



The Caltech Y NEWS

"Making a World of Difference"

Since
1916

Announcements

The ACT Fellowships

A new Caltech Y program introduced!

by Abdul Ahad Tariq '09, ExComm

"Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it's the only thing that ever has." – Margaret Mead

Margaret Mead could just as well have been talking about Caltech when she lauded the efforts of a modest but dedicated citizenry; the scientific impact of this small Institute has been legendary. Now a new program by the Caltech Y – *Advocating Change Through Service (ACT) Fellowships* – hopes to inspire a similar enthusiasm for social activism.

The ACT Fellowships will provide funding to students for independent projects, in partnership with established organizations, to tackle any issues of national or international concern. This year, two 10-week fellowships will be awarded. Students conducting full-time work will be compensated \$6000, while those pro-

posing a part-time commitment will be awarded \$3000. Proposals will be entertained from both Undergraduate and Graduate students. The ACT Fellows will conclude their projects by engaging the Caltech community in an on-campus campaign to promote awareness of their social causes.

The ethos of the Y is to nurture within students such meaningful understanding of the world as is becoming of a future leader. The fellowship program hopes to encourage students to explore and embrace problems which affect our world today so that they can be a part of the solution tomorrow. Indeed when it comes to pressing issues facing society, it is never too early to act.

<u>Contents</u>	<u>page</u>
Announcements	1
Recent Events	2
Meet the ExComm	5
Ex ExComm Greetings	6
Voices of the Y Board	6
Coming Events	7
Calendar	8
The Caltech Y	8

Y Friends Lake Cachuma & Wineries Tour rescheduled

The recent storm has forced a delay of the Caltech Y Friends winter field trip. The outing, which includes a boat trip on Lake Cachuma and visits to two vineyards for lunch and wine tasting, has been rescheduled from January 26th to Saturday, February 23rd. Roundtrip bus transportation is provided from Caltech. A few spaces were available at press time – contact the Y office.

Caltech President & First Lady bestow another gift on Caltech Y

by Athena Castro, Y Executive Director

We are pleased to announce that President Chameau and his wife, Dr. Carmichael, have again made a generous gift to the Caltech Y. In their annual New Year message to the Caltech community, they stated:

"In the spirit of making a difference, we are dedicating resources traditionally allocated to holiday cards to the Caltech Y ACT Fellowships. This program offers students an opportunity to pursue an interest or passion in the area of community service or advocacy.

"We are looking forward to an exciting and prosperous 2008 for Caltech and for all members of our community."

We are honored that Dr. Chameau and Dr. Carmichael have chosen the Caltech Y as the recipient of their gift, and we deeply appreciate their support and encouragement of the Y and this exciting new program!

RISE Program report

by Alycen Chan, Y RISE Program Coordinator

The *RISE Program* has generated a lot of interest as the number of Caltech tutors has increased this year overall. Almost all of our 50 high school students now receive tutoring at a 1 to 1 ratio or a 2 to 1 ratio of students to tutors. This formula is helping both students and tutors build a relationship of trust and continued academic improvement for the PUSD students that participate in the program.

RISE is also looking forward to an upcoming trip to Pitzer College in late February as well as more visits during Spring Quarter

Recent Events (December – January)

Studenski recipient reports on flamenco dance studies in Spain Her experience conveyed via DVD

by Ben Turk '09, Y Board

Elena Hartoonian had always enjoyed the arts, music and dance, but as a Caltech student she had a difficult time fitting her growing interest in learning flamenco dance with her academic life. However, as the 2007 recipient of the Studenski Memorial Award granted by the Caltech Y, Elena was able to spend a month studying flamenco in Seville and Jerez, Spain, learning not only the intricacies of flamenco, but immersing herself in the whole culture of Spain.

"I took a month of a series of intensive Flamenco lessons at Taller Flamenc," Elena said. "As part of the program, I stayed with the colorful local Señora, Laura. She kept me well informed about local food, flamenco culture, and made me practice my Spanish. Laura lives only two blocks from the school. Every morning I'd walk to the studio, where I would take three hours of dance classes. After lunch and siesta, I'd go back to school for Spanish lessons, or to practice in one of the dance studios."

Having graduated last May, Elena was unable to return to campus to give the normal report back to the Y Board on her experience. So instead, at their Dec 3rd meeting, the Board viewed a DVD she created detailing her experiences studying, attending concerts and flamenco performances, and meeting



other flamenco enthusiasts.

"Yes, it was a dream come true to have the time and the opportunity to dance every single day for as long as I wanted, but this was only one part of my Studenski experience," Elena wrote. "I learned a great deal about myself, my values, my strengths and weaknesses, by being immersed in a different culture away from the familiar home and exploring the unfamiliar,

barely speaking the language. This trip helped me develop my philosophy of life. The result has been that, after about two months since returning from Spain, it was clear to me what path I was going to choose. I want to dance, but not for a living. I need to be creative, yet I need intellectual challenges. My plan is to continue my graduate studies in mathematics. I love teaching, so I want to teach mathematics at a two or four year college for a living, yet grow as a dancer and choreographer. Who knows, maybe one day I'll have my own little dance studio or open a diverse performing arts venue."

The Studenski Award is granted annually to a Caltech undergrad who could use time away from Caltech academics to better understand self, and to consider and explore directions for his or her future. The award was established in 1974 by the Studenski family in memory of Paul Studenski, a Caltech student killed in a car accident while on a cross county trip.

The \$4000 grant is awarded by the Student Relations Committee of the Caltech Y Board of Directors after a review of proposals and candidate interviews. Interested undergraduates are encouraged to apply during 2nd term. More details on the application process will be released in February.

Decompression still going strong!

by Ilia Shadrin '09, ExComm

On Saturday, Dec 8th, Caltech students enjoyed a night of good laughs and delicious food as hilarious episodes from the TV series, "The Office," were projected onto a wall on the top floor of Winnett Student Center for everyone's viewing pleasure. The theme of "The Office" was quite apparent, as incoming guests were greeted with a

stapler and scissors frozen in bowls of jello, one of the most memorable pranks depicted in "The Office." In fact, the bowls of jello were such a big hit that we had to place "DO NOT EAT" signs on the tables.

As always, the entire floor was absolutely packed, the cold weather making even more people want to eat inside. The turnout of the hungry

crowd was so large that the Excomm had to create a shopping list in the middle of the evening to replenish some food, something that hasn't happened in a long time. Towards the end of the night, many volunteers trickled in to tell Vickie and me that the night was a huge success – so, I'm glad to say that Decompression keeps going strong every term!

Explore LA Series events and a Pasadena Symphony program

Museum of Tolerance toured

by James Huang '09, ExComm

On December 2nd, as part of the Y's *Explore LA Series*, I led a group of seven Techers to the Museum of Tolerance. We got to see their main exhibit, a series of displays that guided us through the history leading up to the Holocaust and, then, through its end. Our tour continued with the Tolerance Center exhibit, which gave us a chance to think about issues of intolerance that still come up in the present day. It was quite engaging for all of us who went. I'd planned an hour in our trip for eating a late 2 PM lunch, but, when the time came, the group was so into the experience of the museum that we passed it up for a chance to hear firsthand the story of a Holocaust survivor who was speaking there.

Quite a day!

"The Nutcraker" draws student attention

by Molly Jones, Y Student
Activities Coordinator

The Caltech Y subsidized student tick-

ets for 40 graduate and undergraduate students to attend another event in the Y's *Explore LA Series* – the Pasadena Dance Theatre's December 15th production of "The Nutcracker". Leslie Lamberson, a Caltech graduate student in aeronautics, danced in the program.

The presentation, which was held at the historic San Gabriel Civic Auditorium, featured an ensemble cast of ninety dancers which brought Clara's magical dream to life with Cynthia Young's brilliant choreography and Tchaikovsky's timeless score. Soloist and principal role professional dancers were joined by children from the Pasadena community for this exquisite production.

Pasadena Symphony receives standing ovation!

by Molly Jones, Y Student
Activities Coordinator

The Caltech Y sold an outstanding 60 tickets to a presentation of Beethoven's 1st and 9th at the Pasadena Civic Auditorium.

Electrical engineering graduate student, Uday Khankhoje, made the fol-

lowing commentary about the evening's program:

"An ideal opportunity to enjoy the end of term presented itself in the form of the Pasadena Symphony's performance of Beethoven's 1st and 9th symphonies on December 8. The choice of music was interesting, giving one a glimpse of the evolution in Beethoven's music, from his earlier symphony No. 1, to his last (complete) symphony, the 9th, spanning almost a quarter of a century in music composition.

"A lecture preceded the concert and it attempted to give a background to the music that was to follow, although, going by the standards set by such lectures in past concerts, this one fell short of the mark. However, all was forgiven once the music started. While I'd characterize the rendition of the 1st as elegant and at times even delicate, the exuberance of the 9th, especially of the famous fourth movement, was unmistakable, almost elevating. It was only fitting that, at the end of the concert, the musicians were given a standing ovation."

Second annual DC Policy Trip a success

Students explore US policy and decision making in nations capital

by Jon Tsai '10, ExComm

The Caltech Y took a group of over 20 students to Washington, DC for 4 days (Dec 18-21) during the winter break for the Y's second annual *DC Policy Trip*. The group stayed in the William Penn House just a few blocks from Capitol Hill and the National Mall.

The students met with lobbyists, policy makers, and alumni, and visited sites such as the National Academy of Sciences, the National Institutes of Health, and the Department of Energy to learn more about public policy.

The group held thought provoking and

informational discussions with each guest to learn more about the role of scientists and science in the capital.

Most worked first hand in their respective departments and dealt directly with congressmen and policy makers.



The group also visited the national monuments and museums to get a taste of Washington, DC.

Overall the trip was a success, and all the students left with a better understanding of science policy and a good view of the nation's capital.

ExComm holds retreat

Arrowhead serves as site of winter-term planning retreat

by Peter Liu '09, ExComm

At our first Ex-Comm retreat in a few years, a group of the Ex-Comm went to a small cabin in Arrowhead, over the weekend of December 15-16, to begin planning for programs during winter term. Many of the ideas were extensions of the new programs this year, like the *Explore LA* series and the *Life Skills* series. Part of the planning involved simply setting dates and

deadlines in order to get momentum as the term began.

In addition, we also began brainstorming for more programs we would like to see happen. The range of ideas spanned pretty broadly, from trying to get a program for undergrads, to donating extra board funds to charity at the end of every term, to more SASS speakers, and to a resounding "more international trips!"

It was clear throughout the retreat that, besides our little airplane-throwing, movie-watching, and ice-skating fun, our Ex-Comm consistently and dependably stepped up to leadership positions, took initiative to start new programs, and above all, had the desire to serve their friends on campus alongside other friends. I think we were all glad we went.

Commemorating MLK

"Intelligence Plus Character..."

by Greg Fletcher, Y Student
Activities Director

The week following the national MLK holiday once again featured numerous programs for Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Commemoration Week at Caltech. Coordinated by the Cultural Programming Group, which consists of The Women's Center, International Student Programs, Minority Student Education, and the Caltech Y, the selected theme of the week was a quote from Dr. King, "The function of education is to teach one to think intensively and to think critically. Intelligence plus character – that is the goal of true education." Events included:

Tuesday, Jan 22

I Have A Dream — Public showings of Dr. King's most famous speech, "*I Have a Dream*", were featured in Chandler Dining Hall and in the Franklin Dryden Room at the Caltech Y. Many watched the nine-minute speech to discover why it is still significant today. A display with the text was provided for those interested in following along.

Wednesday, Jan 23

Jeopardizing the Dream: Education and Lost Opportunity — Professor Morgan Kousser, Caltech Professor of History and Social Science

Even before the Civil War, African-

Americans, realizing that separate education could never be equal, sought and, in some instances, achieved integrated public education. That quest intensified during Reconstruction and, in the North, succeeded, principally in the 1880s. After a long period of defeats and further struggle, integrationists appeared to triumph in the Supreme Court's 1954 Brown decision and subsequent federal court decisions. Since 1954, school integration has been second only to abortion rights as a target of legal "conservatives," and, in the last session of the Supreme Court, they came close to victory — within a single vote of absolutely banning all moves toward integration by local school boards in Louisville and Seattle and, by extension, all moves toward integration in every publicly-supported educational institution. Has Dr. King's dream of an integrated society been abandoned or even reversed? Caltech Prof. Kousser prepared remarks and led discussion over lunch on America's continuing dilemma.

Thursday, Jan 24

Eyes On The Prize — Michael Green – JPL staff and one of the Producers of the "*Eyes On The Prize*" series

Many gathered in the Frank Dryden Room at the Caltech Y for lunch and discussion led by Michael Green, one of the producers of the amazing docu-

mentary, "*Eyes On The Prize*," that chronicles the rise of the Civil Rights Movement. "*Eyes On The Prize*" has been called the most comprehensive television documentary on the American Civil Rights Movement. It is described as an opportunity to relive the pain, the protest, the sacrifice, and the triumph of the grass roots struggle for racial equality.

Friday, Jan 25

MLK Week Keynote Speech: *Civil Rights & Higher Education* — Professor Gary Orfield, Co-Director, Civil Rights Project, UCLA

Professor Orfield was the co-founder and director of the Harvard Civil Rights Project, and is now co-director of Civil Rights Project /El Proyecto de CRP at UCLA. His central interest has been the development and implementation of social policy, with a central focus on the impact of policy on equal opportunity for success in American society. Professor Orfield has been involved in the development of governmental policy, has served as an expert witness in several dozen court cases related to his research, including the University of Michigan Supreme Court case, which upheld the policy of affirmative action in 2003, and has been called to give testimony in civil rights suits by the United States Department of Justice and many civil

(continued)

[Recent Events \(continued\)](#)

rights, legal services, and educational organizations. He is a member of the National Academy of Education. One hundred people joined us at the Athenaeum to hear the keynote address by Dr. Orfield.

Saturday Jan. 26

MLK Service Project — In an effort

to transform Dr. King's teachings into a day of service and to make a tangible difference in our community, the Caltech Y coordinated a series of service projects open to students. It was a great opportunity for many to get out into the community to "practice" what they had heard "preached."

Groups volunteered at Terraces at Park Marino retirement community, Rosemary Children's Center, and the Boy's and Girl's Club of Pasadena. Transportation, meals, and t-shirts were provided.

Strawberry Peak Hike proves rewarding

by Abhishek Saha, Grad

On Jan 21, ten Techers headed off to the San Gabriel Mountains for a Y-organized day hike. It involved a short drive from Caltech into the mountains. There were two cars and, because the start and end points of the hike were not the same, a car shuttle was arranged. The hike started around 9 AM at the Camp Colby trailhead just off Upper Big Tujunga road, included an ascent of 6164-ft-high Strawberry peak and ended at Red Box. Though it was cloudy, there were several beautiful views along the way and, around an

hour from the start, it started snowing! This was somewhat unexpected but made the scenery look even more beautiful. Some of the participants had never been in snow before and were very excited.

However, the highlight of the hike was the challenging scramble up the east face of Strawberry Peak. This involved class 3 rock climbing and was a thrilling and unforgettable experience. Though many had never done rock scrambling before, everyone made it to the peak safely. The descent on the other side was quick and the hike was

over around 4:30pm. It had been a strenuous but fun-filled affair and everyone had a good time.



[Meet the ExComm](#)

Each month the Caltech Y News interviews a of the Student Executive Committee (ExComm)

Kenny Oslund '08

*by Molly Jones, Y Student
Activities Coordinator*

Kenny's first experience with the Caltech Y was a distinctly unforgettable one. He and his fellow Y-Hike peers were relaxing on the edge of a pristine lake deep within Sequoia National Park when a bear came into view along the shoreline. It was an exciting sight until the bear continued progressing in the group's direction. With only 50 feet remaining between this massive animal and themselves, the group's shouts and a few small pebbles fortunately encouraged the bear to alter its path. While disconcerting to some, this experience fueled Kenny's love for backpacking and the Caltech Y.

Kenny has been involved with the Y since the first days of his freshman

year. In addition to his service on the ExComm, Kenny has led and participated in countless Y activities. A few of the memorable trips Kenny has coordinated have included: community service trips to the Los Angeles Arboretum, the Boys and Girls Club of Pasadena, and the Huntington Gardens as projects during multiple Make-a-



Kenny leading a Y hike

Difference Days; a group of backpackers during the 2007 Y-Hike; and a group of wayward kayakers during a Freshmen Orientation Trip. What Kenny appreciates most about the Y is the variety of activities offered and the fact that anyone can be involved.

Academically, Kenny has focused his attention on computation and neural systems. He has enjoyed exciting research opportunities on campus as he has worked with the DARPA autonomous (self driven) vehicle project, and robotic and control systems experiments. Kenny is hoping to pursue graduate school in the future, but plans to work in computer programming for a year or two after graduating this spring.

Greetings from an Ex ExComm

Nathan Wozny '03

Although my undergraduate studies in physics and economics occupied much of my time at Caltech, I quickly discovered the unique and welcoming community of the Caltech Y. The Y Hike and other social and community service events attracted me to the organization, and I became a part of the ExComm by the end of my first year. My involvement deepened as I led hikes, coordinated what is now the RISE tutoring program, and became



the Vice President and later President of the ExComm.

Inspired by my love of tutoring, I sought an opportunity to teach high school after receiving my B.S. in 2003. I joined the faculty at Mayfield Senior School in Pasadena, where I taught physics for two years. I am now pursuing graduate work at Princeton University, where I am studying the economics of secondary education. After Princeton, I hope to teach at the college level.

As I reflect on the path I have taken since graduating from Caltech, I cannot help but think of how my experience with the Y helped to shape the decisions I have made and the way I live my life. The dedicated students, enthusiastic and supportive staff, energetic board members, and generous supporters of the Y continue to inspire



me to be an active world citizen. My own experiences on service trips and on the ExComm helped me to build confidence and leadership skills that have proven to be an invaluable complement to Caltech's rigorous education. I will always look back on my experiences at the Y with fondness and appreciation. It is satisfying to know that the Y continues to fulfill its mission as it reaches out to the Caltech community and beyond.

Voices of the Y Board

Susan Murakami '75

I became a member of the Caltech Y Board at Frank Dryden's request — at least the phone call was made by Frank — I've no idea whose idea it was, originally.

Although I had not utilized the Y as a student (my spouse, Lee Fisher '78 had), I did recognize the tremendous role it plays in making the lives of Caltech students "more livable" in many ways and thought I would be nice to contribute our volunteer efforts to the "cause". Also, on a more selfish side, it is a great way to interact with the students and to meet community people who are interested in Caltech but have no other connection to the Institute. Volunteering for the Y ties in

nicely with my involvement on the Caltech Alumni Association Board and the Gnome Board. I've enjoyed it immensely and hope I am making some contribution.

About me: Caltech alumna of 1975; old enough to have college age children, including a "super-senior" son at Caltech and daughter at University of Edinburgh; went to University of Michigan for medical school; trained at Cedars Sinai Medical Center and Memorial Sloan Kettering; then came back to California to practice pathology at Huntington Memorial Hospital here in Pasadena.

One of the surgeons on the hospital staff (an MIT grad) was ambitious

enough to organize a six-week summer program at HMH for Caltech students interested in medicine. (It had to be a clinician to get everyone on board — I don't think I, as a pathologist, could have managed). The students do rotate through the department of pathology, so I meet several in the course of each summer.

Since we now have an empty nest, I'm currently: active on the Caltech Y Board, Caltech Alumni Assn. Board and Seminar Day Committee, Gnome Board, and Caltech Associates Board; serving as an Caltech Alumni Area Representative; and helping out at Tom Mannion's cooking class.

Coming Events (February)

Winter Term Programs — Continuing!

by Greg Fletcher, Y Student Activities Director

With winter upon us, the ExComm, Y-Outdoors, Community Service Coordinators, and Social Activism Speaker Series Committee have all shifted gears for another season of events. Coming soon:

- The **Explore LA Series** is looking to start the year with a repeat performance of *Wicked* at the Pantages Theatre followed by a trip to the *LA Philharmonic* at the Disney Concert Hall. The *Explore LA Series* encourages students to join the Caltech Y on an adventure each month, from the mountains to the ocean, exploring museums, shows, cultural experiences, sporting events, outdoor adventures, and more.
- The **Housner Life Skills Series** is working on programs looking at basic law and at photography. The *Life Skills Series* encourages students to join the Caltech Y to learn more about important skills that are of value here and beyond our walls.
- Our leaders from the **Y-Outdoors** committee are looking into some winter adventures in the are – hoping to do some snowshoeing and looking into a trip to Bryce National Park. *Adventure 101* keeps things close to home

with a series of short workshops and presentations right on the Caltech Campus. They will start the year with **Great Hikes in the Greater LA Area** – revealing some of the hidden treasures in easy access for those who know where to look. This month will also feature a rare *Full Moon Hike* with an eclipse bonus. Y-Outdoors programs provide Caltech students, including novices and experienced outdoor enthusiasts, an exciting opportunity to explore with guidance.

- The **Social Activism Speaker Series (SASS)** will continue with a screening of “*Made In America*,” a documentary which follows Latina immigrants working in L.A. sweatshops. The event will also feature the filmmaker, activist Almudena Caracedo. As always, the Social Activism Speaker Series will focus attention on current social and political issues giving students the opportunity to

explore how they might shape the world.

- With the election season in full swing, the Caltech Y is hoping to do a results viewing on the new projection system in the Frank Dryden Room. There have been many great discussions at past events about the elections, and we hope this forum will feature another opportunity to stimulate discussion around major current events.
- Of course, winter is also a time of lead up to some of our larger programs. Coordination meetings and information meetings are being scheduled for **Black History Month, Alternative Spring Break, Make A Difference Day** and **International Week** – as well as search and selection processes for **The ACT Fellowship** and the **Studentski Award**.

Much is underway at the Y!

Y Friends Events

by Chris Kealey, Y Marketing & Development Director

Lake Cachuma & Wineries Tour

A January storm forced a delay of the Caltech Y Friends winter field trip. The outing, which includes a morning boat trip on Lake Cachuma and visits to two vinyards for lunch and wine tasting, has been rescheduled from January 26th to Saturday, February 23rd. Roundtrip bus transportation is provided from Caltech. A few spaces were available at press time – contact the Y office.

Winter Friends Dinner

The Caltech Y welcomes Dr. Richard Murray as the speaker of the Winter Friends Dinner on February 28th. Dr. Murray will provide us with a first-hand account of “Team Caltech’s” entry in the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA) Grand Challenge, the off-road race of robotic vehicles.

“Team Caltech” is a group of graduates, undergraduates and JPL engineers who worked to conceive, design, build and optimize Alice, Caltech’s entry in

the most recent DARPA Challenges. Alice, a converted Ford E-350 4x4 Van employing seven computer servers, two GPS units and five lasers, will be available for viewing outside the Athenaeum on the night of the Dinner.

Join us February 28th, as Professor Murray and members of “Team Caltech” delight us with stories of Alice and the DARPA Challenges.

Dinner tickets are \$60 each. More information can be found at:

<http://www.caltechY.org/support/events>

CALENDAR OF UPCOMING EVENTS

Note: See [Caltech Y website](#) for additional information and schedule updates

February

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
					1	2
3	4 RISE Tutoring Y Board Mtg	5 Super Tuesday Viewing ACT Applications Due ExComm Mtg RISE Tutoring Boys & Girls Club Tutoring	6 RISE Tutoring	7 RISE Tutoring	8	9
10	11	12 ExComm Mtg RISE Tutoring Boys & Girls Club Tutoring	13 RISE Tutoring	14 RISE Tutoring	15	16 Union Station
17	18	19 ExComm Mtg Boys & Girls Club Tutoring Explore LA – WICKED	20 RISE Tutoring PALAC Nanotechnology	21 RISE Tutoring	22	23 Friends Tour Lake Cachuna/ Wineries
24	25 RISE Tutoring	26 ExComm Mtg RISE Tutoring Boys & Girls Club Tutoring	27 RISE Tutoring	28 RISE Tutoring Friends Dinner Richard Murray	29	

The Caltech Y

The Caltech Y is an independent 501c3 organization formally affiliated with the California Institute of Technology. The Y mission is to enrich student life and challenge students to grow into responsible citizens of the world.

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Molly Jones - Student Activities Coordinator
Carmelita Hearn - Administrative Assistant

Board of Directors

Executive Committee

Carolyn Ash - Chair
Lee Fisher - Vice Chair
Peter Mason - Treasurer
Barbara Heublein - Secretary
Peter Liu - Student ExComm President

Members (* indicates Student Executive Committee)

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