 400 alumni and friends of Cal.
15–18. In January, the campus reopened the Berkeley Art Museum and Pacific Film Archive in a new 83,000-square-foot home in downtown Berkeley.

15. Guests explore the new facility on the opening weekend’s Community Day.

16. Rena Rosenwasser and Penny Cooper J.D. ’64 enjoy the opening festivities.

17. Berkeley Mayor Tom Bates ’61, Congresswoman Barbara Lee M.S.W. ’75, and Lawrence Rinder, BAMPFA director, at the ribbon-cutting ceremony.

18. Professor Wen-hsin Yeh Ph.D. ’84 mingles with Coleman Fung ’87 at the opening gala.

19–20. The campus dedicated the new Physics Reading Room and Collaboration Center at Le Conte Hall in February.

19. Thomas Brennan-Marquez ’79 (center) and his college roommate Michael Doyen ’79 (right) work a few problem sets with physics student Joe Costello ’16.

20. Caroline Gee ’75 (second from left) and her husband, Henry Blauvelt (third from left), were the primary donors for the new space, which is dedicated to the late physics professor emeritus Harry S. Bingham. Joining the celebration were Grace Fretter, Sanford, Diana, Aidan, and Daphne Bingham, and Riley and Alison ’86 Mankin.
Robert Reich, Chancellor’s Professor of Public Policy, is a former secretary of labor, noted author of 14 books, and a media commentator (robertreich.org). At commencement last December, Reich warned graduating students about the great divide between the rich and poor, the replacement of people with technologies in the workforce, and the inextricable link between inequality and climate change. He also shared a funny story and inspiring advice that anyone can live by.

“Now, three things” I’d like you to carry away with you.

Number one: In this era of widening inequality, make sure you respect those who don’t have the education or the status you do. A college degree is not a license for arrogance. In fact, respect everybody you work with, regardless of their station.

My first job 50 years ago was working in the Senate office of Robert F. Kennedy. It sounds glamorous, but I ran his signature machine. There’s a little pen at the end of a long wooden handle, and I made sure that all of the letters lined up exactly right so that the pen and his signature lined up nicely.
It was a fine job, but after three months, I was so bored that I did something I’m not terribly proud of. I snuck in at night and wrote letters to my friends on the senator’s stationery. Letters like, “Dear Mr. Dworkin, Congratulations on having the largest nose in New York State.” And then, I used the signature machine — signing Robert F. Kennedy. My friends still have these letters framed on their walls.

One day I was standing in the Senate hallway, and the elevator opened and out came Senator Kennedy, surrounded by his aides and looking like he was doing very important work. I had seen his signature, but hadn’t yet met him in person. He looked at me and asked, “How are you doing, Bob?” He knew my name! I couldn’t believe it. I couldn’t even summon the answer out of my throat I was so overwhelmed.

From that moment on, if he had asked me to work his signature machine for the next three years, I would have done it. Respect … respect.

Number two: Remember that you don’t have to be a secretary of some cabinet department or president of the United States in order to exercise leadership. Leadership is the art and practice of getting people to focus on problems that they would rather not focus on. They’d prefer to deny that the problems exist or blame others for the problems. The role of a leader is to overcome these escape mechanisms, and I have every confidence that you will be in positions to do that.

Third and finally: Know the difference between tenacity and martyrdom. Be tenacious, but don’t burn yourself out. If you’re trying to change the world for the better, even a little bit, you’re going to need patience. You’ll need to accept what you cannot change, at least right away. And dedicate yourself again and again to changing what you cannot accept.

So go forth and do your best. Comfort the afflicted, even if that means occasionally afflicting the comfortable. And use every opportunity you get to renew and re-energize yourself.