

The California Tech

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I HAVEN'T BEEN PAID FOR MY WORK IN THREE YEARS. WHAT'S UP WITH THAT?

KENNY THAI | LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

It was a simpler time three years ago. On March 3rd, 2020, students submitted their assignments they wrote up on sheets of paper to physical drop boxes, the most interesting thing that happened on campus in the past two weeks was a party put on by the undergrad house we now know as Venerable, and the article with title "Coronavirus Cases Pop Up Across U.S. Over Weekend" wasn't a big enough deal to be the first thing you see as you picked up the day's issue of the *The California Tech*.

Looking back now, it seems like so long ago, because it was! On this day three years ago, three quarters of our current undergrad population was still in high school! Hopefully, this puts into perspective how long it's been since I've been promised a wage I still haven't received.

The March 3rd, 2020 issue was the first one I worked on for the *Tech*, and at that time, the pay rates were made very clear to us by the business manager. As a page editor, I would be paid \$30 for my work on the issue. The long hours I worked the night I helped prepare the publication put my effective hourly rate well below minimum wage, but since our publication is funded entirely by the dues each undergraduate pays to our student council, ASCIT, I was glad I was being paid at all.

Of course, this would be the last issue we would publish from on campus. I wasn't paid immediately, but at the time, losing out on \$30 wasn't my primary concern. Most of us working on the *Tech* shared this outlook, so as I got sporadic updates on the earnings I had accrued and wasn't paid out over the next year, I assumed that things would work themselves out once we got back on campus.

When we returned to campus at the start of the 2021-2022 academic year, I asked our business manager at the time about the status of payments for our contributors over the past two years. I was told that he didn't know how to access the account that would be used to pay the *Tech's* contributors.

We later organized a meeting with the administrators responsible for payment distribution. By this point, all the financial records for payment had long since been submitted to them, we were told by the administrators that Caltech's bureaucracy is set up to pay for million dollar microscopes, not twenty dollar article payments, and that the process would require more time. There were additional legal complications due to the payments being linked to work that had occurred in a previous tax year. They said they would get things resolved within four to six weeks.



Publishing this the same day as my first issue was a coincidence I had to take advantage of!

Well, it's been nine months since they said that. In that time, we occasionally heard rumblings of progress - during the summer of 2022, contributors were asked for tax information. We were also asked if we were okay with receiving our backlogged payments and all future payments in the form of... gift cards. But as you may have guessed by the fact that I'm writing this article, neither of these things have led to any of us getting paid our promised wages. As of this week, the payment procurement forms were resent, though whether or not this will lead to any of us actually getting paid is yet to be seen. Let's hope it does...

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Years since I've been paid:
3
Days since I've been paid:
1095

REINSTATE, IT CANNOT WAIT: A COLLECTIVE CALL TO ACTION FOR AN INTERNATIONAL SCHOLAR

ABDULLAH FAROOQ (G5 BIOLOGY · INTERNATIONAL STUDENT),
FAYTH HUI TAN (G5 BIOLOGY · INTERNATIONAL STUDENT),
SAM PONNADA (G3 ASTRONOMY · INTERNATIONAL STUDENT),
NADIA SURYAWINATA (G2 BIOLOGY · INTERNATIONAL STUDENT),
ELISABETTA BENAZZI (POSTDOC CHEMISTRY · INTERNATIONAL SCHOLAR),
VARUN WADIA (G6 BIOLOGY · INTERNATIONAL STUDENT),
ZITONG WANG (G5 BIOLOGY · INTERNATIONAL STUDENT)

Last Friday, on the 24th of February, a group of about 40 Caltech graduate students and postdoctoral researchers delivered a petition signed by over 400 of our colleagues, in support of an international graduate student. Facing unjust retaliatory action from the Institute, the student risks losing their graduate student status at Caltech permanently, and with it, their legal immigration status in the US. Fully unfurled, the petition stretched seven feet long. Organized by our nascent union campaign, Caltech Grad Students and Postdocs United (CGPU), we rallied in support of the petition's main demand: to unconditionally and immediately reinstate the student into the graduate program.

The student, who is in the Biochemistry and Molecular Biophysics (BMB) graduate option, repeatedly had others repurpose and take credit for their work. In June and July 2021, these experiences, combined with overwork and verbal abuse,

eventually resulted in serious physical and mental health issues and several trips to the ER.

Despite these dire circumstances and injuries, the graduate office has done nothing to effectively intervene on the student's behalf. Graduate students are often told that part of the Graduate Office's role is to mediate student-advisor disputes, but the student's grievances were not met with attempts at remediation. Instead, the student was required to take unpaid medical leave—or else graduate within two terms and lose the research credit and publications from their work over the past 4 years. While on leave, they lost access to the lab they worked in, their research records, data, and materials, and their stipend—all while faced with heavy medical expenses. At the direction of Caltech's General Counsel, other students (including those who are part of the Graduate Student Council) have been barred from mediating on their behalf.



To show support for the student, a group of graduate students and postdocs delivered a petition to the office of the Dean of Graduate Studies

The urgency of this situation came to a head at the beginning of February. The Institute delayed the student's re-enrollment for so long that their F1 visa status was allowed to lapse. Now, the student depends on an F1-OPT (optional practical training) visa extension to legally remain in the US. If not reinstated within the next 2 months, the student will lose their immigration status in the US. The exigency of this timeline, and the continued stonewalling by senior administration, spurred CGPU to take public collective action to demand accountability for a member of our own community.

| Continued on Page 4 |

ASCIT WINTER ELECTIONS: THIS WEEK!

Elections for Caltech's undergrad student council will be held on Monday, March 6th. The positions being elected are:

- Interhouse Committee Chair
- Board of Control Chair
- Board of Control Secretary
- Conduct Review Committee Student Co-Chair
- Tech Editor

Statements from candidates in this election can be found on Pages 5 through 7 of this issue.

NEWS TICKER

- 3/4: Venerable Interhouse**
Also known as "OPI", the party's theme will be "Once Upon a Time"
More on OPI on Page 12.
- 3/10: Last day of classes**
- 3/11: Dabney Interhouse**
Also known as "DEI", the party's theme will be "Deep Sea Horror"
More on DEI on Page 12.
- 3/17: End of Winter Term**
- 3/18 - 4/2: Spring Break**
- 4/3: First day of Spring Term**

PAGE INTERHOUSE: EDC DOPPELGÄNGER?

THANHTRINH NGUYEN | EVENTS

Page's Interhouse Party was held on Saturday, November 19th from 10PM to 2AM in Page courtyard. We interviewed Arya Mevada, the former Page House President, about planning the event and his hopes for the outcome.

Q: What was your theme, and how did you bring it to life?

A: Our theme was Music Festival, and like most music festivals, we focused on getting a lot of lights and colors and such around the event. We got a lot of inspiration from EDC and had a fantastic and creative group of painters who came up with really cool designs for the event. On top of that, we got creative with the lighting to make it feel very dynamic and bright. We also had themed drinks that really complemented the rest of the party.

Q: What were your favorite things to look forward to?

A: My favorite part of interhouse is that everyone from all around campus come to one place and get to dance and vibe together. We had awesome DJ's that really made great playlists and were able to really have music that appealed to everyone. I loved the dancing and the big crowd because it really has a feeling like no other on campus.

Q: What makes this party unique from other houses?

A: I think that the beauty of Page interhouse is that to us it feels like a reflection of what Pageboys enjoy doing, but we still work hard to put on an interhouse that everyone will enjoy.

Q: What was done differently this year from other years, and is there anything that's likely to change in the future?

A: This year we modified the dance floor that we usually do, and it had multiple levels and was a lot more complicated than previous years. It was

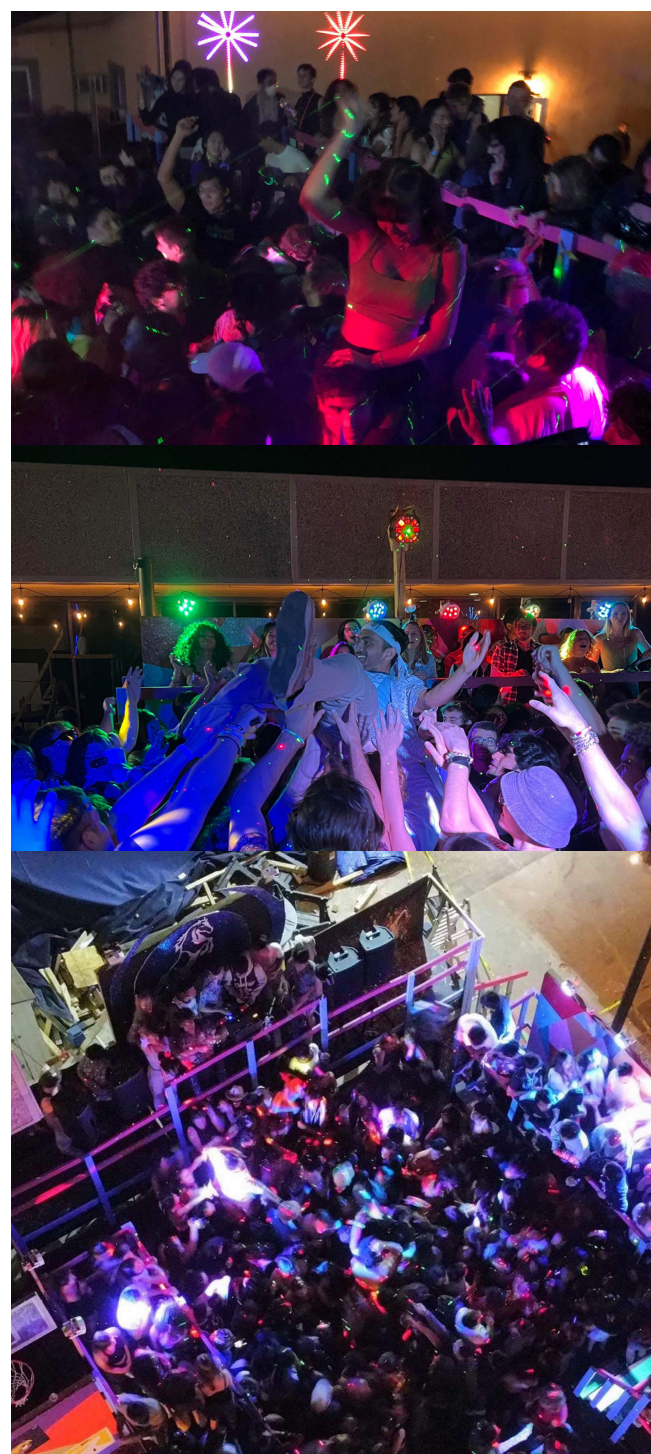
a really cool design and made our party different than in previous years and gave the partygoers a place to chill if they did not want to be part of the intense dancing on the main floor. As for the future, there are definitely discussions on how to make the party itself and the preparation better for everyone. Many people in our house have some awesome ideas on how to make that become a reality too. I am excited to see what comes out of it!

Q: What are some of the things you did to prepare? How was turnout; was it better or worse than expected, and why?

A: To prepare, we obviously had the task of building the dance floor, setting up lighting, making posters, and making the drinks and food menus. It was really important this year because there were not COVID capacity limits that we had extra drinks, food, water etc. We saw awesome turnout; it's always a good sign when there are too many people on a dance floor in my mind.

Q: What was it like being the first interhouse of the year? Were there any complications you were worried about being the first?

A: There are always a few complications with being the first one. The first is time: we just have to rush and build the party as fast as we can, which can be really stressful. Secondly, we definitely set the tone for how parties are run, expectations for the party and future interhouses can definitely be set and that comes with the entire process, from how construction is done to the kinds of cool things that are built and made to how problems are solved during the party. I think we did a really good job of that, and the parties that came after us were able to learn from our mistakes and throw even better parties which was awesome to see.



RAVERY: THE LAST AIRBENDER

ARDEN SHAO | EVENTS

Avery's Interhouse Party ("Ravery") was held on Saturday January 21st from 10 PM to 2AM in Avery's courtyard and dining hall. We interviewed Parul Singh (former Avery Social Director, current Avery Chancellor) and Clara Wang (former Avery Social Director) about the planning process and the Interhouse itself.

Q: What was your theme and how did you go about bringing it to life?

A: Our theme was "Avatar: The Last Airbender" but for Avery. So it was "Avery: the Last Airbender". We had Avatar-themed foods corresponding to each nation and we also had Avatar-themed games corresponding to each nation. So we had a Water Nation game that was like a fishing game. We had a shooting game where you shoot the evil Fire Nation characters. So we had a few themed games, themed foods, and themed drinks at our bar.

Q: What were some of your favorite things about the Interhouse?

A: I guess we had a bunch of fun food. We had noodles. We go pretty high effort with our food every year. So we were equally high effort this year. We had noodles, egg rolls, and boba there. I think it's cute how everyone gets invested in the games because we have plushie prizes. And so we had a raffle ticket system this time where you play the games and get a certain amount of tickets whenever you win and you can go buy plushies. People were very excited about that – it was nice to see.

Q: I know Dabney had a theory the plushies were so overpriced, they were only there to embezzle money from the Interhouse budget to get Avery extra plushies. Is that true?

A: By the end of the Interhouse, all of the plushies were won. We did manage to give away all of the plushies. People went hard for them.

Q: Avery Interhouse in particular did not have an Alternate Interhouse. Do you know why that was?

A: I think it's because someone told me that we have so much food, we don't need an Alternate Interhouse. I think the Alternate Interhouse is usually for the non-drunk experience. And I think Avery Interhouse is pretty interactive for people who are not intoxicated because we have games and a lot of food. And Alternate Interhouses usually in Avery dining hall, which is already being taken up by our party.

Q: What makes Avery Interhouse different from other Interhouse parties?

A: It's kind of a carnival setup every time, just themed to whatever theme it is.

Q: What was done differently this year from other years and is there anything that is likely to change in the future?

A: We had a dance floor this year in the dining hall. I think we had a dance floor in pre-pandemic years also. We just brought it back this year because last year we weren't allowed to have anything indoors. In future years, I don't know, I guess our new social directors will come up with a twist.

Q: How were the turnouts? Did you get more or less people than expected?

A: I think it was about as much as we expected. It was good, and it was nice that it was not during another Interhouse like it was last year. So, I think we had a very good turnout. Avery had a good time. Everything was pretty well-attended. The food we ran out of and the games were well-attended the whole time. The dance floor takes a while to warm up, but I think it got pretty well-populated at the end.



RICKETTS INTERHOUSE — A ONCE IN A LIFETIME TRIP TO CAMP ROWDY!

CHI CAP | EVENTS

The notoriously exciting Ricketts Interhouse — Camp Rowdy — was an explosion of unbridled joy on Saturday, February 4th, 2023, from 10PM to 2AM. We interviewed AJ Torres and Anna Mortari, two of the three Ricketts Social Vice-Presidents, about the process of bringing Camp Rowdy to life.

Q: What was your theme, and how did you go about bringing it to life?

A: Camp Rowdy was a beautiful summer camp situated in the heart of a mystic forest. Welcoming campers from all corners of the world, we had a little something for everyone. Outside, campers danced under the stars and floral canopy of the forest, as the DJ blasted music from a classic camp log cabin. A nine-foot-tall mushroom house was opened just for this special time, for campers to explore and appreciate the enchantments of the forest. Campers got dinner in the dining hall, relaxing in the night-time forest on cushy benches around a crackling fake fire pit. It is very important to note the fire pit was fake. It was fake! Finally, campers made beaded bracelets surrounded by thousands of bright flowers in the lounge.

At midnight, strange things began to occur. Tragedy struck: a camp counselor warned of something lurking in the woods, and mid-announcement, was taken by the monster of the woods. The eldritch being took control, turning the enchanted paradise into our worst nightmares.

THE CRC IS BACK!

MICHAEL GUTIERREZ

One of the best things about Caltech is the autonomy that students are afforded. It's no exaggeration to say life as we know it would not be possible without the Honor Code. We often take this implicit trust between students, faculty, and staff, for granted. But as in any relationship, this trust can start to degrade over time if it is not reassessed and reaffirmed.

By many accounts, the past few years have been a rough patch -- owing in large part to the pandemic, among several other factors. One of the most notable yet least discussed manifestations of this was the five-year hiatus of the Conduct Review Committee (CRC). The CRC is a panel of students, faculty, and staff which hears cases of non-academic honor code violations. In essence, it is a counterpart to the Board of Control (BoC). Before this term, the CRC had not convened since 2018; instead, cases were being routed directly to the Deans' Office or the Office of Residential Experience (ORE) for investigation, removing any avenues of student input in the process.

"If the student CRC reps don't really get to be a part of deciding consequences or outcomes in a meaningful way, it's basically a longer version of saying the deans can do as they please," said Pranay Satya (Ricketts, '24).

But for now, things are on the mend. Over the past few months, the official procedures for the operation of the CRC have received an overhaul and rewrite, thanks primarily to the efforts of undergrads Winter Pearson (Dabney, '24) and Jonathan Booker (Ricketts, '25) and Associate Dean Kristin Weyman. The new procedures were recently amended to the Bylaws of the Associated Students of Caltech, inc. (ASCIT) by vote of the undergraduate population.

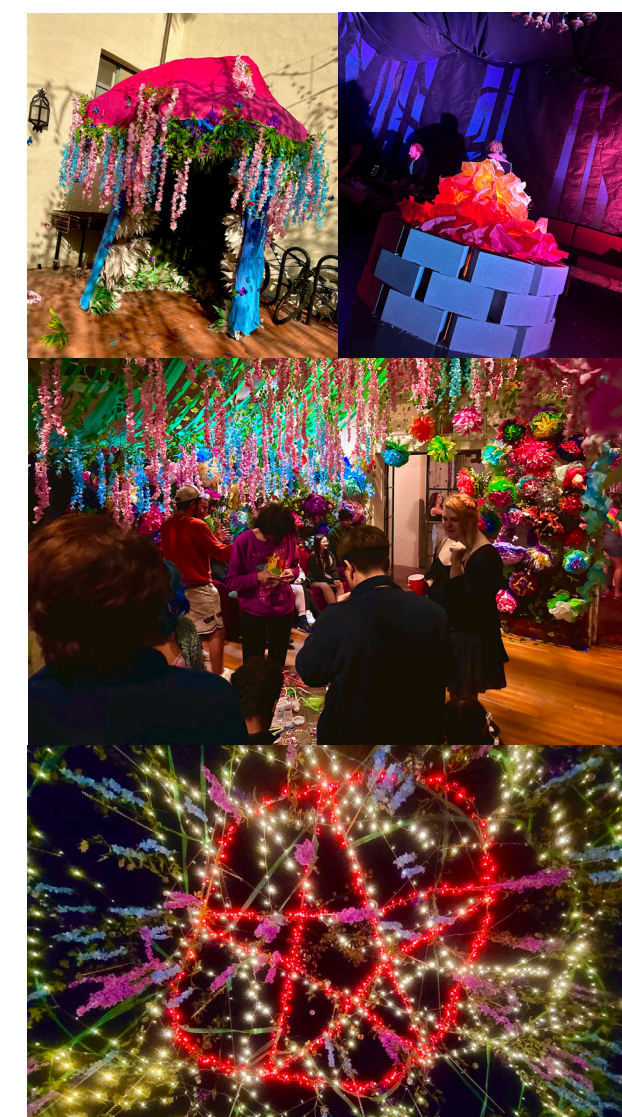
Q: What was done differently this year from other years, and is there anything that is likely to change in the future?

A: Construction was a new element this year. Ricketts needed all sorts of approvals and trainings to construct the outdoor canopy, drop the indoor ceilings, build the cabin/DJ booth, and create the giant mushroom. Actually doing construction greatly helped us bring the vision to life, and we'll likely have similar elements in the future!

Q: What was the most difficult part of the Interhouse preparation/decoration process?

A: The better question is what wasn't difficult. We had to hire roofers to install the outdoor canopy. In addition, the drop ceilings were painstakingly assembled from the top of 15-foot ladders. Our dining hall murals were massive: they were hung in only three pieces. The tissue paper flowers, fake florals, vines, and greenery were individually created and attached to the netting. It took a true army of Skurves to put this Interhouse together!

We definitely worked up until the final moments before Interhouse, especially on the bigger set pieces. We really gave our all to create all the decorations, and, in the end, it all came together beautifully.



The elected student representatives to the CRC from the eight houses (plus one unaffiliated rep) have received training. And, finally, the CRC has started hearing cases again.

From the student perspective, this all comes as a huge sigh of relief -- and especially so for Pearson, the current Student Co-Chair of the CRC. "I think it's wonderful that we've been able to update the CRC process to allow us to sit more cases," they chirped. "I'm certainly glad to see how those changes will allow a greater degree of participation from the whole Caltech community in resolving non-academic Honor Code concerns -- undergrads included!"

Booker, the current ASCIT Secretary and co-author of the revised bylaws, explained why he was first motivated to reexamine the old CRC process.

"Barely three months into the year, five friends of mine -- one of them a frosh -- were kicked out of campus housing as a result of a Deans' investigation," Booker told the *Tech*. The incident being investigated caused no physical or personal damage to any member of the Caltech community. "Several student leaders, the Interhouse Committee (IHC), and even a faculty member petitioned for this sanction, which was obviously overkill, to be modified or lessened, especially since it was a first offense. But they stood firm."

That incident was one of several controversial decisions handed down by administration last year without student input, despite the fact that most of them fell within the CRC's jurisdiction. For example, another particularly high-profile case was the ORE's investigation of an "underwear dance party" which took place in Ricketts Hovse, deemed to be a violation of the Code of Conduct. The resulting sanctions, which were uni-

laterally decided on by residential life staff, included a complete cancellation of Ricketts' social events for the Winter 2022 term.

For many undergrads, who already felt that their opinions were being discarded in favor of decreasing Institute liability, these actions served only to highlight the administration's detachment from the realities of student life.

"The traditions and social activities that breathe life into the Caltech undergraduate experience are seeming more and more like relics of the past," lamented Adèle Bastürk (Lloyd, '25).

Fortunately, the revised CRC procedures were built to make handling similar incidents far easier for both students and administration in the future. One of the major functional changes is the number of committee members required for a full hearing, which has been decreased from five to three (plus the non-voting co-chairs). This maintains the ratio of committee members at 1 student : 1 faculty : 1 staff while significantly decreasing the amount of "cat-herding" necessary.

Equally important is the obsolescence of the "routing committee," which was a panel consisting of the Dean of Students, the Associate Dean of Students, the director of ORE, the BoC chair, and the CRC student co-chair. The routing committee was previously responsible for deciding if new cases should be handled by the Deans, the ORE, or the CRC. Of course, in recent years, nothing was ever sent to the CRC. But according to Pearson, this was nothing more than an unfortunate practicality. Given the logistical difficulty of scheduling seven CRC members plus the respondents for a full hearing, the staff on the routing committee tended to prefer the quicker option of handling time-sensitive cases themselves.



Scan this QR code to view the revised ASCIT bylaws and Honor Code Handbook.

Link:

<https://bit.ly/3y4y1G3>

Instead, the role of the routing committee will be carried out by a dedicated staff member in the Deans' office. While at face value this might seem a worse arrangement than before, it's worth noting that the Deans' office has no incentives to divert cases from the CRC. In fact, they would much prefer that their schedules remain uncluttered by minor investigations.

"In the spirit of shared-governance, the deans' office is trying to engage students, faculty, and staff in the decision-making process, to help uphold Caltech's community standards," wrote Dean Weyman, the faculty Co-Chair of the CRC.

The pan-institutional accomplishment of researching, implementing, and ratifying these changes to the CRC represents a significant recent milestone in student-admin relations. "I think it's really important that students are involved in enforcing the honor code just as much as administration is," said Saren Daghlian (Avery, '24). "This is a very welcome development."

REINSTATE, IT CANNOT WAIT: A COLLECTIVE CALL TO ACTION FOR AN INTERNATIONAL SCHOLAR

| From Page 1 |

The student's situation is one that international scholars in the US are likely all too familiar with. Faced with the precarity of their immigration status and isolation from their support networks at home, they are often compelled to throw themselves into their work, in the hopes that being the ideal researcher leads to crucial continued support from their advisors. This leaves international scholars especially vulnerable in the already unequal power dynamics of advising relationships, with a recent study by Nature finding that international researchers are especially targeted with highly malicious forms of abuse. Too many international scholars are familiar with the feeling of deferring their own needs, health, and aspirations for the sake of building a life and career in the US. This case served as a grim reminder for us: no amount of exceptional scientific ability or deferential behavior to your advisor can or will guarantee your safety. For many of the international researchers that make up CGPU, this student's case hits a deeply existential nerve: the truth is, this student

could easily have been any one of us.

And yet, in the face of this reality, and in our recognition of our individual precarity, many of us find strength and not fear. If no amount of individual effort will ever grant us the safety we seek, then we will work together to make sure that we secure it. Our situation is already precarious, involvement in organizing notwithstanding. If we can be fired at a moment's notice, if institutional safeguards fail us, if we are disposable once we no longer serve the Institute's interests, then our most effective route to safety is clear: to collectively organize for our rights and protections.

Such acts of public protest are atypical at Caltech, despite many of us knowing of someone, or perhaps having faced, similar abuses of power during our time at the Institute. Unjust treatment is academia's badly kept secret: many of us are compelled to keep quiet, whether through coercion, fear, or shame. The petition delivery and sit-in on February 24 was the culmination of weeks of planning, coordination, and outreach. We dedicated weeks to organizing for our colleague because we hope it marks

a true turning point at Caltech. We will no longer tolerate what we see as continual institutional failure and silencing of our peers.

Our action joins the recent protests and campaigns organized in the past few years on the Caltech campus—Caltech for Affordable Healthcare, Caltech for Black Lives, and the Rally for Reproductive Justice among them. Organized action on the Caltech campus might be historically atypical, but these campaigns reflect the growing recognition that we must take collective action to effect meaningful change. We are also not alone in unionizing, in part, to better protect and support early-career researchers. Across the US, at institutions like MIT, the University of Southern California, the National Institutes for Health, and the University of Washington, researchers are unionizing and seeking contracts that protect from abusive conduct, unjustifiable workloads, and unfair termination. In the UC system, graduate researchers and postdocs have already organized on multiple occasions to protect international researchers from unjust termination. By setting the precedent with this student's case, we hope that researchers at Caltech, like our peers at

other institutions, will act in solidarity with their vulnerable colleagues.

In his 2022 Year End address, Caltech President Thomas Rosenbaum wrote, "We pride ourselves at Caltech on an open-door policy for ideas and collaborations. The barriers to crossing disciplinary boundaries are low and the payoffs for original approaches are high...We have no compunction about seeking help from a student, postdoc, faculty, or staff member who may hold the key to discovery."

In this spirit of communality celebrated by President Rosenbaum, we call on the rest of our colleagues to work towards building a Caltech that prioritizes the rights and well-being of everyone in this community. In organizing as a union, the barriers to crossing disciplinary or departmental boundaries to acknowledge our shared interests are low, and the payoffs of solidarity and collective action are high. No one should have to face what this student went through alone, and we want to ensure that no one else will. To achieve that, we have no compunctions about asking that the Caltech community rally around our colleague and stand resolutely in support of our cause.

LARGE STUDENT BODY LEADS TO UNDERGRADUATE HOUSING SHORTAGE

ANKITA NANDI | CAMPUS

For almost as long as Caltech had undergraduate students, the institute has guaranteed its students housing on campus for four years. This policy stood until 2021, when the Institute had a record yield rate of 54% of admitted students. This, combined with the numerous students who took a gap year during the 2020-21 school year, meant that there were too many students for the nine residences; "there [were] approximately 870 beds available with approximately 970 undergraduate students," as stated in the Assistant Director of Undergraduate Housing, Joe Benethaum's initial email to the undergraduate students relaying the housing changes. According to the Caltech housing requirement as stated by Bennethum, "Caltech requires that all first and second-year students live in campus housing." Thus, Housing was forced to make the decision that up to 100 third- and fourth-year students would not be able to live in on-campus housing for their first year back from the pandemic.

With the 2021-2022 academic year being the first year on campus for two classes' worth of students, and the return to campus for the other two classes, the housing dilemma caused significant backlash from the undergraduate students. For instance, as Bennethum's original email was sent on June 29, 2021, pre-season upperclassmen athletes would have had up to three weeks to secure housing for the year, an already difficult task made more difficult due to the pandemic. Due to the backlash, former quarantine halls Marks and Braun were converted into doubles, despite their rooms originally being intended to house a single student. The upper floor of Braun remained as quarantine housing, with the lower floor allocated to regular housing.

This arrangement stood until the first week of January 2023, when first floor residents were forced to move out due to a surge in COVID-19 cases on campus. Braun first-floor residents were moved out of their rooms in order to open up more quarantine beds. Residents were placed throughout the different residences on campus, with attempts to place them within their affiliated House if possible. And all relocated residents received a refund on their winter term housing.

Despite the increase in beds with the opening of Marks and Braun, multiple students chose to live off campus for the academic year. With the Bechtel lottery picks system, if a student had a "bad pick" they were unlikely to secure a bed in a Bechtel suite and likely would have ended up in Marks or Braun, undesirable due to the small room sizes, in addition to other factors, such as not living in their House. One such student, Philippa "Pippa" Richter (CS '23, Page & Ricketts) chose to live off campus during the 2021-22 school year, but returned to on-campus housing in the Fall of 2022. She cited increased difficulty in collaborating on sets and feeling a disconnect from other students while living off campus as reasons for her return, saying it was "lonely and stressful" off campus, in contrast to the close-knit nature of the Caltech community.

Katy Chu (CS '24, Blacker) shares a similar outlook, yet chose to remain off-campus for the 2022-23 academic year. Chu had moved into Braun due to a lack of housing in her affiliated House, and stated that she did not "think it was ready to be lived in yet. For around a week there was no filtered water, and COVID restrictions against entering other buildings made it very difficult to get filtered water from other places. There was

also only one functioning washing machine and no hot water for showers." Chu was able to leave Braun with the assistance of the housing office to cancel the housing contract at no cost, and received a prorated rate for the time before they could move out. Similar to Richter, Chu "found it difficult to be super involved in everything on campus." However, she did say it was possible to make time for friends, and she enjoys having a pet cat that would be prohibited in Caltech housing. Although she is frustrated that she never experienced life on campus, she is remaining off-campus and is happy with her living situation.

Amongst other former Braun residents includes Shwetha Kunnam (EE '23, Page), who started a petition in an attempt to get partially subsidized rates for Marks and Braun housing. The petition cited the massively different room sizes between Marks and Braun rooms in comparison to double rooms in the Houses. Kunnam originally picked into Braun second floor but was moved to the first due to the quarantine housing allocation. As a critique to the housing office, they stated, "I firmly believe that everyone in the world is always trying their best at any given moment. However, it appears that the housing office's best is not good enough to even provide adequate options and information to less than 1000 undergrads." Kunnam suggested the housing office be student run with work study and other payment as opportunities for students who do logistical work, in order to increase support for the student body. Adding to Chu's remarks about the state of the Braun Residence, Kunnam described the "mold growing on the floor near the entrance" and the constant repairs done throughout fall 2021. Despite sending the petition to the housing office,



Rooms used as doubles in Marks and Braun are significantly smaller than doubles in the eight undergraduate Houses

Marks and Braun residents were not given a discounted rate on their housing contracts as "every undergrad on campus pays the same rate, regardless of the size or capacity of their room. It is simply a one bed rate." The rate came into effect as an Institute policy to attempt to create equity on campus with the rotation system and differing accommodations.

Marks Residence once again houses undergraduates for the 2022-2023 academic year, with Braun being entirely reserved for quarantine housing. While both the Class of 2025 and Class of 2026 have large class sizes, there is no indication of such sizes continuing to grow. The current larger student body brought challenges to the limited housing spaces, but many students have come to enjoy their lives in off-campus housing, as is more common at larger universities. A recent email from Caltech administration announced the closure of the twice-weekly COVID-19 surveillance testing program, indicating a possible reconsideration of the use of Braun as quarantine housing. Regardless, re-opening Braun could go a long way in increasing the amount of on-campus housing spaces, and the housing office will have to continue to ensure that as many students that desire on-campus housing receive it.

TOM MANNION'S RECIPIES

Tom Mannion is the Senior Director of Student Activities and Programs at the Office of Residential Experience and the instructor of Caltech's cooking class. These are two recipes from his collection!

Goat Cheese Mousse and Parmesan Cups

Ingredients

- Parmesan reggiano cheese, fully grated
- Goat cheese
- Cream
- White pepper
- Italian parsley

1. Place a tablespoon of cheese in a 2-3 inch ring made on a silpat (on baking sheet).
2. Cook cheese at 350 F until golden brown.
3. Remove cheese disc and center on a compartment of an egg carton - push in to make a tulip like cheese cup (must be done while cheese is hot and soft).
4. Place 1 log goat cheese, Italian parsley fine chopped parsley, dash of white pepper and 4 teaspoons cream in the food processor, mix until fluffy and consistent.
5. Fill cups with mousse. Garnish with parsley.

Smoked Salmon Tartare

Ingredients

- One side of smoked salmon
 - 1 ½ cups finely chopped shallots
 - 1 cup finely chopped chives
 - EVO to moisten
 - Salt to taste (tbsp?)
 - Creme fraiche and chive tips to garnish
1. Chop up salmon, add chives and shallots, moisten with EVO. Sprinkle and stir salt to taste.
 2. Place some on crostini/cracker/etc. Squirt dollop of creme fraiche. Garnish with chive tips.



ASCIT WINTER ELECTIONS CANDIDATE STATEMENTS (PAGE 1 OF 3)

Winter Pearson CRC Co-Chair

(Candidate 1 of 1)

I have had the unique privilege of serving as your student Conduct Review Committee co-chair for the past two years, and I hope to continue with the job!

During that time, my greatest accomplishment has been my work to revitalize the CRC, which has begun sitting cases again, for the first

time in about 5 years! Additionally, I'm proud to have assisted with the creation of a newer and more efficient Honor Code Handbook, led the process of amending the ASCIT bylaws to reflect these changes, and generally worked to make the CRC's operation more effective and transparent.

I believe the CRC is essential to the structure of the Honor Code here on campus. The trust we have built for each other is enormously valuable, and it remains easily one

of my favorite aspects of Caltech. Since frosh year, I have also served on the Board of Control. All of this work has been deeply fulfilling to me.

I hope that I have provided a familiar face for the CRC, answered your questions, and effectively advocated on behalf of our community. The nature of this role often operates behind the scenes, but I look for every opportunity to connect it to people. I am always excited to see what the CRC can be next!



Please reach out to me if you have any questions at winter@caltech.edu. Thank you!

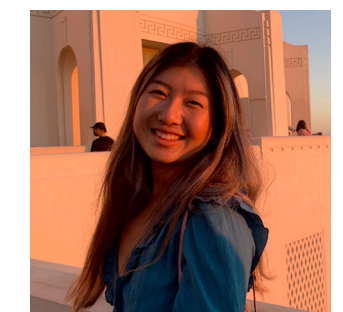
Terry Huang BoC Chair

(Candidate 1 of 1)

I'm Terry and I am running to be your next BoC Chair. Being BoC Chair does not only include having

integrity, but it also entails being reliable, understanding, and most of all fair. I have exemplified these traits during my time as a representative of BoC as well as serving as BoC Secretary the previous year. As an active member of BoC leadership, I have

worked endlessly to improve the system and pass fair and reasonable judgement and aid in the consistency and fairness of all cases. I believe that with the traits I possess and my experience on the board I will best serve the community as BoC Chair.



Rachel Reyes BoC Secretary

(Candidate 1 of 2)

Hello! My name is Rachel Reyes and I am excited to be running for BoC Secretary. I believe that my good organizational skills, meticulousness, and ability to work well with others make me a strong candi-

date for this role. As we all know, at the core of Caltech is the Honor code that reminds us that "no member of the Caltech community should take unfair advantage of any other member". As BoC Secretary, I would be dedicated to upholding the Honor Code and ensuring that all members of our community are treated with respect and fairness. In my four years of leadership experience from

being Treasurer, Secretary, Historian, and Vice President, I have learned the importance of honesty, hard work, and dedication. As part of the executive board for two years, I was able to help create a positive and productive team environment, and I am excited to bring those skills to BoC. I would be very grateful to have your support. Please consider voting for me as BoC Secretary!



Heidi Redmond BoC Secretary

(Candidate 2 of 2)

Hello everyone! My name is Heidi Redmond. I am a Junior studying Chemical Engineering, and I am running for the position of BoC secretary. For the past year I have been serving as a BoC Representative for Venerable House. During this time, I have developed a true admiration for the work that the BoC does to protect the community, work that almost no one sees, which has driven me to sit for more cases than required for every term that I was a Venerable BoC Rep. In addition to this, over

the past few months, I have gained experience as acting BoC secretary to prepare for the role.

I greatly value the honor code and the privileges it brings to us as Caltech students, and I am dedicated to upholding the spirit of integrity within my own life and within our school.

Additionally, I believe that the BoC members and leadership have a responsibility to all members of the Caltech community to be genuinely invested and engaged in the proceedings of BoC cases and outcomes. As BoC secretary, I will do my utmost to support this engagement organizationally and ideologically.

Lastly, the BoC not only represents a place where students get to actively take part in shaping the future of Caltech and the honor code, but also, more importantly, it is a body which directly shapes the lives of the people around us, the lives of our peers or even ourselves. The BoC secretary is the first person a respondent meets when students enter a full board hearing, the culmination of the BoC process. As secretary, I will strive to be a presence that is not only fair, but also kind as I help to guide students through the BoC process.

I strongly believe that to be a member of the BoC is a privilege in itself, that it is an honor to be se-



lected from amongst our peers to protect all members of the Caltech community against violations of our honor code. I ask for this honor once more as a nominee for BoC secretary.

ASCIT WINTER ELECTIONS CANDIDATE STATEMENTS (PAGES 2-3 OF 3)

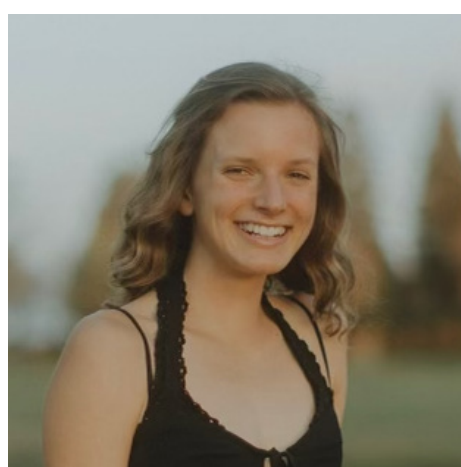
Sophie Elam IHC Chair (Candidate 1 of 4)

In my experience, one of the most positive and unique aspects of student life at Caltech is the House system. As we have all come to learn, each house contributes its personality to campus culture, and between the eight houses, students can find a family-like community where they feel they belong. My goal as IHC Chair would be to advocate for the best interests of the Houses and facilitate a healthy and functional partnership with administration so that the Houses may continue to maintain their cultures and traditions to the fullest capacity.

During my time at Caltech, I have had the privilege to serve in a variety of positions including Campus-Wide Orange Watch Coordinator, Fleming ARC Representative, Fleming Cannon Master, and Fleming Title IX and Peer Advocate roles. In each of these I feel I have gained valuable skill sets that enhance my ability to serve as a suitable IHC Chairperson. In order to effectively fulfill the expectations of these responsibilities, I have established relationships with multiple administrators in a variety of contexts, cooperated with students and excomms of each house, and developed efficient communication and organization skills. That being said, I feel that I am well equipped and prepared with relevant experienc-

es to meet the demands of the IHC Chair. Further, through my work as a PA and as Orange Watch coordinator, I have built a reliable and cooperative relationship with Vanessa Tejada, who will be the primary administrator working with the IHC next year. I am confident that because of my background and connections, I am in an ideal position to best advocate for students and the Houses, and ensure that their desires and concerns are expressed to administration in the most effective manner.

Most importantly, I genuinely care about and am invested in the well being of my peers and the Houses, which I believe I have demonstrated through my commitment to being an advocate, repre-



sentative and supportive resource for anyone who needs it. Thus, it is with great enthusiasm I pursue the opportunity to serve Caltech undergrads as the next IHC Chair. Please reach out to me if you have any questions or want to talk! I'm easily accessible through email (selam@caltech.edu) or Messenger!

Kyle Piper IHC Chair (Candidate 2 of 4)

Hi! I'm Kyle Piper. I am a Junior MechE, and you've probably all seen me around campus, even if we haven't met. The pink hair is hard to miss.

I'm running for IHC Chair because I want to amplify the voice of students, see Caltech policies more closely reflect the pre-COVID era, and keep the administrative side of student initiatives running smoothly. Every one of you has most likely already experienced events I have organized. For the past two years, I have worked on all construction and safety approvals for events in Venerable. I arranged the guidelines to safely build a mini-golf course in the hallways of Venerable during

rotation. Last year, as the construction lead for OPI, the Venerable interhouse, I attended countless safety meetings with ORE. This year, I took on the role of OPI event coordinator, and successfully worked out new, post-COVID-era guidelines for a party with 600 anticipated guests. From organizing safety guidelines for unique activities, to taking phone calls in the middle of class, I know what it takes to keep house events running smoothly.

Beyond my experience working with every member of the ORE events committee, I've been heavily involved in house culture my entire time at Caltech. I know how important the houses are, and these are the steps I will take to keep the houses feeling like home for the next generation of students. First-

ly, as Caltech starts holding us to modern safety standards, I will ensure our events are not canceled or limited. I will take steps to close the communication loop with ORE and keep events safe without sacrificing our traditions. Secondly, my experience coordinating big events means I also know how to work in a group. I've worked alongside most of the new house presidents before, and I know you've elected great people. I'll respect their time, delegate work efficiently, and maintain clear communication. Last, and most importantly, I know that I can be wrong. When your presidents tell me I've made a mistake, I'll listen. I have been the only candidate running for IHC Chair regularly attending IHC meetings for the past few months, so I'll be able to make sure the presidents have an easy transition.



I refuse to make promises I can't keep, so my only campaign promise is that IHC Chair will be my first priority. OPI is this Saturday. Come see for yourself what giving my 100% to a project looks like. Let me give your houses 100%. Let me give your presidents 100%. Let me give you 100%. Vote Kyle for IHC Chair.

Tanmay Gupta IHC Chair (Candidate 3 of 4)

Hey Everyone! My name is Tanmay and I'm a junior physics major. Along with the rest of the class of 2024, I began Caltech online. And now, after two more years of Pandemic restrictions, I want to experience all that Caltech can be before I graduate.

I want that Caltech student experience I'd heard so much about when applying. All the rich house culture, exciting pranks, and cross-house events that seem to have dwindled in the last few years. I want students to have freedom again so we can keep ourselves from going insane. At a place like Caltech where the academics are already crushing, house culture and events allow us to balance our life. Without them, attending a place like Caltech would not be feasible. And the best way I know how to bring that change about is

to lead the change myself. I have sat in IHC meetings for the last month and am ready to transition over and work with the new presidents, all of whom I know myself.

Some things I'd like to focus on in the coming year: Help repair the student-admin relationship. There's so much animosity between students and admin. Granted, it's for good reasons, but it doesn't have to continue being that way. With different admin like Vanessa taking over as liaison, it's an opportunity for a fresh start. Uphold pre-Covid precedents and set new ones to make sure student events can be held unhindered. Caltech admin is concerned about liability, but that shouldn't mean every little event is hindered. There needs to be trust on both sides and I hope to help instill that with carefully thought out proposals and seeking reasonable justifications. Seek and be transparent. When ev-

eryone is able to know exactly what is happening, there is less distrust and rumors. If admin wants us to trust them, I will pursue them until they are an open book.

As the current chair of the SFC committee, an active Title IX ad, and having organized several events over summer, I know how to work with jaded adults. I have experience dealing with admin and faculty on many levels. In particular, I know how to put on a smile when we need to and bare the teeth when it's time to. I will be the mediator that helps deliver student's wants and needs.

Caltech's houses and residences already provide a family and community to support everyone here. I want to help those houses continue being homes away from home, each with their unique traditions and events that give them their personalities. Rather than smothering them as they have been recently, they should be celebrated. I



will advocate for this crucial part of student life. No matter how much admin may want to avoid us. I will work with a phenomenal new set of presidents and the student body to make sure our needs are met.

Vote for me to finally experience everything we don't even know we're missing out on!

Jonathan Booker IHC Chair (Candidate 4 of 4)

Hi everyone, my name is Jonathan Booker, and I am running for IHC Chair! I am a sophomore from Ricketts House, and I am studying Physics and Computer Science. I am currently the ASCIT Secretary, so I am the guy that has been spamming everyone's email inbox every day. I am running to be the next IHC Chair because I want to preserve the rich culture and trusting community that accompanies life at Caltech. I am from a small town in the middle of nowhere. This means that I am one of the few people that has not had the resources and a supportive community until arriving at Caltech. I feel that it is my obligation to help preserve this environment for every other person that also has not had a lot of opportunities before arriving to Caltech. The best way I can protect this environment is to preserve the structure that enables student autonomy within the community. This structure is the house system. To ensure that the house system is preserved, I believe that I should take on the soul crushing responsibility of leading it. In other words, I want to be the next IHC Chair.

Why I am the best person to be IHC Chair

Throughout my time within the Caltech community, I have served as a Ricketts Representative to the BoC during an unprecedented case load that has never been seen within the history of the Institute. Additionally, I am serving of the SFC Special Topics Committee investigating the effects of COVID on the Caltech community; we have uncovered revelations that will result in a solution to a multitude of problems that have resulted as an effect of the pandemic. Finally, I have taken on a numerous number of initiatives as ASCIT Secretary and a member of student leadership: I have found and restored 60 years of student government records, including both ASCIT and the IHC that dates to WWII, that gave new insights into the significant events within the institute's past. I secured \$14,000 of additional funding to buy equipment including a brand-new set of sound equipment, the ASCIT Popcorn Machine, and the ASCIT Cotton Candy Machine that any group, especially houses, can utilize at any event. Finally, I was instrumental in revitalizing the CRC, which has been inactive for half a decade,

Michael Gutierrez Tech Editor (Candidate 1 of 1)

Hey all, I'm Michael (or perhaps better known as Guutz), and I'd like to throw my hat into the ring to become your next editor for the California Tech. I'm running for this position with the promise that if elected, the Tech will return to a regular publication schedule. If you've ever gone back through the archives and read old issues of the Tech (I highly recommend it!), you've seen how much pride, passion, and care went into documenting each chunk

and pushed through amendments to the ASCIT Bylaws that finally reflected the CRC process and codified the rights of students and houses within honor-code violation investigations - a task that I was told by countless upperclassmen was impossible to complete. Finally, I aided the previous IHC during rotation last year in the following ways: I coordinated with the transportation office to get every prefrish a metro-card so they can explore the Pasadena area while they await results. I forwarded every single announcement from each house about their respective rotation events. Finally, I updated three classes of student's photos on Donut. This task was neglected for 3 years,

This laundry list of accomplishments and experiences shows how effective I have been in a position of leadership, especially when accounting for the fact that I was only ASCIT Secretary. As IHC Chair, I promise to keep this drive and use my position to take my effectiveness to the next level.

I will campaign on three things. Rotation, revamping sub-committees, and transparency.

Rotation

This will be the first year that rotation will be normal after the pandemic. We need to move on from what was and move on to a new version of rotation that is still faithful to its original intent. As IHC Chair, I will continue the efforts of the former IHC to further refine the rotation process and tweak the algorithm to ensure a fair gender distribution amongst the house while further consulting the CCID to determine the best way to fairly account for non-binary, gender-queer, etc. individuals. Last year, there was a noticeably higher than normal number of rotation violations. I will aim to decrease this number by advocating for the fair and effective use of the mechanisms defined in the IHC's Definition. Finally, with my experience assisting the IHC this past year, I am the most familiar with the interworking's of rotation.

Sub-Committees

Revitalize AdComm, FoodComm, StewComm, & Interhouse Sports:

There are so many problems that the IHC can encounter within the next year that no one can anticipate the magnitude or the nature of those problems. So, as IHC Chair I want to revitalize the role AdComm, FoodComm, StewComm, & Interhouse Sports IHC-Subcommittees play in student life to help solve future

of student life at Caltech. To me, it's really inspiring to see the entire campus come together to tell our stories, whether good or bad, hopeful or dismal, jovial or heavy. It feels like these days, most of us stay sequestered in our respective corners of campus; my hope is that the Tech can help bridge these gaps and give us all something in common to talk about.

My qualifications:

- I can read and write English
- Passed my frosh hums
- Enrolled in a 9-unit journalism class next term so I'll have time

problems that are unpredictable. Concerning AdComm in particular, I want to mandate that the chair calls a meeting once per a suitable regular interval of time. In the short term, I want them to work with SWS, CCID, the Dean's office, or whichever necessary office to solve problems - such as the institute failing to meet disability accommodations - that are disproportionately affecting including but not limited to neurodivergent individuals or students with mental health issues. In the long run, I would like AdComm to take on any issue that disproportionately effects a traditionally marginalized group within the Caltech community. Additionally, I would like for AdComm to take charge of volunteer programs that are currently implemented by the ASCIT Board of Directors to advocate for the underprivileged outside of the Caltech community.

I want to reboot Interhouse Sports and Discobus by finding the funds to buy an actual Interhouse Trophy and a Disco Trophy for houses to compete over. Ideally, I would like results publicly tabulated throughout the course of the competition.

Transparency & Relationship with the Board of Directors

The most forgettable aspect to many about the IHC Chair is that they are also a member of the Board of Directors as the V.P. of Non-Academic Affairs. The final pledge that I make is to be as transparent as possible about the proceedings of the IHC without injuring the long-term goals of the IHC. As IHC Chair, I promise to relay all information to the Board of Directors, especially when it comes to interactions with administration. However, while doing so, I will continue to respect the privacy of others within the community and keeping proceedings that require it to be carried out discretely under-wraps to eventually be reported.

Foreword

If you have made it this far, yeah, I know I wrote a lot. I really appreciate the time you spent reading this long statement. I have put a lot of effort this past year to make life for us undergrads more tolerable while we endure the academic rigor at Caltech. Surprisingly, I want to put in even more because I know I can make the greatest impact compared to anyone else. If you have any questions, please feel free to reach out to me over Facebook Messenger, over email: jbooker@caltech.edu, or on Discord: Jbookero53#9278



TL;DR After writing this long but necessary statement, I ran my statement through Chat GBT. Here is the result.

This statement is a candidate's statement for an election for the position of IHC Chair at Caltech. The candidate, Jonathan Booker, is a sophomore studying Physics and Computer Science and currently serving as the ASCIT Secretary. He wants to preserve the culture and community at Caltech and protect the house system that enables student autonomy. He believes he is the best person for the position because of his experience in leadership positions and his accomplishments, including serving as a Ricketts Representative to the BoC, investigating the effects of COVID on the Caltech community, restoring 60 years of student government records, securing funding for equipment, revitalizing the CRC, and updating student photos on Donut. He promises to focus on rotation, revamping sub-committees, and transparency if elected. Regarding rotation, he aims to refine the process, ensure a fair gender distribution, and decrease violations. He also wants to revitalize sub-committees such as AdComm, FoodComm, StewComm, and Interhouse Sports to solve problems and advocate for underprivileged groups within the Caltech community. Finally, he promises to maintain transparency and have a good relationship with the Board of Directors.

Write for the Tech!

Give our next Tech Editor an easier time!

TECH@CALTECH.EDU



- Most relevantly, I've been working with the current editorial staff of the Tech this term and helped publish this issue, so I know how things work already

My agenda, if elected:

- Regular publication schedule (at least monthly)
- Personally solicit interviews and articles from students, faculty, and staff about current campus happenings
- Get the California Tech website back online (I'll develop it myself if necessary)

- Bring back the puzzle section!

Looking forward to working with you all! Take it easy :)

INTERVIEW WITH HIMA VATTI ABOUT THE CALTECH TITLE IX PROGRAM

ADITEE PRABHUTENDOLKAR | CAMPUS

How long have you worked in the Equity and Title IX office?

I became Caltech's Title IX Coordinator and started managing the Equity and Title IX Office in July 2019. We address issues of sexual misconduct, relationship violence, and stalking, as well as unlawful discrimination and harassment based on legally protected characteristics, including sex, gender, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, race, national origin, ethnicity, medical conditions, disabilities, and religion.

What are some things you believe every student should know about the Title IX process at Caltech?

First, when you sit down with us, we will listen to your experience with empathy and without judgment. Whether it's navigating interpersonal interactions, exploring sexuality, identity, and sexual activity, experimenting with alcohol, or just generally feeling unconfident, overwhelmed, or depressed; being a student can be complicated and mentally tough. We have been there, too. We also strive to be a one-stop shop. We often welcome students with concerns and questions that do not pertain to our work, but we take a strong coordinating role with appropriate faculty, staff, and administrative and support offices to ensure their needs are met.

Second, our goal is to help you understand the options available to you, both for support and for action. We facilitate students' access to support resources because we know that even calling someone for help

can feel overwhelming at times. As examples of options for action, we facilitate requested housing and academic accommodations, work with respondents to take voluntary steps to increase a complainant's comfort in their environments, institute mutual no-contact orders, facilitate reports to law enforcement, counsel respondents to stop offending behavior, negotiate agreements where respondents undertake social and academic restrictions and in-depth coaching and training on sexual boundaries and consent, and oversee processes, including investigations, that may result in disciplinary or other corrective action. We encourage each complainant to do what's right for them. Where a complainant does not want to take action, however, Title IX requires me as Title IX Coordinator to consider certain factors that may lead me to take action, potentially including emergency removal of a respondent from campus, to protect the health and safety of the complainant and the Caltech community. Even then, however, we fulfill complainants' wishes as far as we are able. We strive to empower complainants of sexual misconduct by respecting their decision-making.

Third, we are aware that a fear of retaliation, whether from parties and witnesses, other peers and older students, staff, or faculty members, can make students hesitant about reporting a concern to us or exercising an option for action. Retaliation for reporting and taking action is never acceptable and is strictly prohibited by Caltech policy and the law. We talk with complainants and others about their specific concerns about retaliation, such as who might

have a motive to retaliate and how, and we offer preventative strategies. With complainants' awareness, we activate student leaders and senior staff and faculty, including Division Chairs and the Provost, when needed, to prevent retaliation. We advise and encourage students to report to us any instance of perceived retaliation.

What support do you offer to students who are victims of Title IX offenses (including confidential support)?

To address emergency situations and recent sexual assaults, we activate a crisis response process that prioritizes complainant safety and access to our Campus Sexual Violence Advocate Pilar Montenegro or one of her colleagues at our local sexual assault response center Peace Over Violence, as well as paid and accompanied transportation to the Santa Monica Rape Treatment Center or the San Gabriel Valley Medical Center. We have longstanding relationships with these organizations and maintain regular communication with their leadership to ensure a high level of care for our community members if and when it is needed. The process includes Caltech's Campus Security Response Officer Camille Saurenman, who is trained in trauma-informed survivor support and engagement and is dedicated half-time to coordinating with our office and Pilar to address and prevent sexual misconduct.

For non-emergency situations, we advise complainants about confidential campus resources, including Pilar, so we can ensure they have the option of getting support and infor-

mation in a confidential space before reporting an incident to our office. Our office is not a confidential resource. We maintain a high degree of confidentiality, but Title IX and Caltech policy authorize us to share the information that someone might "need to know" in order to help carry out an option a complainant chooses or to take other appropriate action. For example, in obtaining an academic accommodation for a student, we may need to let the professor know only that two specific students should not be on a class project team together.

Also, whenever a student engages with our office on matters relating to sexual misconduct, they may bring with them a support person of their choice, such as a friend, family member, or advocate.

Finally, we offer communal support programming each month, including Trauma-Informed Yoga, Healing Art Nights, Empowerment Self Defense, and Sex Positivity and Healing After Trauma.

What are the limitations of what the Equity and Title IX Office can do?

Students express confusion and frustration about why they do not see immediate action taken against persons accused of sexual misconduct, such as expulsion, removal from housing, or limitations on access to classes, leadership positions, and social activities. This is not because Caltech does not take seriously its commitment to preventing and addressing sexual misconduct.

Disciplinary measures may be and are taken when there is a determination that a respondent has violated

Caltech's sexual misconduct policy. However, such a determination can only be made consistent with Caltech's procedures for addressing sexual misconduct. Under Title IX, colleges and universities cannot subject their students to discipline or restrictions that impact their access to educational opportunities, programs, and services without providing them due process. Every American college and university that receives federal funding, therefore, must follow rules and processes set forth by Title IX and state law, that delineate the requirements of due process. These include an accused person's right to be presumed innocent, to know the specific allegations against them, to respond to the relevant evidence, and to have action taken against them only with respect to allegations substantiated by a preponderance (over 50%) of the evidence. So, an accused student cannot be removed from campus or barred from classes, activities, housing, or leadership positions, unless and until a formal determination is reached, as a result of a process providing due process, that the student violated Caltech's policy.

To be clear, this does not mean that our office cannot take any action without undertaking these procedures. On the contrary, as described earlier, there are many informal non-disciplinary measures that we can and do take expeditiously to support complainants' wellbeing.

How does the Title IX investigation process work? What kind of evidence is necessary for a proper investigation?

Here is a very high-level summary. The purpose of an investigation

is to gather all available evidence relevant to the allegations and to determine whether a preponderance of that evidence (even a smidgen over 50%) supports the allegations. All participants in an investigation are treated fairly and respectfully. The role of the Equity and Title IX Office is to oversee the process and ensure it complies with Title IX and Caltech's policy. We do not make decisions about evidence, sanctions, or appeals.

To get started, Title IX requires a student to submit a simple signed formal complaint document that outlines their allegations. If the complaint alleges conduct that falls within one or more definitions of sexual misconduct under Title IX or the California Education Code, as set out in the policy, we provide the respondent with notice of the allegations. An assigned investigator gathers the evidence, which may include: oral accounts of what happened from the complainant, respondent, and witnesses; electronic communications relating to the allegations; photos; clothing and bedding; contraceptives; and rape kit evidence. The complainant and the respondent (parties) can suggest evidence and witnesses for the investigator to consider.

We encourage students not to be discouraged by the lack of eyewitnesses or certain types of evidence. Often, there are no eyewitnesses or physical evidence. All that is really necessary is for parties to meet with the investigator and provide their account of what happened. You can also share information about "outrage witnesses," who are persons to whom a party confided relevant information close in time to the incident, and

whose testimony can be gathered as evidence.

The investigator prepares an evidence report for the parties' review and response, and the finalized report is provided, generally, to an outside non-Caltech decision-maker who conducts a hearing. Parties are not required physically to be together at the hearing. During the hearing, the decision-maker asks parties and witnesses questions about items of evidence to facilitate their resolution of disputed facts, makes credibility determinations, and ultimately determines whether any allegations are substantiated by a preponderance of the evidence. In certain circumstances, Title IX requires allowing each party's adviser to pose questions to the opposing party and witnesses. If a policy violation is substantiated, the responsible dean determines appropriate sanctions and remedies, and the Vice President of Student Affairs decides any appeal by either party.

What are your suggestions for students who want to learn more about and get involved with the Equity and Title IX Office?

Overall, let's all get to know each other better! Whether it's doing outreach, working with the Equity and Title IX Advocates and Sexual Assault and Gender Equity (SAGE) Council, holding a Title IX Summit with student leaders, conducting a lab workshop or Respect is a Part of Research event with graduate students, or talking one on one in our office, we love engaging with our students. Please invite us to a House dinner and come to one of our events!

Another great way to be involved



Hima Vatti, Director of Caltech's Title IX Department

in preventing sexual misconduct on campus is just to be a great friend and bystander who is willing to intervene in problematic situations. Stepping in to guide someone to their room, telling someone to stop inappropriate behavior, or saying "this is not ok" to throw cold water on someone speaking hurtfully are all powerful preventative tools.

Students who are interested in helping specifically with our programming and being a peer resource can contact us to find out more about the SAGE Council and our Equity and Title IX Advocates program! And we encourage graduate students to contact us to find out more about the interactive workshops we host for whole lab groups in the science Divisions to promote collegiality and respectful communication skills in the research environment.

A CHAT WITH MERI MAKHMURYAN, PROGRAM DIRECTOR AT THE CCID

ANKITA NANDI | PEOPLE

In November 2022, the Caltech Center for Inclusion and Diversity (CCID) welcomed a new Program Coordinator, Meri Makhmuryan, to join the staff. On the second floor of the Center for Student Services, the CCID "provides education, advocacy and allyship to foster an inclusive campus community across individuals from all student, postdoctoral scholar, faculty, and staff groups."

What drew you into working at Caltech?

I applied for the CCID because I was interested in the center's role, and as a student I was part of something similar. At Glendale Community College, I was part of Extended Opportunity Programs and Services, which helps minority students to succeed in college and provides services like extended tutoring sessions and book vouchers. While attending UCLA, I joined an Advanced Academic Program which let me to join a small tutoring group for a course I was struggling in. Without these two programs, I wouldn't be so successful. That's why I am here to pay it forward and do something for the students, because I believe centers like this affect our academic journey.

Why Caltech?

I'm more of a soft and social scientist, but I really respect Caltech's

work and innovations. I'm also very interested in space and Caltech's work with JPL and NASA. I think the resources and help professors provide to students at Caltech is really important because many Caltech graduates are successful because of what they learned here. It gave all the skills and education and built the foundation for success after graduation.

What are your goals for your time here?

To create a brave and safe space for students. We have informative events with knowledgeable people who provide lots of useful information. While I'm here, I want to see more students come and actually use and take advantage of these resources. Whether they come to the CCID and learn something or join our affinity or processing spaces and talk about current events. I think that would benefit the student and provide them an opportunity to build a network with other students, faculty and staff. I want to incentivize more programs so that people can come to us and feel that they belong here at Caltech. We are lucky and honored to have everyone here.

What are your next steps?

For now, I see myself staying at Caltech because of the opportunities to speak to different people and learn their perspectives and knowl-

edge. For example, sometimes I'm having conversations about interests like African politics and it cheers me up knowing there are other people at Caltech with the same interests. I learn a lot from other people about their experience and traditions, and it amazes me because these are people I wouldn't be able to meet on a day to day basis. I want to accomplish more because of all the new perspectives and knowledge.

I also want to use feedback from the Caltech community to host more events like affinity spaces. Or share information about important events like Black Heritage Month and Native American Heritage Month, or a social media post about Holocaust Remembrance Day. One of the other projects I'm working on is creating a digital education campaign for Armenian Genocide Day; I'm Armenian and this way I can pass on the knowledge I have and learned. As an Armenian, I'm very proud I'm able to provide this information and knowledge to others.

Is there anything else you want to share with the Caltech community?

My main duties are to implement, support and develop different trainings and workshops and events, as well as activities, for the whole Caltech community; students, faculty, staff members are all welcome.



Other things would be coordinating communication with speakers, the Caltech community, or the CCID so the event goes smoothly. As I said, I'm doing digital education campaigns and social media posts.

Overall, I want students to know that I am here to provide ongoing support and be a liaison between them, the center and the Caltech community. Anyone is welcome to stop by the office or email me. It's very important for me to make it known that I'm a resource for everyone. They can stop by and talk about the things they are ambitious about. I'm more than happy to share my own personal and academic journey, what I've learned, my ambitions and passions and get to know people.

ART SPOTLIGHT



Hermaphrodite by Alicia Zhang



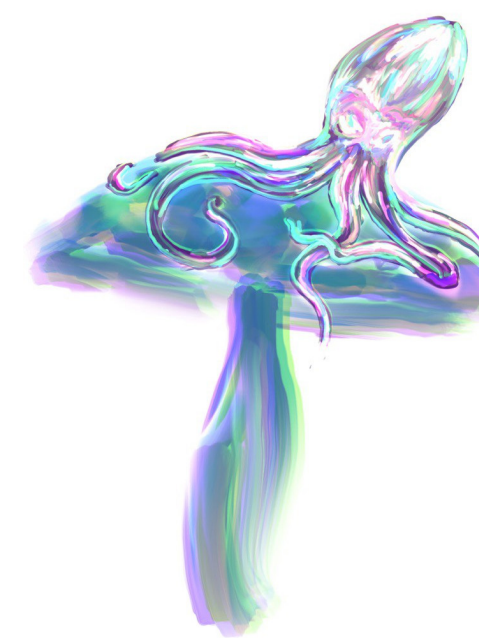
Chomgp by Aelin Hunt



Sporangia in Dabney's Treehouse Alley by Aelin Hunt



Swimming Lessons by Alicia Zhang



Liquid State by Aelin Hunt

Contribute to the Tech!

Did you know we used to publish comics?

TECH@CALTECH.EDU

FIZZ: COMING TO A CAMPUS NEAR YOU

JUSTIN TOYOTA | CAMPUS

On the first day of winter term, on-campus students woke up to find small glossy flyers outside their doors, advertising an app called “Fizz”. Throughout the day, representatives gave out free donuts outside Hameetman to incentivize students to download the app. The invasion had begun.

Fizz is a social media platform designed specifically for college students: you need a university email to create an account, and you can only interact with your university’s feed. So, while Fizz has launched at many other schools, a Caltech user will not be able to interact with their content whatsoever. In principle, everything you see on Fizz was posted by a Caltech student, and only other Caltech students will see what you post.

Once on the app, users can create and consume posts, which contain things like images or short text, largely centering around Caltech. Other

users can leave comments and award upvotes or downvotes to rate posts and comments. The app’s moderators are apparently Caltech students hired by Fizz, the stated intent being to have a more bespoke moderation system than relying on an auto-moderator or human employees unfamiliar with the university. It has been reported that moderators are also paid to regularly produce numerous posts of their own.

According to Fizz’s website, the app was founded by Stanford dropouts Teddy Solomon and Ashton Cofer. The two say they felt Stanford students struggled with “a lack of connection and authenticity”. They envisioned Fizz as a way to remedy this by being a “campus-specific platform that facilitates authentic conversations”, and launched it at Stanford in 2021. In the following months, they would procure millions in seed funding and expand to other campuses. It has supposedly been quite successful: the flyers claim that

“95% of Stanford, Dartmouth, and Pepperdine students” use Fizz. I take this with a grain of salt considering Fizz is only available on iPhones and iPads.

The app’s website also states the following about the initial launch: “Fizz had completely changed the culture [at Stanford], creating a wholesome, intimate, and uplifting online space through proper community-based moderation.” While I am unable to access Stanford’s Fizz feed, the posts that have been posted to Caltech Fizz hardly seem to be the vanguard of positive cultural change. The vast majority are banal memes, posts dunking on members of certain houses, and a sprinkle of truly cursed content. I wouldn’t classify these posts as “wholesome”, “intimate”, or “uplifting”, and I doubt that many people are forming new “authentic” connections after seeing someone’s shitpost about Red Door pasta.

In short, it is essentially what one should expect from an anyo-



mous Reddit-like platform: memes, shitposts, and some edgier material whose sincerity will probably never be known. We don’t even know how much of the app’s engagement is authentic, considering mods are required to make content. However, you should know what you’re getting into: Fizz is garbage. As a Caltech Confessions reader myself, I should stress that it is not wrong to enjoy garbage. Indeed, I personally enjoy seeing the disgusting things that my fellow Techers decide to inflict upon the rest of us. But you shouldn’t download Fizz thinking it’s revolutionary or positive.

QUESTION THE QUAIL!

QUAIL | ADVICE

A new advice column about life, love, classes, and everything in between! Brought to you by the one and only California Tech.

Dear Quail,

I recently started seeing someone and it’s going super well! I’m really into him and he seems really into me. The only problem is that our relationship is constantly being mentioned on Fizz, and not in a very flattering way. It’s gotten to the point that almost every conversation we have is about the latest Fizz post about us, or how we should deal with the endless rumors surrounding our relationship. We barely even have sex anymore because we’re so busy thinking about Fizz and the gossip mill at this school. What should I do to reignite our relationship?

From,
Fizzing Fornicator

Dear Fornicator,

Honestly, the only thing you can do is ignore the rumors and keep doing you. Unless there’s some sort of meaningful advice hidden among the gossip, which is unlikely, I would carry on as if it didn’t exist and remember that people will eventually forget about your relationship. Half the people on Fizz are being paid to post on there anyway! As bad as it sounds, you might try posting some competing gossip on Fizz, preferably something that doesn’t hurt others. And in the meantime, try some activities that will force you to get to know each other better, such as off-campus excursions or consuming some media together. That’ll give you something else to talk about besides the gossip and will give you a better idea of where your relationship is going to go.

Quail

Dear Quail,

I’ve been trying to get to know this girl (21+) but really the only thing she seems interested in doing is drinking. Before you start judging me (also 21+), let me say that I haven’t made any moves on her and we actually have very interesting conversations! The downside is we are both pretty drunk during these discussions and it’s gotten to the point that I’ve been drinking on weekdays just to find an excuse to talk to her. My grades are slipping and honestly so is my liver health. What should I do?

Signed,
Wasted on Wednesdays

Dear Wasted,

At Caltech, we sometimes grow desensitized towards bad drinking/health habits. Keeping that in mind, if you really care about this girl, the first thing to do would be to call attention to her drinking problem. If you’ve already done this, try to get her to figure out why she does it (even if you have to do this while drunk) or, if you’re not close enough to her, ask her friends to look into it (from a place of concern, not thirstiness!). There’s no way to form a productive relationship with someone whose main hobby is blacking out on weekdays, and until you get her to progress past this stage and get some hobbies, I think you’re right to not come onto her. If she does have other hobbies, try to engage her in those, or bring her along when you do constructive things. Even if this doesn’t lead to a situation or relationship, it’s the best thing to do for someone who seems like she’s stuck in a bit of a rut.

Quail

Dear Quail,
I’m a sophomore who is severely struggling with my coursework. I’ve suspected for some time I have some form of ADD/ADHD, but through a

lot of help from my friends, housemates, TAs, Dean’s Tutors, and P/F, I successfully made it through my freshman year here. Now that I’m a sophomore, I can’t rely on my friends anymore as a lot of them are no longer taking my classes. On top of that, I’m taking some really poorly taught major-specific classes. I just don’t have the time, money, or parental support to seek proper counseling. I’ve fallen so far behind in my classes and I just don’t know how I’m going to make it through two more years of this. How will I ever graduate from Caltech?

Signed,
Aching for Aderral

Dear Aching,

The first piece of advice I have for you is to **not** take medication under the table, as your name suggests you might. Amphetamines are serious business and should only be taken under the supervision of a medical professional. With that being said, the first thing you should try is Caltech’s own counseling center. I know, I know, you’ve probably heard this one already. However, they could help you work through some of the issues you’ve built up over years of having untreated ADHD and suggest skills groups and behavioral practices to help you manage your work better, even without medication. Speaking of skills groups, there’s actually an “ADHD Accountability Group” being offered by the counseling center next term, which I would definitely look into if I was you. In the meantime, a technique that could work is using friends to hold you accountable. Even if you and your friends aren’t working on the same set, a pair of eyes that might look over at your screen and judge you for playing 2048 could be just the push you need to stay focused enough to complete some of your coursework. This technique is called “body doubling” and has been known to help people start a particularly annoying set or push through the last few hard problems.

Quail

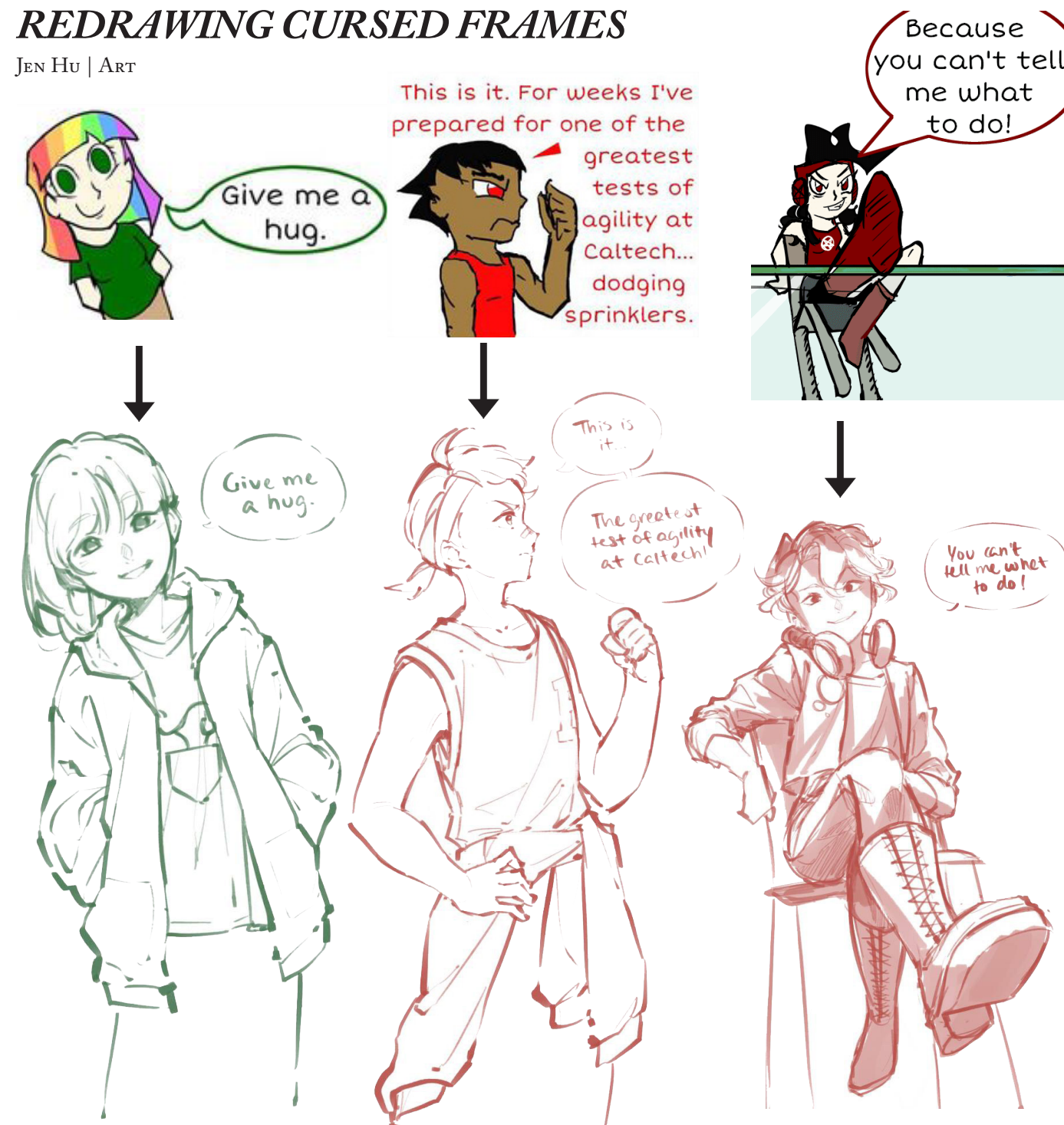


To submit questions for next issue’s “Question the Quail”, fill out the google form: <https://bit.ly/41rEQ1N> (also in the QR code below). Your email should contain your question and a (mildly) clever nickname/pseudonym that is relevant to the question.



REDRAWING CURSED FRAMES

JEN HU | ART



MAKING A CASE FOR THE ORANGE CREWMATE

KENNY THAI | HUMOR

2022’s Frosh Camp Counselors attempted rallied in support of getting all incoming frosh orange crewmate plushies from the video game *Among Us*. The following are real emails sent in support.

- Studying at Caltech is a lot like crewing a spaceship. You get to work alongside some of the most talented people on Earth, you’re constantly doing science in order to survive, and the environment tends to keep you under a lot of pressure. It’s an incredible experience, and also a very challenging one, to be sure. Sometimes you’re left feeling like an impostor among your crewmates, having failed to complete every task you think is expected of you. But fear not! These feelings are not based in reality; they are merely symptoms of a benign condition known as impostor syndrome. This could help the incoming students have a sense of belonging.

- Wait, an among us crewmate plush would be a great message if we include something like “you belong here in our crew. You are not an impostor. Keep this to prevent impostor syndrome from keeping you down”. Incoming students struggle with that and an among us plush to squeeze for stress would be great and teach a good lesson!

- Beyond its direct reference to Caltech’s historic and current involvement in space exploration, the image of an astronaut in Caltech’s colors is representative of the Institute’s mission to push the frontiers of human knowledge in every field of study. It’s a symbol of the quest to explore the unknown. In addition, this particular figure’s origins enable it to facilitate, in an approachable way, meaningful conversations about handling the workload at Caltech, dealing with impostor syndrome, and feeling like a full member of the Caltech community.

- I remember when I played *Among Us*, where I was an impostor under the username `sdl_wrapper`, and I feel a great sense of warmth from these memories. I believe that such an *Among Us* plushie could also evoke this same sense of nostalgia in the prefrosh, having been a popular game, and it could remind them of happier days in high school during possible struggles in college. The plushie would be a delightful companion for the prefrosh, and references the game, as the crewmates can have smaller astronaut-like companions as well. Also, me being a fan of space, I think this would be a great addition to the Caltech Swag that the prefrosh receive. It is not only heartwarming, but memorable and unique.

Orange crewmate plushes were not given out to the class of 2026. However, one can be found in Dabney House’s Bear Pit.

The California Tech

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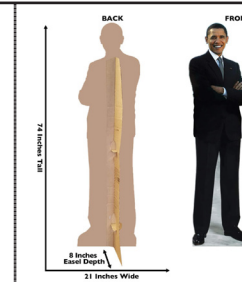
AMAZON SKYMALL

KENNY THAI | COLUMNIST

Welcome back to Amazon Skymall! In this column, we hold a raffle where we [not] randomly select one of our lucky readers and give them the item of their choice from my hand picked selections!

Enter this week’s raffle by using the QR code (right) or the link below:

<https://forms.gle/QBeLSu7oFEojeDt6A>



Life-Size
Obama
Cardboard
Cutout
\$49.95



Orange
Crewmate
Plush
\$23.00



Shrek
Night
Light
\$17.99



OPI: A STORY OF FAIRYTALES AND SHREK

THANG TRAN | EVENTS

Venerable's Interhouse Party ("OPI") will be happening on Saturday, March 4th. As we await the day of the party, we asked two lead Gryphons (leaders of building OPI), Iris Lee and Kyle Piper, some questions to gain some insight on their process of bringing OPI to life. Note that this interview was conducted in the middle of a three day period of continuous rainfall.

Q: What is your theme, and how did you go about bringing it to life?

I: Our theme is "Once Upon a Time", a storybook and dark fairy tale kind of vibe. We mixed storybook and medieval fairytale energy and brought it into our construction and art. We also wanted it to be a little bit darker and less cutesy so it's more focused on storybooks than fairy tales, which also allows us to expand the scope of our art.

K: A challenge with fairy tales was that a lot of people were unsure on how we could make the construction exciting at first. I've had this idea for the past year where it would be really cool to build a castle. I realized we could go for a run down castle vibe along with the fairy tales that got a lot of people really excited about the construction.

Q: What should we look forward to as we attend your interhouse?

I: We try our best to cater to any person that wants to come to our party for different reasons. We try to make the stage very danceable and the music great and well-mixed. For people who aren't as into partying, we have Shrek playing in the lounge and we have really pretty decor if people want to just look around at the art.

K: One thing that we try to do really well is making our food part of our theme. It's easy to order a bunch of boxes of pizza, but that doesn't exactly fit any fairytale vibe. We have quite a large group specifically working on food to make sure it also

fits the rest of the party. I'm really excited for what the food group has put together.

Q: What are some of the things you have been doing to prepare, and what did you enjoy the most about the process?

K: Other people who have been interhouse leads will recognize the amount of work that goes into preparing menus and getting everything approved. None of those meetings are fun, but I view them as a necessary thing to get to the part that I'm excited about, which is the interhouse itself. I also find construction to be a nice break from work.

I: On the art side, I live in the dining hall, more or less, as soon as my work ends. Because I hang out there all the time, a lot of other people also hang out there a lot of the time with me, and I really like the energy of us all hanging out in the dining hall either working or taking breaks by painting.

Q: Have you run into any challenges, and if so, how did you address them? This rain, for instance?

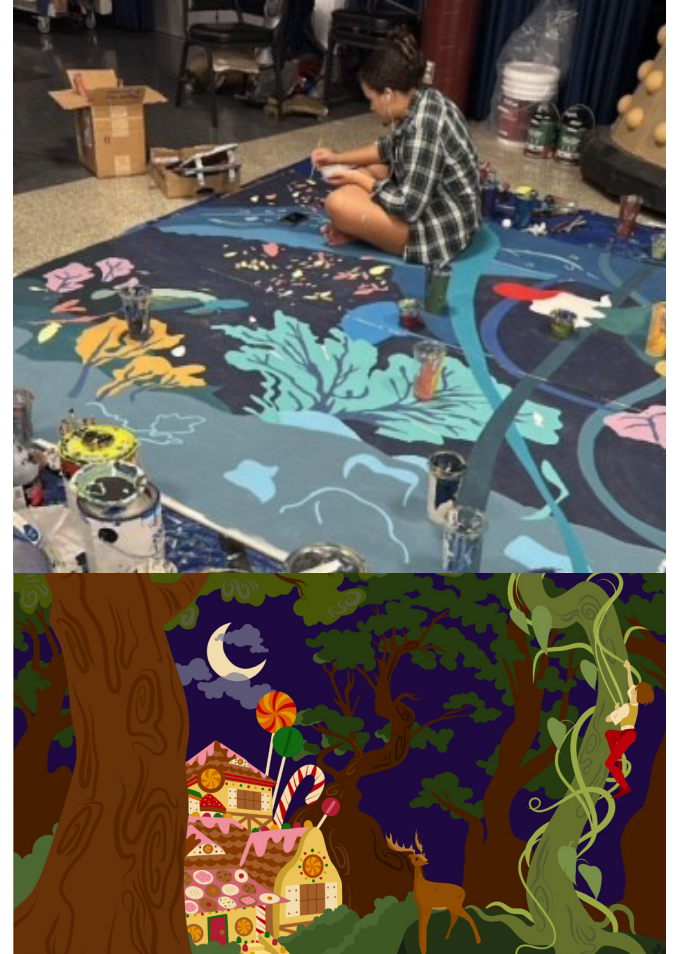
K: The rain sucks. We've lost basically three days of construction straight now to the rain. What this means is that I'm trying to do everything I can to get ahead on my work. You get ahead while you can, to prepare for when it rains for half the time you're building the party and you lose half your remaining time.

I: It's always hard to get stuff done, but we tend to be ambitious and try to bite off more than we can chew. It's always a struggle managing our time and getting it all done but it's nice that we have experienced leaders as gryphons. It also helps that we have 10 of them, so if I can't be there, another art gryphon can take my place and we can spread out the work a bit more evenly.

Q: Do you have any final thoughts and plugs?

I: Come if you want! OPI isn't a party where we try to make everyone come. It's a party where we want people to come if they want to. I think we've done as best of a job as we can considering the amount of time we had and the fact that we're all Caltech students working, so I hope it turns out well.

K: I think we did a really good job this year. I'm gonna be really stressed finishing it up because of course I will be. I hope people can come and have a good time.



DABNEY'S ELDRICH INTERHOUSE: DEEP SEA HORROR

KENNY THAI | EVENTS

Dabney's Interhouse Party ("DEI") will be held on Saturday, March 3rd from 8 PM to midnight in Dabney's courtyard, lounge, and dining hall. We interviewed Emma Markowski and Mira Menezes, Dabney's current Social VPs about what we should expect to see at the party.

Q: What is your theme and how did you go about bringing it to life?

A: Our theme is "Deep Sea Horror". It will be a magical experience reaching the bottom of the ocean surrounded by creatures beyond your comprehension.

Q: What sights will there be to see?

A: Right now, we're constructing the jellyfish, which is this giant net that spans the courtyard and has decorations hanging down from it. It's going to have literal jellyfish hanging down from it, this year! There's also gonna be things like shipwrecks, deep sea ruins, and we're figuring out these other things right now. There will also be two murals to enjoy.

Q: What makes Dabney Interhouse different from other Interhouse parties?

A: Dabney Interhouse is a dry Interhouse. We don't serve alcohol. Rather than loud music and focusing on dancing, it will be more focused on vibes and the experience. It's scenery based, and we'll have a lot of food, so I invite everyone to come even if for a short while to see all these incredible sights that we are preparing.

Q: What's being done differently this year compared to other years?

A: For our big construction setpiece, we alternate between building our dome and our jellyfish. We did the dome last year, so this year's a jellyfish year. If you really liked the dome, it will be coming back next year!

Q: I hear there is going to be a ballpit. Is the ballpit going to be sanitary?

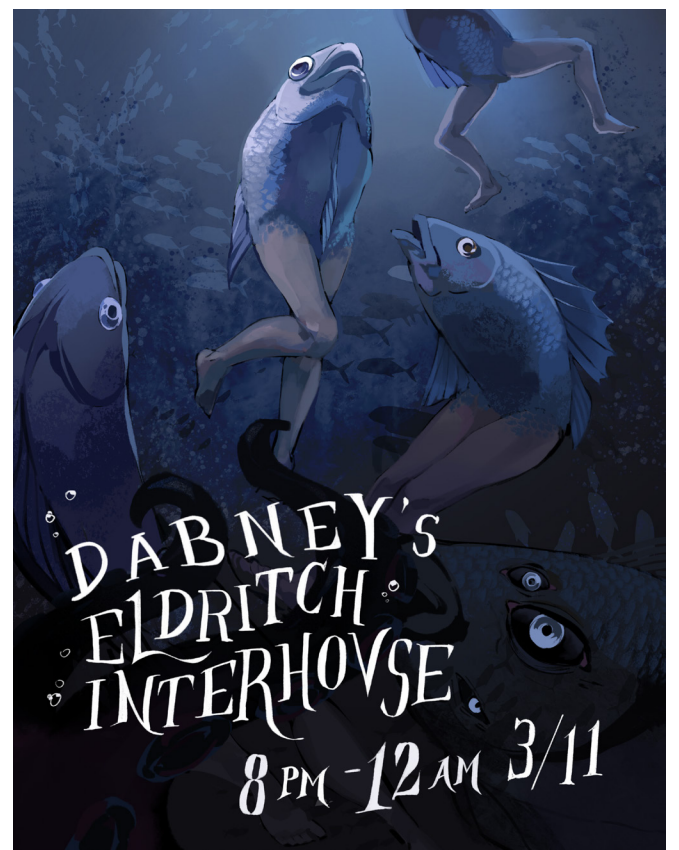
A: Each individual balls has been sanitized with bleach, and then the floor of the ball pit was sanitized this week, so the ball pit is as clean as it will ever be.

Q: Tell me about this fabric maze that's being constructed.

A: The fabric maze is a maze made of fabric where the room have different themes and people get to volunteer to create them. It will be filled by various constructions that are the reaches of what the Darbs can imagine. You will be able to experience a myriad of wonders within it, and it won't be limited to being "Deep Sea Horror" themed. It can be anything.

Q: Who made the flier to the right?

A: Jen Hu



SURVEY: DUAL-HOUSE MEMBER NAMES!

KENNY THAI | CULTURE

Members of Dabney House are called "Darbs", and members of Blacker House are called "Moles", so what do you call someone who's a member of both Dabney and Blacker? They're "Marbles".

"Marble" is among the most commonly used names for dual-house members, but many house combinations do not have an agreed upon joint name. Let's change that!

The QR code to the right leads to a Google Form where you can leave suggestions on names for all combinations of the eight Houses + Bechtel.

Link: <https://bit.ly/3EQQE88>

