RISING IN THE EAST
CAL STATE EAST BAY LOOKS TO THE FUTURE WITH A NEW CAMPAIGN
ZERO TO SIXTY
SECRET MEETINGS
MADE OF HAYWARD
Inside cover: Junior Danielle Armstrong is one of Cal State East Bay’s many first-generation students. She will graduate in 2018 with a liberal studies degree.

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PRESIDENT’S MESSAGE

Dr. Leroy M. Morishita
President

The beginning of the academic year is always a watershed period in the life of our university — it marks a season of renewed optimism and exciting possibilities.

That is especially true this year. In September, we kicked off “Rising in the East” — our first-ever comprehensive campaign, with a goal of raising $60 million to take Cal State East Bay to the next level. At the same time, we launched a high-profile branding campaign with ads on billboards and AC transit buses, in BART stations and trains, in print and online.

“Rising in the East” evokes the dawn of a new day — and I believe it is a new day at Cal State East Bay. The theme speaks to the aspirations of our students, the accomplishments of our faculty, and our optimism for the future. And it sends a message to the broader community that these are exciting times on our side of the Bay.

In the pages of this magazine, you will see many of the reasons we are a university on the rise. It’s because we have students like Jumila Guerrero-Cantore, a tireless champion of education rights for the deaf, and Cal State East Bay’s first Chancellor’s Doctoral Incentive Program recipient within the university’s Doctorate in Educational Leadership for Social Justice; faculty like Farhad Sabetan delivering online courses for Iranian students of the Bahá’í faith, who are banned from higher education and literally risking their lives to learn; and alumni like Randy Davis, who came here to achieve his dream of building an electronic DNA sequencing chip, and ended up building a biotech company that was acquired by the Swiss healthcare giant Roche.

The “Rising in the East” campaign is vital to the university’s future. Fresh funding will enable us to launch innovative programs, strengthen our faculty, offer more scholarships, and modernize and expand our facilities. Thanks to the efforts of our Foundation, friends, and alumni, we are already halfway to our goal.

We have a terrific story and it is time to tell it to the world. That is what “Rising in the East” is all about.

Go Pioneers!

Dr. Leroy M. Morishita
President

University Welcomes New Provost,
Dr. Edward Inch

Following a nationwide search and appointment, Dr. Edward S. Inch became provost and vice president of Academic Affairs for Cal State East Bay on August 1.

“I am very pleased that Dr. Inch has agreed to serve as provost and vice president for Academic Affairs at Cal State East Bay,” President Leroy M. Morishita said. “He is a proven leader with a collaborative and team-oriented style, who will continue strengthening our academic programs and student success initiatives. Dr. Inch’s knowledge of the California State University system and breadth of experience provide a strong background that will serve Academic Affairs and the university well. He is an excellent addition to the Cal State East Bay leadership team and will help take us to new heights.”

Inch has served as the dean of the College of Arts and Letters at California State University, Sacramento since 2011. He previously served as provost and vice president for Academic Affairs at Capital University in Columbus, Ohio, and has participated as an American Council on Education Fellow, and an accreditor for the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities. At Sacramento State, Inch led the initiative to double his college’s four-year graduation rates and improve retention rates, and served as a member of the university’s Strategic Planning Committee.

Inch said he is impressed with how Cal State East Bay students, staff, and faculty work together to improve opportunity, not just on campus, but across the region.

“What I think Cal State East Bay is really poised to do is to engage this region in very meaningful ways that give our students experiences that prepare them as civically engaged people,” Inch said. “I am most looking forward to hearing the insights of the people who work here, who understand the place, our students, and our community, and to think through with them the best strategies and direction for our university.”

Inch received his bachelor’s degree in speech communication from Western Washington University and his master’s degree in rhetoric and communication from the University of Oregon. He earned his doctorate in speech communication from the University of Washington.

Inch replaces Dr. Carolyn Nelson, who served as interim provost and vice president for Academic Affairs for the past year. Nelson resumed her position as dean of CSUEB’s College of Education and Allied Studies.

— Kimberly Tere-Hawkins

NATIONAL HONORS

Cal State East Bay was recently named to the President’s Higher Education Community Service Honor Roll, a first for the university. The honor roll, which started in 2006, is the highest federal recognition an institution can receive for its commitment to community, service learning, and civic engagement. A full list of recipients is available at nationalservice.gov/special-initiatives/honor-roll.

Inch replaces Dr. Carolyn Nelson, who served as interim provost and vice president for Academic Affairs for the past year. Nelson resumed her position as dean of CSUEB’s College of Education and Allied Studies.
Due to the Cal State East Bay Education Foundation’s success supporting and motivating underprivileged students in the Hayward Promise Neighborhood (HPN) program, it has been selected as one of 18 recipients nationwide that will share in $10 million from AT&T through the Aspire Connect to Success Competition. The program currently includes two specialists who work with high school administrators to support at-risk students.

The new contribution from AT&T will add an additional specialist will be added at Mount Eden High School part-time this fall.

“Not only do we have to maintain and expand the infrastructure that supports the work of our specialists and provide even more opportunities for students,” added at Mount Eden High School, “but we also have to manage and support the needs of the students, but gives them a sense of community and support. "Students need consistent connection, support, and hope that they can get through it," Baker said. "Anything to make their situation somewhat better."
MacArthur Foundation ‘Genius Grant’ Awarded to Alumnus

Cal State East Bay alumnus and graphic novelist Gene Luen Yang (MS ’03, Education) was recently announced as the recipient of one of 23 $625,000 no-strings-attached MacArthur Foundation fellowships, often referred to as a “genius grant.”

Yang and the other fellows were awarded the grants for their exceptional creativity and potential for future contributions to their respective fields, according to the foundation. “While our communities, our nation, and our world face both historic and emerging challenges, these 23 extraordinary individuals are some of the best hopes,” said Julia Starch, MacArthur Foundation president. “They are breaking new ground in their respective fields, in the arts, and in the sciences, often in unexpected ways. Their creativity, dedication, and impact inspire us all.”

Earlier this year, Yang was the first graphic novelist to be named National Ambassador for Young People’s Literature by the Library of Congress. Yang uses his work to explore history and multicultural experiences, and as a creative instructional medium for children and young adults. He is also one of the writers of DC Comic’s New Super-Man, a performance major on tuba, and an instructor. “In his time at Cal State East Bay, he has developed into a composer of sophisticated and substantial works, in- incliding the music for video games. ‘Jordan is an excellent composer and tuba player,’” said Lecturer Brian Perry, assistant professor of music education. “Jordan is a musician.”

Friends of the Arts Select Four New Award Recipients

Creative and performing arts students were honored last spring at an annual luncheon for excellence in the fields of music, fine art, creative writing, and performing arts by Cal State East Bay’s Friends of the Arts (FOA), a volunteer organization with a 25-year history of dedicated support to the university.

Every year, FOA presents scholarship awards to a student from each discipline, all housed within the College of Letters, Arts, and Social Sciences. This year, the winners are:

Arts: Isaiah Labao is pursuing his bachel- lor’s degree in fine arts (multidisciplinary) with a minor in creative writing, focusing on visual art and video game concept art. “What makes art so meaningful to me is the act of sharing my work and sharing a part of myself with others,” said Labao. “I’ve always found it hard to explain myself through words, so I find painting and drawing [as] a way to commu- nicate with others.”

Creative Writing: Luis Gua- lin (BA ’14, English) is pursuing his master’s degree in English at Cal State East Bay. He is the current editor of Ocean’s Race, the English department’s literary journal, as well as Arroyo Literary Review, the university’s print journal, which accepts submissions worldwide. English Professor Stephen Guti- errrez said, “Luis is a talented writer, having placed high in both the national nonfiction and flash contest this year, and he is a model literary citizen.”

Music: Undergraduate stu- dent Jordan Nadell began his studies at Cal State East Bay as a performance major on tuba, but is now focusing on composing. Nadell graduates this fall and aspires to write mu- sic for video games. “Jordan is an excellent composer and tuba player,” said Lecturer Jeffrey Miller and Nadell’s composition instructor. “In his volunteer organization with the College of East Bay he has developed into a composer of sophisticated and substantial works, incl- including a string quartet and a band piece. I look forward to his future development as a musician.”

Performing Arts: Mariah Kulen, who is also the recipient of the Leonard Libresco Award for Academic Excellence in Theatre and Dance, received the Jerry Rose Mem- orial Theatre/Dance Scholarship from FOA. Kulen believes in using theater as a vehicle for social awareness and plans to teach after graduating with her BA in the- ater arts. “I would love to teach people the rich and deep language, the positive and liberating experience, and the family that theater holds and creates,” she said.

Friends of the Arts is a volunteer orga- nization that comprises retired Cal State East Bay faculty and friends of the university, whose goals include increasing patron- age at arts events, raising funds to provide scholarships and grants to students in arts programs, and enhancing the culture of the region surrounding the university. “The arts help us understand others and to learn more about supporting outstanding cre- ative and performing arts students,” contact Director of Development. “In the College of East Bay he has developed into a composer of sophisticated and substantial works, incl- including a string quartet and a band piece. I look forward to his future development as a musician.”

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When she speaks, Jamila Guerrero-Cantor can’t help but move her hands. As an advocate, activist, and counselor in the deaf community for two decades, using sign language comes naturally to Cal State East Bay’s first-ever Chancellor’s Doctoral Incentive Program (CDIP) student within the university’s Doctorate in Educational Leadership for Social Justice. The CDIP is awarded annually to doctoral candidates who show promise in their proposed research and voted interest in competing for future tenure-track openings within the California State University system. CDIP participants can complete their degrees in any accredited doctoral program nationwide, and Guerrero-Cantor, who was also accepted at UCLA, chose Cal State East Bay.

As she explains why she left a coveted tenure-track position as a counselor for deaf students to study at CSUEB, she places one hand perpendicular to her chest, palm down, facing the floor. Then she takes her other hand, balls it into a fist, and punches up into the flat hand several times. “I was tapped out,” she says aloud while signing, almost as an afterthought. “I felt so frustrated, like I wanted to do so much more.”

While Guerrero-Cantor helped the deaf population grow from 19 to 90 students in just a few years in her former role, the more students she worked with, she explains, the more she wanted to do something that could help thousands, not just handfuls, at a time. The lifelong social justice advocate began wondering if other programs targeted toward at-risk populations could also be applied to deaf students — and if she could do the research to prove it.

For example, Guerrero-Cantor, who is also a mentor within the Puente Project, a program that originated at Chabot College and targets disadvantaged students by building a sense of community among them, thought a similar framework could be used as a starting point for her own studies. “It’s a no-brainer, it’s a recipe for success,” Guerrero-Cantor says. “You have a cohort of students, they become very bonded, [and] you connect teaching, counseling, and mentoring — those three components — and no wonder [The Puente Project has] a 98 percent success rate. I would love to do that with deaf students.”

Last spring, while she was still considering programs, Guerrero-Cantor met with Professor Lettie Ramirez as well as the director of Cal State East Bay’s EdD program, Associate Professor Bradley Porfilio.

“When I told them my vision, their response was ‘Oh, we can support you with that. You should come here.’ It was just this warmth and love. I saw the opportunity to do something practical while doing research, with a very supportive mentor, who has experience with the exact type of model I want to try.”

There was also another rare benefit Cal State East Bay offered Guerrero-Cantor: the chance to study alongside California School for the Deaf Fremont Principal Liann Osborne, who could add valuable insights and collaboration to her research. “As the EdD program’s first black, deaf student [Jamila and I have] discussed what we really want to see happens out there,” Osborne says. “We really want to set up a program where we can help first-generation families, communities that don’t value education as much … and we want to support deaf children and let them know that [higher] education is of value to them as well.”

While the framework of the research is still being defined, Guerrero-Cantor believes a model that brings more deaf students into the fold of higher education must include counselors who are deaf themselves and communicate in sign language, classes designed for deaf needs, as well as high-quality interpreter services.

“Believe we can learn so much from a community of people that have been so excluded,” she says. “The beauty and the potential of what they can teach us as a society are largely unknown because we haven’t supported a world where that has been possible. I’m really interested in getting deaf students to complete higher education degrees and then come back as leaders and lead these programs.”

BY KRISTA DOSSETTI PHOTOGRAPHY GARVIN TSO

THE Fight to Be Heard

CAL STATE EAST BAY’S FIRST CHANCELLOR’S DOCTORAL INCENTIVE PROGRAM EdD STUDENT CHAMPIONS ACCESS TO DEAF EDUCATION

BY KRISTA DOSSETTI PHOTOGRAPHY GARVIN TSO

THE Fight to Be Heard

CAL STATE EAST BAY’S FIRST CHANCELLOR’S DOCTORAL INCENTIVE PROGRAM

EdD STUDENT CHAMPIONS ACCESS TO DEAF EDUCATION

STUDENTS
Professor Matt Johnson has been working in artificial intelligence since its beginnings. He began studying computer science at Xavier University at age 15, dug into AI during his master’s work at Michigan State, and was one of the first PhD graduates in computer science from William & Mary. Since then, he’s worked on in-flight pilot automation for NASA, air-traffic control strategies, military surveillance, and more. Here, amidst fears of the technology evolving beyond human control, Johnson answers questions about what he believes are the real concerns with AI. Hint: It isn’t robots falling from the sky.

Ideas about the power and consequences of AI span the gamut — Stephen Hawking has said it could be the end of humanity. Where do you stand?

People are afraid of AI largely because of how it’s portrayed in science fiction and the movies — that it’s going to take over the world and giant robots are going to come out of the sky. At a cocktail party when someone hears I work in AI, the first question is always about Skynet (laughs). No, I’m not afraid of that.

There is a contingent of people, however, well-known people, who believe in what’s called “strong AI,” which is about getting the computer to actually be intelligent — as opposed to just seeming intelligent because it performs the task correctly or gets the right answer.
There’s no harm in researching [strong AI] and doing things with it in my opinion, but trying to get computers to act human isn’t the right approach. We should be continuing to come up with systems that make the best decisions given the information that they know. That’s not necessarily about being self-aware or conscious or philosophical, it’s just a program solving one particular task.

So AI isn’t about trying to recreate or mimic the way the human brain works?

No, it’s not about trying to build your thinking, feeling artificial friend. And it’s not even about understanding how the human brain works. To me, that’s a cognitive science. And, it’s also incredibly arro

Your specialty is machine learning?

Yes. Machine learning, which is the design and construction of al-
gorithms that can learn new behaviors from and make predictions on data. Modeling solutions after observable phenomena in nature is what I dig most, though, so my main area of research is genetic algorithms that can learn new behaviors from and make predictions out your knowledge or ability to control it is ethically disconcerting.

Artificial intelligence is being hailed as the fourth industrial revolu-
tion — a recent study by the World Economic Forum estimates a net loss of five million jobs due to AI in the next 20 years. It’s a real challenge, and I think it will happen a lot in China, since there’s so much in robotics for manufacturing. When people make decisions about whether to automate some-
thing, they’re focusing on a personal or business bottom line, not what happens to the workers. As a society, the more we automate, the more we’re going to have to adapt.

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thing, they’re focusing on a personal or business bottom line, not what happens to the workers. As a society, the more we automate, the more we’re going to have to adapt.
It’s 9:30 a.m. on an overcast summer morning at Cal State East Bay, and approximately 100 soon-to-be eighth- and ninth-grade girls are gathered for roll call outside the College of Science. They’re members of Girls Inc. of Alameda County, the largest affiliate of a national nonprofit dedicated to empowering young women to go to college, and each year, they descend on the university’s Hayward campus to get a taste of higher education.

Standing at about 5’6” and wearing a hoodie and jeans with fashionable rips at the knees, Shayna Whitley (MA ’16, Economics) easily blends in with the middle schoolers — a fact, they say, that helps them think of her as a big sister. But there’s no mistaking her authority, or the respect she commands from the young women. As program coordinator at Girls Inc. of Alameda County, Whitley designed the camp’s curriculum, arranges the weekly field trips, oversees the instructors, and reinforces — at every opportunity — the STEM-based lessons that are at the heart of the experience.

She quickly calls out changes in the schedule (a group leader is out sick and she’ll be taking over pool duty), and true to her warning, gives the information only once. When Whitley asks, “Are we clear?” dozens of young voices answer back with a resounding “Yes!” The group is dismissed and she heads for lifeguard duty with the first of the girls to swim for the day. Many of them, she notes, had never been in a pool before coming to Cal State East Bay.

En route, she confiscates a piece of cheesecake (it’s against Girls Inc.’s nutrition policy) and responds to exaggerations about frostbite by asking a group of “rookies” — eighth-grade — at what temperature water freezes. When one says it’s so cold she’s sure she’ll get pneumonia, Whitley is again on cue, inquiring, “Really? Does that make sense? How do you contract pneumonia?” (Virus transmission is on the list of course topics this summer.)

Later, as she tells her own story — she grew up in Washington, DC (her parents both work government tech jobs), got a bachelor’s degree in biology at Hampton University, and started with Girls Inc. in Virginia before following an opportunity with the organization to California — an interesting reciprocity surfaces between the young women she’s shepherding toward college and what led her to the master’s in economics program at Cal State East Bay.
"I noticed there was a deficit with the girls just understanding the way the world works," Whitley says. "And with science — I love science — but when you try to talk about biology and cells, the girls can't see cells, so they really don't care.

"Girls care about money," she continues. "And literally anything and everything we do has some type of economic component to it, so I really thought about that — and I started developing lessons for the girls [on economics] in a way that made sense to them."

However, after a good running start with talks about family finances, material goods, and the cost of college, Whitley soon came up against her own limitations. "I started researching economic literacy, and I started realizing how much I liked it — and how much I needed to know. I needed to know the mechanics of it," she explains.

Whitley began looking for master's degree programs locally, and it wasn't long before she was filling out an application for Cal State East Bay.

"When I tune in CNN, Bloomberg, CNBC, there's not a lot of people of color — at least not enough," she says. "It's a culture thing and maybe it's a community thing — my family was well off and we still didn't talk about money. I want to see more people of color take the reins, if you will, to understand their power. We could change the world," she emphasizes. "If everyone understood the economic principles, fundamentals, and repercussions of all the decisions that they make."

And she isn't waiting any time putting her knowledge to use: She's been sharing it with young women from throughout the East Bay, whom she calls "our future," and she recently took on a new role as a business finance analyst at PG&E.

"Economics is a scary word to [the girls]," Whitley says.

"Before [Girls Inc.], I was really confused about what economics was. Now I know we can use it to save our planet by not using too many things that are limited, like fossil fuels, plastic, and petroleum."

— Tatiana Le, 13

"I learned that everything has a cost, but also to use what I have, and to think outside the box on how to use what I have creatively."

— Kayla Jones, 13

"I learned that every lesson has a cost, but also to use what I have, and to think outside the box on how to use what I have creatively."

— Tatiana Le, 13

"The greatest thing that [Shayna] offers is that she knows how to make everything relevant to a girl's life," says Odette Nemes, senior director of development for Girls Inc. of Alameda County. "Whether it's economics, if it's science, if it's media literacy — she can always tie it in. She can get girls excited to learn about anything."

For example, in a lesson on the function of the eye that culminates in making eyeglasses, Girls Inc. educator Coralie Scimenes — also an East Bay alumna (BA '16, International Studies) — begins by playing an infomercial on glasses that correct colorblindness. After the girls watch people see, for the first time, the full spectrum of color in a sunset or their child's artwork, Scimenes asks them what they think of the product. Tentatively, an eighth-grader questions if it's fair to let people try on the glasses without letting them keep them, and how much they cost. More questions are raised about the role of the sponsor, a paint company, and what it gets out of advertising glasses.

Scimenes continues with a group quiz that lets the girls amass "money" that will be used to "buy" the materials they need to build their glasses, with any leftover funds counting as their "pay." The price of materials also fluctuates throughout the lesson, providing a basis for the girls to understand markets.

Whitley says it's a point about resource scarcity that re-surfaces across several lessons, while Scimenes notes that setting up the experiments in this way frequently leads to some interesting outcomes. "The girls who didn't do well [in the quiz] will go out during the break and study so they can come back and make more money. But the girls who have the most money — they don't always have the most money — they don't always have the most money, but they always have the most money."

"I know I'll use [economics] when I'm in college — when I'm on my own and trying to figure out life for myself ... you can't just go around spending money on things you don't need."

— Alexis Guzman, 13

"I've had a lot of role models who are showing me the benefits of saving. Money is scarce. We need to learn how to think towards the future and what could be useful for times beyond right now."

— Michelle Ohwobete, 14
As both a first-generation American and the first in her family to go to college, Cal State East Bay alumna Leona Tang (BS ’91, Business Administration) is familiar with narrow expectations for women. “My own grandmother would always say, ‘You’re going to be a doctor,’” Tang recalls. So, when she was accepted at UC Davis, young Leona indeed began preparing for a life in medicine. “I nearly flunked out of college!” she laughs today. “When I transferred to Cal State Hayward, I started studying accounting because that’s what I was interested in, and I loved it.”

It’s a lesson Tang, who is former head of internal auditing at Charles Schwab and a repeat name on the SF Business Times’s annual Most Influential Women in Business list, has been sharing with young women through Girls Inc. for 15 years. She’s passionate about showing the young women their full potential outside professions they might be more familiar with (lawyer, doctor, teacher), as well as achieving greater equality for professional women everywhere. “I did hiring in my previous position and women are doing well actually, but there are few ethnic minorities,” Tang says. “And like myself, they might be the first one in their household to go to college, so no one is telling them how to pick majors. “I spend my time trying to help advance women, and girls in particular,” Tang adds, “because I hope one day we don’t have the most influential women list, it will just be person. But to get there, we need to see more women — especially minority women — in leadership roles. The more girls can see women doing things they’re not used to seeing women doing, it’s helpful for them to know they can aspire to be that as well.”

Model Success
Alumna shares her passion for Girls Inc.

Participants of Girls Inc. of Alameda County gather at Cal State East Bay each summer. Girls Inc. is a national nonprofit that inspires young women to be “Strong, Smart, and Bold” — the organization’s motto — through free programs and mentorship. Girls Inc. of Alameda County is the largest affiliate of the organization and serves 8,000 girls and families.
The car that Tesla Motors founder and CEO Elon Musk drives is unlike any other. It may appear to be a normal Tesla Model X on the outside, but look closely at the car’s 259-horsepower front motor (762 combined) and you’ll find the initials ‘SP’ hastily written with a Sharpie pen.

Scott Pallesen (BS ’14, Physics) was working as an engineering technician in the dynamometer lab at the Tesla headquarters in Palo Alto when a spark of excitement flew through the department. The team learned that the motor they were testing would soon be installed in the famed entrepreneur’s car. Pallesen, caught up in the excitement, couldn’t help himself.

“As I’m uninstalling the unit after a test, I signed the motor,” he says with a twinkle in his eye. “It’s actually still in the car. Elon’s driving [it], and I tested it.”

Pallesen’s route from Cal State East Bay’s College of Science to Tesla’s dyno labs has been fast and exciting — not unlike the cars themselves. And similar to Tesla’s built-to-last electric vehicles, Pallesen is looking forward to a long ride in the car business. But it wasn’t always that way.

IGNITION SPARK

Pallesen graduated in 2014 with a physics degree and an uncertain future. He was working at an athletic shoe store in Livermore and considering applying for grad school or a job at Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory. Then one day his father, who does high-end custom metal fabrication, invited him along to install stainless steel staircases and handrails at the Tesla Motors headquarters in Palo Alto.

“I saw a bunch of people on computers doing what looked like AutoCAD (2D and 3D design) and modeling,” Pallesen recalls. He has never considered himself a stereotypical “car guy,” but he has a mechanical and technical aptitude — from years at his father’s elbow — and the work looked appealing, so he submitted an application.

Alumnus Scott Pallesen works in Tesla’s dynamometer lab, and says his ability to demonstrate critical thinking skills is what got him hired at the cutting-edge automaker.
Pallesen’s timing was perfect; just a few hours later his phone rang. After a three-part interview (a sit-down conversation, a mechanical skills test, and an assessment of his ability to read technical drawings), he was hired as a production associate — basically, an assembly-line worker — in the fall of 2014.

**MOUNTING SPEED**

The labor Pallesen began doing on the shop floor was a far cry from the design work in sleek offices that had inspired him to apply.

He began with a physically demanding 12-hour swing shift — 5 p.m. to 5 a.m., five nights a week — building doors for the Tesla Model S, the brand’s flagship electric car. Over the course of several months he got to know the equipment engineers who maintained the assembly-line robots (the plant is renowned for its cutting-edge automation) and, intrigued by their work, asked if he could learn from them — on his own time.

The engineers and Pallesen’s supervisor agreed, and soon he was working an additional 12-hour shift on the weekends, repairing and maintaining the factory’s robots.

After nine stimulating but exhausting months, he was primed for another challenge. “I went to my supervisor and said, ’I’ve got experience doing all this other stuff,’ ” Pallesen says. “And he said, ’Well, we need to get you out of here. I’ve been looking at other positions for you already.’” Pallesen embarked on another series of interviews, one of which included a geometry problem on a whiteboard. (He aced it.)

“[The manager] was looking for critical thinking — could I break down the problem?” Pallesen notes. “Then he took me on a tour of the lab. I was like, ’What did I just get into?’ Because it’s loud, things are spinning, and I had never touched equipment like that before.”

But in June 2015, Pallesen indeed began testing motors on those loud, spinning machines — they’re called dynamometers, and they measure force, torque, and power.

“It was a lot of fast-paced work,” Pallesen says. “Engineers would bring their motors down, and I’d test them. The tests ran for two hours, then we’d take the motor off the dynamometer and put another one on it. It’s a very tight schedule.”

In spite of the breakneck pace, Pallesen once again found time for side projects. The motors, weighing between 200 and 350 pounds apiece, are kept on tall racks and retrieved using a forklift. Some 40 motors are on the racks at any given time waiting to be tested, and retrieving the next one in the queue used to take technicians 20 minutes or more. But thanks to a database application Pallesen developed, which tracks...
the motors by serial number and uses a scanner to identify each one, the retrieval time dropped to under a minute. “All the departments were impressed,” he says with a slight grin. “They all wanted the code for the application.”

Pallesen’s willingness to do more than expected doesn’t surprise Cal State East Bay Associate Professor and Department of Physics Chair Erik Helgren. Helgren recalls an upper-division physics class Pallesen took with him that covered the Compton generator — a device invented by Arthur Holly Compton to detect the Coriolis force (a principle of physics that explains the motion of objects relative to a rotating frame of reference). Helgren assigned a related homework project and, the professor recalls, “I half-jokingly said that I’d be impressed if someone built one over the weekend.

“Sure enough, on Monday morning Scott came walking in with a homemade Compton generator,” he continues. The class was able to spend much of the next session reproducing Compton’s experiments using Pallesen’s device. “Scott did his best work in lab-based activities, whether it was in a lab class or the research lab,” Helgren says.

Within four months of starting work in Tesla’s Palo Alto dyno lab, Pallesen was promoted to a different lab — this one in Sunnyvale — to perform long-term tests that simulate actual driving conditions. (Tesla founder Musk has set a goal that his cars last a million miles or more, and these long tests are key to meeting that goal.) Here, Pallesen is one of just two people conducting tests that can run for weeks or even months on end, generating up to 300 channels of data.

Although his current assignment at Tesla is less physically demanding than the 72-hour weeks he spent building Model S doors on the shop floor, his drive for excellence is just as intense. Case in point: A single long-term test produces at least 10 gigabytes of data, and Pallesen strives to deliver those results as cleanly as possible.

“I’m very particular, and I want the tests to be run perfectly,” he says. “There are hundreds of data columns, and my job — depending on the test — is to put [the data] on a big graph and analyze it. I look at the highs, the lows, the averages. This is what the senior engineers want to see. I want to get as much data as I can to the engineers, because I don’t want to hear that [a part I tested] is suddenly failing. Because then I can’t be proud of what I do.”

Pallesen clearly feels a sense of belonging to — even ownership of — Tesla and its vehicles. And when he talks about his work, it’s with phrases such as, “I want you to have your car forever.”

He attributes his attitude to Tesla’s culture, which seems more akin to that of a technology company than an automaker. Team-building exercises include video-game marathons, trips to the Tesla battery-manufacturing “giga-factory” in Nevada, and even an outing to watch one of Musk’s rockets launch into space.

Through it all, Pallesen says his habit of asking for (and finding) more work has only been encouraged, and he takes little credit for how he’s pushed himself at every turn to get ahead: “This just kind of happened,” he says, “but it’s been really cool, so I don’t think I’m ever leaving.”

Who: Regina Robideaux (BS ’81, Physical Education)
What: Team Lead, Plastics Injection Molding
Why: I work in the area that handles the molds for different parts of the car, specifically the skin that goes over the bumper. I’m also the go-to person for breakdowns, training, and documentation on the machines that create the molds.

“I remember …” Playing intercollegiate sports (softball). We would travel to other colleges and vice versa, and it was an opportunity to see areas of California that I hadn’t been to. Plus I love a good, long drive — still do!
Under sparkling lights and a setting sun, more than 400 Cal State East Bay faculty and staff, students, alumni, and supporters of the university mingled and listened to inspirational speeches to celebrate the public announcement of a $60 million comprehensive campaign, Rising in the East: The Campaign for Cal State East Bay.

As the university approaches its 60th anniversary, it is rising to the challenge of educating the most diverse student population in the 23-campus CSU system, many of whom are the first in their families to attend college.

“Each of us has a journey that led to Cal State East Bay, where the journey continues, fueled by a fresh infusion of energy, ideas, and inspiration,” President Leroy M. Morishita said at the event in September.

To date, CSUEB has raised more than half its goal, which will continue the university’s prominence as a leader in K-12 STEM education, and has extended the reach of programs like Hayward Promise Neighborhood.

“The goal of the campaign is simple — it’s about people, place, and purpose,” said Jack Acosta, chair of the Cal State East Bay Educational Foundation. “Students come to Cal State East Bay as one person and leave as another — their time here is sacred. Giving provides the scholarships, faculty support, modernized spaces, and programs that fuel their learning during this transformation.”

The September 24 gala featured prominent speakers such as Golden State Warrior’s co-owner and entertainment executive Peter Guber and California State University Chancellor Timothy P. White (MS ’72, Kinesiology). Guber is considered a pioneer in the...
Professor Karina Garbesi (left) and Associate Professor Erik Helgren presented the university’s Solar Suitcase program at the event; the suitcase provides life-saving, portable renewable energy sources to resource-deprived countries.

Clockwise from top left: Golden State Warrior’s co-owner and entertainment executive Peter Guber gave the keynote speech; alumnus and Emmy winner J.R. Havlan emceed the evening; Chancellor Timothy P. White (MS ’72, Kinesiology) shared his own journey from Cal State East Bay student to leader of the CSU.

Eight-time Emmy award-winning comedy writer J.R. Havlan (BS ’87, Business Administration) encored the evening and regularly had the massive tent of supporters laughing at his antics and rides slips of his own fundraising attempts on campus, including selling lemonade for $50 a glass and giving students piggyback rides to class.

Speakers and campaign materials from the night highlighted the university’s ability to fulfill its promise to the communities and region it serves through three key initiatives: people, place, and purpose. The university hopes each initiative will empower students from diverse backgrounds to reach their full potential and use the transformative power of knowledge to serve the public good.

To illustrate the campaign’s goals, President Morishita made several exciting announcements, detailing how the initiatives will be brought to life through donor support.

Under “People,” the president announced the university would continue to focus on securing student scholarships and paid internships, create a student emergency fund, establish distinguished professors of practice, and enhance staff expertise.

For “Place,” Morishita spoke about a new “Innovation Corridor” at the heart of the Hayward campus that will envision collaborative learning spaces of the future. New and renovated spaces will provide open gathering areas for students and faculty; encourage entrepreneurial and inquiry-based discovery; and feature technology-enhanced learning tools and a library for the new millennium.

“Ours is an era of invention — of creation and discovery,” said Morishita. “It is a time when individuals and communities are revisiting old problems and finding new solutions. And it is a time when we seek to educate students who will think deeply, be critical in their thinking, and become leaders who will drive change.”

Drawing from the theme of the evening, Morishita announced Cal State East Bay will continue to promote excellence and diversity in STEM education and work to solve the important issues of the community while developing future professionals with the critical thinking skills to do the same. “Purpose is responsible leadership that makes a difference, solving the issues that matter to our communities and the region,” he said.

And finally, for “Purpose,” Morishita announced Cal State East Bay will continue to promote excellence and diversity in STEM education and work to solve the important issues of the community while developing future professionals with the critical thinking skills to do the same. “Purpose is responsible leadership that makes a difference, solving the issues that matter to our communities and the region,” he said.

According to Morishita, with strong philanthropic support, the university will continue making a dramatic difference in the lives of tens of thousands of students, who will...
will then make a difference in the places they work and the communities where they live.

This point was exemplified throughout the evening by featuring the "journeys" of several current students, alumni, and faculty, who both spoke at the event and were highlighted in videos. "Together, we can honor the journeys that brought us here, while ensuring that succeeding generations of students, faculty, and alumni record their own remarkable journeys for years to come," Morishita said. "With generous philanthropic support, Cal State East Bay will continue to rise."

James Monroe Iglehart (BA '98, Theatre), the Tony award-winning Broadway actor and singer, shared his experience of growing up in Hayward and finally deciding to pursue a theater degree at Cal State East Bay. "My journey led me from a church choir in Hayward to the Broadway stage and my dream role in Aladdin," Iglehart said. "I was blessed to have a lot of good people guiding me along the way." Iglehart also confessed that he still hears the stage-direction commands of the late Professor Emeritus Edgardo de la Cruz in his head when he performs each night, and reminded the audience how influential the faculty is on the students at Cal State East Bay.

Other highlights included student Roberto Granados, 17, and his brother Ernesto, 12, musical virtuosos. The siblings performed an original flamenco piece and received a standing ovation. The work of Jamila Guerero-Cantu, a student and activist in the university's Doctorate in Leadership for Social Justice program was also featured, along with professors Karina Garbesi and Erik Helgren of the university's Solar Suitcase program. Garbesi shared a story about working in an African community where women were dying during childbirth because there was no reliable electricity — doctors would pull out cell phones and hold flashlights in their mouths to deliver babies, including perform C-sections. It was the impetus for the now well-known CSUEB Solar Suitcase program, a hybrid environmental studies–physics class in which students build portable solar light systems that are then sent to energy-impoverished areas throughout the world. "Our journey calls for a very special suitcase, packed with the power to bring light to dark corners of the world, and to teach our students about technology, sustainable energy, and social justice," Garbesi said.

Morishita and his wife Barbara Hedani-Morishita closed the evening by presenting Havlan with the special gift of his very own letterman jacket, which they joked he hope he will wear when he accepts his ninth Emmy. The Morishitas then thanked the attendees for their continued support, wishing them well wherever their respective journeys lead.

"I have the profound privilege of hearing about [many] journeys, and the people behind them, every day," Morishita said. "These are the reasons we are a university on the rise: people with a passion to pursue a purpose, in a place that makes it possible. I invite you to join us as we embark on this next critical stage of our journey."

Clockwise from top left: (Left to right) Barbara Hedani-Morishita, Jerry H. Tokofsky, Karen L. Oliver (BA '74, Art), President Leroy M. Morishita, Chancellor Timothy P. White (MS '72, Kinesiology), and Karen N. White gathered for a snapshot; Cal State East Bay students helped present the university's Solar Suitcase program; a memento booklet, "The Journey to Here," featuring the stories of the evening’s participants was given to each guest.
In any given night, after he completes a full day of teaching at Cal State East Bay, College of Business and Economics Lecturer Farhad Sabetan opens his computer, logs into an online classroom, and begins his lessons all over again. His web students are eager and depending on the course, they learn more or less the same principles as the students he sees face to face. But there’s a distinct difference: the online students are studying in secret, halfway around the world.

Sabetan has been teaching for the Bahá’í Institute for Higher Education (BIHE) for several years, volunteering his time to help students who, because of their faith, are banned from attending universities in Iran. Instead of filling lecture halls, the students at BIHE gather secretly in living rooms and basements or log in to secure chat rooms, knowing full well that if they are caught going to college, it could mean years of imprisonment.

Sabetan, a Bahá’í, left Iran in 1976 before the Islamic Revolution. Because of his involvement in the Bahá’í community and human rights activities, he has never returned. But his love of his faith and desire to help the next generation of Bahá’í learners permeate nearly every facet of his life. “It’s not paid work, but the students are eager … I’ve met quite a few of them and they are amazing and driven,” he says. “They are really thirsty to be among their peers and engage in intellectual discourse.”

While not recognized formally by the Iranian government, BIHE has 700 faculty members like Sabetan, many of whom were once teachers at government-run universities in Iran but who lost their jobs due to their affiliation with the Bahá’í faith. The school currently offers more than 1,050 classes ranging from Persian literature to applied chemistry, and accepts 450 out of roughly 1,000 applicants each year.

“[BIHE] asks its instructors to apply the same conditions and standards as they apply to their own courses in the universities in which they teach,” Sabetan says. “It is important because BIHE strives to achieve the highest possible academic standard in the face of the limitations it has.”
“Sometimes there would be a man sitting outside on a chair pretending to read the newspaper, just like in the [spy] movies.”

UNDER FIRE

Adherents to the Bahá’í faith are the largest non-Muslim religious minority group in Iran. While Bahá’ís have been persecuted for the past 150 years, followers have been targeted more intensively since 1979 when Islam became the country’s national religion. Since that time, Bahá’ís have been barred from everything from seeking an education to owning a business.

According to Anthony Vance, director of public affairs for the Bahá’ís of the United States, a memorandum published in 1991 promoted restrictions to be placed on the Bahá’ís — at least not in the way that is typical of Western governments — this action spurred years of persecution.

Documents issued after the 1991 memorandum outlined the various ways in which progress should be blocked for all Bahá’ís living in Iran, including denial of admission to universities and expulsion in the case of mistaken identity.

Former BIHE student Niknaz Aftahi, 30, who now lives in Berkeley, remembers being kicked out of libraries because she was required to show an identification card that indicated she was Bahá’í. Sabetan says other Bahá’ís have been banned from everything from seeking an education to owning a business.

When Aftahi was studying at BIHE, where she was accepted at her own risk rather than opting not to go, the university had a small architecture studio. But students knew they were being watched and after a couple years, the learning space was shut down by the government.

“Sometimes there would be a man sitting outside on a chair pretending to read the newspaper, just like in the [spy] movies,” Aftahi says.

Similarly, Sabetan shares that interrupted or stalled communications while he’s teaching classes online is typical. One day, he recalls, an “11th student” showed up in his 10-person virtual class and he and his students figured it was a government official listening in.

IT’S A REALITY

“I knew it would be difficult [to hide my education], but the whole time you’re in school, and you are planning for your university education … you’re thinking, ‘This is the last year of depriving Bahá’ís from entering university, and hopefully the educational discrimination is going to end, and I can enter university with all my high school friends,’” she says. “From an early age, you’re always thinking and wondering if the university door will open.”

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“It’s a reality most Cal State East Bay students couldn’t fathom, but Aftahi says for BIHE students, living with the fear of being found studying became second nature.”

THE PRICE OF LEARNING

When asked why students don’t just lie about their faith on the documents required to attend other colleges in Iran, Vance explains, “Honesty is a very important, basic spiritual trait in the Bahá’í faith, and therefore to lie about anything is inappropriate, but so lie about one’s fundamental belief [in] and relationship with God would be particularly inappropriate.”

Aftahi is one of about 50,000 students who have studied at BIHE since its inception in 1987.

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“The risk is always there because the government knows about [BIHE] … at any moment if they wanted to arrest these students they could,” Sabetan adds.

Instead of fearing that possibility, though, he says it drives them.

“I see that these students are so eager, they themselves are going out of their way to pursue an education. They’re sacrificing a lot to learn — it’s the very least I can [do] to help them stand for an hour here or there. There’s often a mix of feelings — it’s sad and absolutely joyful at the same time.”

Government overreach also requires teachers like Sabetan to get creative with what and how they teach, and for students to play catch-up with major international events or ideas.

“At East Bay, I have to keep myself current with the literature, economic trends, and latest findings and applications,” Sabetan said. “This is tremendously helpful to BIHE students, who are hardly getting any unbiased news in Iran … of course as they learn of the latest developments, they need to catch up with a lot of background information, which is not easily accessible to them.”

But teachers are dedicated to making sure students are learning on par or above their peers at traditional universities both in Iran and beyond. Many have gone on to pursue graduate or doctoral degrees at universities worldwide.

There are now 69 higher education institutions, including Yale, Boston University, and UC Berkeley that count BIHE graduates among their students.

After Aftahi graduated from BIHE in 2010, she applied for graduate school in the United States. Initially, she was challenged in trying to explain why she graduated from a nontraditional university. However, she was accepted at UC Berkeley and started school in 2012, graduating with her master’s degree in 2014.

“Usually BIHE students struggle to introduce their school here. You have to explain the whole story of”
Founded by Bahá’u'lláh in 19th-century Persia, the Bahá’í world community has more than five million followers and is established in 191 countries. It is a monotheistic religion emphasizing the spiritual unity of all humankind. Teachings and doctrine are based on three core principles: the unity of God, the unity of religion, and the unity of humanity. Other values include equality between men and women; independent investigation of truth; and spiritual solutions to economic problems.

However, since 1991, when a memorandum was approved by Iran’s supreme leader, thousands of Bahá’ís have faced extreme persecution under the Islamic Republic.

“It’s really part of an overall plan to marginalize the Bahá’í community by impoverishing it and keeping it under-educated,” says Anthony Vance, director of public affairs for the Bahá’ís of the United States.

According to the NGO Bahá’í International Community (BIC), more than 200 Bahá’ís have been killed and hundreds more have been imprisoned and tortured in the past 40 years. Tens of thousands have lost their jobs, access to education, and other rights. Government-led attacks on the Bahá’ís have intensified in the past decade, and according to the BIC, more than 7,000 pieces of anti-Bahá’í propaganda have been issued through Iran’s state-run media since 2013.

Source: bahai.org

Understanding Bahá’í Persecution: A Brief History

“Uncertain Future

Like Sabetan, Aftahi was involved with several human rights activities that prevent her from returning to Iran (or else risk arrest), but she is hopeful, nonetheless, of returning to teach there someday.

“I would love to go back in the long run, especially for teaching and practicing architecture in my own country,” Aftahi says. “As much as I am happy and grateful for the opportunity that I have now to advance in my profession in the U.S. and contribute to my community, I would love to be able to go back to Iran, and contribute to the welfare and life of my country. One-on-one communication with the students and having physical classes makes it much easier to communicate ideas in architecture, so hopefully if things change, I can go back in [the] near future.

For now, she’s resolved to helping BIHE however she can. She currently teaches classes online alongside her husband, also a former BIHE student, in addition to her work at ELS Architecture & Design — a top-ranking architecture firm in the U.S.

She says the couple’s connection to the school and understanding of what students sacrifice to study are what inspire them to volunteer to teach.

“I think especially the experience that we went through, all the challenges that we’ve experienced, have allowed us to know how the students feel,” Aftahi says. “I know how frustrating it is to need a book, and being banned from it, even though what you’re doing is not wrong — in fact it’s good and positive.”

In the coming months, Sabetan is hoping to help the school beef up its graduate programs. The advanced programs are not as easy to start and support since graduate and doctoral students need access to more research materials, which is difficult to come by considering the ban on public libraries for Bahá’ís. Currently, BIHE offers graduate degrees in sociology, psychology, civil engineering, and computer science. Sabetan says he’s also interested in doing what he can to inform the world about the persecution of the Bahá’ís, particularly surrounding education.

“Iran has one of the biggest brain drains in the world,” he explains. “Education is not a crime — I’m not saying it should be free, but at least it shouldn’t be illegal.”

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Gabby Delgado was seven years old when a single event made her aware, for the first time, of the two challenges that would shape her life: She couldn’t speak English, and her family was at risk of being deported.

Her mother was away, attending the funeral of Gabby’s grandmother in Mexico, when she was prevented from returning to the United States because she didn’t have citizenship papers. Delgado’s father, a construction worker, couldn’t care for Gabby and her sister alone, so he sent them to stay with family in Southern California until the documentation could be sorted out.

It was there that Gabby’s aunt began taking her to preschool classes alongside her younger sister, just to quickly get her into some type of school. Over the course of a month’s time, as she learned alongside children half her age, her trouble with English became painstakingly clear.

"I didn’t even know the days of the week. That’s how bad it was," Delgado recalls.

She also remembers overhearing the adults in her life wonder at how she had gone under their radar for so long. "My aunt noticed and told my mom, ‘She doesn’t know much. I don’t understand why these children in preschool know more than her.’"

Today, at the beginning of her sophomore year at Cal State East Bay, as she reflects on a journey that began with repeating the second grade, on how she’s never been to the beach, or gone camping, or seen snow ("I guess because my father didn’t have a license we couldn’t risk it"), Delgado seems determined not to show any shame, quick to assure that it’s fine to talk about it — though she rushes through the hard parts.

She lives minutes from the university’s Hayward campus, just blocks from Harder Elementary where her younger brother, eight, now attends, and a little farther from Tenneyson High.

The numbers are in — more students like Gabby Delgado are going to college, thanks to Hayward Promise Neighborhood.
School, where she graduated from and one of her sisters is now a senior. Delgado’s other sister, 12, is at nearby Martin Luther King, Jr. Middle School.

The neighborhood the Delgados live in is known as Hayward’s Jackson Triangle — where families struggle with poverty, a high rate of single-income, female-headed households, and nearly twice the state average of English as a Second Language speakers (see By the Numbers).

It’s also where an initiative called Hayward Promise Neighborhood, now closing in on the end of its fifth and final year of grant funding from the U.S. Department of Education, targets the students in those homes — kids whose financial and family circumstances just happen to make it easy for their educations to derail.

Delgado was first introduced to HPN as a junior in high school, when Cal State East Bay students began circulating as tutors in a common lounge area at Tenneyson High School, and where she, motivated by another deportation scare, was seeking help with pre-calculus.

“Towards the end of my sophomore year, my dad lost his job because he didn’t have papers,” she says. “It was like, ‘Gabby, you need to wake up and you need to start working, and you need to get good grades because if you don’t, how are you going to go to school?’” Her voice breaks ever so slightly over the last few words but quickly firms up again. “I got a job at Panda Express … and in my junior year, I was just like, ‘I’m going to work and I’m going to take AP classes and I’m going to make it.’”

“These are students who aren’t entitled,” says Carolyn Nelson, dean of the College of Education and Allied Studies at Cal State East Bay and principal investigator on the HPN grant. “And it’s fun to show them, through the opportunities that HPN provides, that they are — they are entitled to a college education, a career of their choice, and all the same success as their peers.”

Nelson is referring to the web of programs that HPN supports (see What Makes a Promise Neighborhood).

Marisol Pena will soon be the first in her family to graduate from college, and she proudly says she is “Made in Hayward,” the official slogan of Hayward Unified School District.

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What Makes a Promise Neighborhood

The Harlem Children’s Zone (HCZ) in Harlem, New York, is the model for the nearly two dozen Promise Neighborhoods throughout the United States today. HCZ has existed since 1970, but in the late ’90s, under the leadership of children’s advocate Geoffrey Canada, a different approach to supporting at-risk youth began to form. Take all the interventions available within a community and offer them via a single pipeline that supports kids at every stage of life.

“Children can have challenges at any stage of their development, so it’s necessary to have programs in place over the long term to make sure a temporary crisis does not have life-altering consequences,” says Anne Williams-Isom, current CEO of HCZ (Canada retired as CEO in 2014 but maintains his role as president). “In order to break the cycle of poverty for an underserved community, we need to guarantee all children have the supports they need when they need them.”

Since its inception, HCZ had garnered national and international attention, and has been featured in the New York Times, on the Oprah Winfrey Show, and in the controversial documentary Waiting for Superman, among many others.

In 2010, based on the success of HCZ (which reported a 93 percent college acceptance rate across its high school programs in 2015 alone), President Barack Obama announced the spread of the “Promise Neighborhood” model throughout the country. In 2011, Hayward was one of the first full grant awardees to receive $25 million, spread across five years.
“Even though their parents might tell them or their teachers [that they can go to college], it’s easier for them to connect with people who look like them.”

provided through a variety of Hayward community partners and funding administered by Cal State East Bay. The focus is on creating a pipeline that supports children from infancy through college, with family services added to make it easier for parents to focus on their children—free prenatal care, a community food bank, access to computers and technology training, and more.

And it’s working. Over the past four years of data capture, a spike of 149 percent has been seen in the cumulative enrollment from Tennyson and Hayward High Schools into Cal State East Bay. On campus today, this includes not only first-time freshmen, but also students who are persisting with their degrees through their sophomore and junior years.

Just ask Roxana Cruz, who used to be the UC Berkeley early academic outreach advisor in Tennyson High’s college and career center, where she first met Delgado.

“My job was to collaborate with staff on campus to build a college and career-growth culture. I encountered great parents wanting to help with that goal, but [there wasn’t] enough of us to really create the impact that we wanted to have,” Cruz says.

According to Cruz, who left that position to cast a wider net as HPN’s outreach coordinator for service learning, “The kids that came in [to the advising center] — it was split between somewhat knowing [about college] and not knowing at all,” Pena says. “And, if they thought college was a possibility, they didn’t consider a UC or CSU or a private college. You see every side of it. We went into the classrooms to tell kids about the deadlines and application process and a lot of them were like, ‘What is that? Where do I go?’ They don’t know what’s available to them with financial aid and how to apply.”

“The service-learning piece is huge in what [Cal State East Bay] students are giving back to our schools and our students,” says Hayward High School Principal David Seymour. “I think [the high school students] take [the reality of going to college] a little more seriously than if an administrator or a teacher or a parent says, ‘You [have] do this and you [have] do this’ — it’s someone who’s roughly their age actually living it, and the kids get a lot out of that.”

The hope is that once they’ve been mentored through HPN, the students will be inspired to pay it forward.

“Ms. Cruz was like a second mom to me back in high school,” Delgado says. “She helped me with everything — grants, scholarships, personal statements, CSU applications — she was really there for me. And when she came to work at Cal State East Bay, she sent me an email saying, ‘You were helped by HPN, you should work for us.’”

This, Delgado reports, after she chose Cal State East Bay from the first CSU she was accepted to. She settled on CSUEB because it gave her the best financial aid package.

“Some things are hard to capture in data,” Nelson adds. “There are these aspects of change in human lives that you can’t capture in numbers, but when you hear the stories universities will always give degrees. But we are re-envisioning the purpose of the degree in such a way that is much more meaningful, a better practice that is tied to lifting up the community around the university — and teaching students the importance of giving back to it.”

At least in Delgado’s case, it’s an easy connection to make. After taking Cruz up on her offer to apply for a service-learning position with HPN, she spent a year tutoring kids at Hunter Elementary with the HPN partner Super Stars Literacy program, and was then able to use that experience to obtain a job that paid double in fall 2016. But her eyes still well up when she describes what it was like working with the third-graders.

“I saw myself in them; I knew I was one of them once, and I needed a lot of help back then. I was really patient, too, because I know that tried to be. And just talking to them — every single day you could see change. It makes me really happy to have been a part of that.”
**RISK & REWARD**

**RANDY DAVIS NEEDED A SECOND CHANCE — AND CAL STATE EAST BAY GAVE IT TO HIM**

**BY KRISTA DOSSETTI PHOTOGRAPHY GARVIN TSO**

It was June 2014 when 58-year-old Randy Davis (BS ’02, Biological Sciences; MS ’06 Biological Sciences) got the news. Multinational Swiss healthcare company Roche was purchasing his electronic DNA sequencing chip to the tune of $125 million. And if the chip could meet certain targets in detecting and reading DNA over the next several years — not entirely proven at the time of Roche’s acquisition — Davis and his colleagues would receive an even bigger payout.

More importantly, if those benchmarks are fulfilled (Davis reports existing developments are underway), the electronic DNA chip will take him one step closer to fulfilling his dreams of revolutionizing personalized medicine. “Imagine that you go into your doctor’s office and spit in a tube, and while you’re having your consultation, your entire genome is being read in about 30 minutes,” Davis explains. “All of your treatments, things you might be at risk for or need screenings for, or a person’s allergy risks for certain medications, wouldn’t be guesswork anymore. Everything will be tailored to your specific DNA.”

But for the tech-minded entrepreneur and co-founder of Genia Technologies, it almost didn’t happen. And not because of the sleepless nights, failed hypotheses, and draining finances that characterize many great startups. It was because after committing to the big move — quitting a successful job and pursuing a career in a discipline far removed from any prior experience — no university would admit him.

“Everywhere I went, no one would give me the time of day,” Davis recalls. “I don’t mind telling you I took myself out for a [drink] after that. I felt really, really low.”

Eventually, Davis would come home one day and ask his wife Pat what she thought of him giving up his career to start anew. “I only found out after the fact that everyone had turned him down,” Baysdorfer continues. “And it makes me want to strangle my [peers]. You see someone who is a mature guy, motivated, intelligent. He’s exactly the sort of person that second chances were meant for.”

Today, Davis, who obtained both bachelor’s and master’s degrees from CSUEB, and Pat are enabling current students to have access to the supplies they need for hands-on research.

“Today, Davis, who obtained both bachelor’s and master’s degrees from CSUEB, and Pat are enabling current students to have access to the supplies they need for hands-on research. "I only found out after the fact that everyone had turned him down," Baysdorfer continues. "And it makes me want to strangle my [peers]. You see someone who is a mature guy, motivated, intelligent. He’s exactly the sort of person that second chances were meant for."

"We want students to be able to go further with the questions they want to ask, to go deeper," Davis says of the funding. "The way the classes were at Cal State East Bay — the professors gave you enough pieces to figure things out, but not the answers themselves. They took you a certain distance, and then it was up to you to go the rest of the way. That’s the best way to learn."
BRIAN ARNOLD (BS ’63, Education) is vice chairman of the Los Altos Corporate Operations Company, which helped to establish in Placecare. Martin also travels extensively and is passionate about connecting with children throughout the world.

1970s

LARRY BROOKS (BS ’77, Speech Pathology; NPA ’84), vice president of Colgate Palmolive Co., is an alumnus. The company is involved in the primary sector and secondary sector.

MICHAEL KAUFMAN (BA ’72, Economics; MS ’77, Chemistry) is an executive vice president of the company. Kaufman is also an executive vice president of the Board of Directors of American Cancer Society.

NANCY SCHLUNTZ (BS ’79, Mass Communication) is the author of the book “In Pursuit of His Dream.” The book chronicles her life journey and the challenges she faced in the field of mass communication.

FRAN DAVID (BS ’77, Urban Planning) has retired from her position as a senior manager of HNTB Corporation. During her time as a planner, David supervised the development of urban plans and policies in various cities.

KEN GIBBS (BS ’73, Biological Sciences) has been appointed to the Board of Directors of the Silicon Valley Business Journal.

JIM KINCAID (BS ’72, Physical Education) is an alumnus. Kincaid has served as the director of the district’s assistant superintendent for business services for the past 15 years and was director of technology for five years. Prior to that, he taught math and science within neighboring Burton School District.

GREG HOFFMAN (BS ’72, Physical Education; MS ’74, Indiana University Northwest) has been working with the University of California, San Diego since 2007, when he started as a therapeutic residential counselor.

CALVIN HUNTINGZER (BS ’78, Criminal Justice; MS ’83, Psychology) is the director of research at the University of Colorado, Boulder. Huntingzer has also been involved in the development of a new technology that is used to identify criminals.

BOB RATH (MS ’77, Counseling) has been working as a counselor for 25 years. He is also involved in the development of a new technology that is used to identify criminals.

JOHN RENSEN (BS ’72, Physical Education) has been an elementary school teacher for 20 years. Renzen has also been involved in the development of a new technology that is used to identify criminals.

BRADLEY MARTIN (BS ’87, Physical Education) is a retired teacher of Los Altos School District in Menlo Park. An award- winning teacher, Martin has been recognized for his contributions to education.

RICK SCHMITT (BS ’80, Education) is the principal of San Jose Elementary School and the director of the district’s assistant superintendent for school improvement.

1980s

ANGELA BROOKS-KYLE (BS ’80, Business Administration) was selected by Director & Ibdins magazine as a 2016 Director of Education. Kyle is also currently interim chair of the district’s assistant superintendent for school improvement.

GREG McCULLOUGH (BS ’85, Business Administration) has been a human resources manager at Champion Hotels, Inc., in CA. Greg has also been involved in the development of a new technology that is used to identify criminals.

JAMES “BUCK” KOONCE (BS ’89, Engineering) is the director of engineering at the company. Koonce has also been involved in the development of a new technology that is used to identify criminals.

JAMES HANNAN (BS ’83, Business Administration) is the CEO of the company. He has also been involved in the development of a new technology that is used to identify criminals.

RICH SCHMITT (BS ’84, Computer Science) is a senior vice president of the company. Schmitt has also been involved in the development of a new technology that is used to identify criminals.

JEDLICKA (BS ’80, Computer Science) has retired from his position as vice president of technology and senior director of the company. Jedlicka has also been involved in the development of a new technology that is used to identify criminals.

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and management corporation. Previously, she served as president of major account and global O&O sales company at Adobe, also a wire and communications company. Sullivan is passionate about Court Appointed Special Advocates, an organization that supports abused and neglected children.

STEVE VICTORSON (BS '82, Physical Education; MS '94, Physical Education) is founder and owner of Sylmfit, a health and fitness and deep-water exercise, and author of The Champion's Way, a book based on his doctoral research at Boston University that defines the characteristics of champions. Victorson specializes in helping individuals regain mobility.

Scott Amyx (BS '96, Economics) is founder and CEO of Anyar, an internet of Things (IoT) strategy and execution agency. Recently, the company’s data and analytics platform was named the number one IoT business intelligence (BI) platform by IDC. Amyx, along with his team, won the Cloud and DevOps World Award for Most Innovative Startup of 2016. Amyx has also been voted one of the Top 10 Global Speakers by Speaking.com and has been featured in publications such as the New York Times, Wired, the Washington Post, and more.

JANA HUNT (B.S. ‘94, Special Major) is director of global color and creative operations at The Scottsbury Group, a new division in the paint and color business. She has helped her career goal of becoming an executive in the fashion design industry. Hunt started with an internship at Target and then joined the firm as a vendor partner and president of Loom Creative. In 2013, she integrated marketing agency he cofounded in 1999 into Loom. Hunt will lead and direct all technology activities for both brands.

Catharine Ighnham-Watters (BA ’94, Liberal Studies; MA ’97, Educational Leadership) has served with the Newark Unified School District for 17 years. She recently served as principal at Musick Elementary School and now is principal at Newark's first female city manager. She has served in a variety of civic appointments prior to her current post, including as assistant city manager in Livermore and administrative services director in Tracy. Stanyan was honored with the NYCA Tribute Women in Industry Award in 2011. She is married with five children, ages 5 to 17.

Harold Lefall (BA ’60, Political Science) is executive director of Not In Our Town, a nonprofit dedicated to combating hate and bullying and building safe, inclusive communities. Previously, Lefall led the leadership advisory firm Atlanta and Solomon’s Temple Foundation, and he is the founder of two businesses: Leftfield Employment Agency and First Step Staffing. Leftfield Employment Agency, located in Oakland, has been recognized in Entrepreneur magazine and B2B Enterprise.

Victoria McGuire (HS ’91, English) is an Antioch Unified School District Teacher of the Year McGowan has been teaching English at the high school since 1995. She started her career in Oakland Unified School District before moving to Antioch, where she has been a principal, director, and superintendent over the course of her career. She has lived in Antioch since 1992.

Rich Calvery (BA ’93, Mass Communications) has been promoted to global technology practice leader for Porter Novelli, a global public-relations company. Calvery, whose current term as Mayor of Martinez will end in November, will serve as vice president overseeing the San Francisco office and as a general partner and president of Vico Communications. As a senior partner and president of Vico Communications, Calvery integrated marketing agency he cofounded in 1999 into Vico. Calvery will lead and direct all technology activities for both brands.

Alisa Greer (BS ’93, Physical Education) teaches belly dance through the San Francisco Parks and Recreation Department and at a private studio in San Mateo. She regularly performs at Arab restaurants throughout the Bay Area and works with top Arab musicians.

Jennifer Hanuma (BA ’96) is Scott’s Valley’s first female city manager. She has served in a variety of civic appointments prior to her current post, including as assistant city manager in Livermore and administration director in Tracy. Stanyan was honored with the NYCA Tribute Women in Industry Award in 2011. She is married with five children, ages 5 to 17.

GREAT IDEAS (BA ’99, Business Administration) is now general manager of Dublin San Ramon Services District, where he will work on complex water and wastewater issues for the Tri-Valley region. Mchichik, a registered civil engineer, has worked in the Tri-Valley for 26 years. Previously, he served as general manager of the City of Livermore’s public works department and directed the city’s storm-water program, which is coordinated with the Tri-Valley Flood Control and Drainage District. Mchichik’s expertise also includes storm-water permits and wetland engineering services.

Marie Morgan (MS ’95, Education) has been an appointed superintendent of Walnut Creek Unified School District. Morgan was previously the assistant superintendent of educational services for Berkeley Unified School District and has been working in public education for 27 years, including as a teacher, deputy superintendent, and assistant superintendent of administrative roles.

Orlando Baqal (MS ’99, Chemistry) teaches chemistry at Santa Monica College. During the fall 2016 and spring 2017 semesters, he will be on sabatical, which will include a three-month stay at the University of Southern California and mass spectrometry research using environmental samples from the Arctic Ocean.

Geoffrey Rodgers (BS ’93, Business) was a vice president of Worldwide Sales for SFD Solutions, Inc., which focuses on big data collection and analysis for the semiconductor and manufacturing industry. Rodgers also has served as the South Bay Regional Director for Santa Clara University.

Chris Brannan (BA ’95, Business Administration) has been hired as a senior vice president for Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory (LLNL), following a broad national search. As CEO, he will oversee the lab’s $1.8 billion budget and a staff of 145,000, accounting, budget, and financial-analysis professionals. Brannan has worked at LLNL for 10 years.

Richard Enriquez (BA ’94, Business Administration) is a Cal State East Bay chef specializing in vegan and Italian food that he shares on his own YouTube channel and website, veggielicious. Enriquez recently held a cooking demonstration at Cal State East Bay, where he succeeded in ‘weeding out the meat’, as he put it, and he was proud of especially the ‘fake’ meatball he cooked during college.

John ‘Jack’ Garamendi (BA ’82, Political Science) is chief executive officer of the Tri-Valley Venture Capital Club and an investor, who holds master’s degrees from the University of the Southwest Center for Economic Development and the Southwestern Center for Economic Development and the University of the Southwest Center for Economic Development. Garamendi is a U.S. Army officer who holds a master’s degree from CSU Sacramento and an associate degree in engineering technology, which led to an internship at Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory’s Ignition Facility. Aon has also participated in NASA’s National University College Achievement Program and the NASA Intern Program and plans to pursue a second master’s in computer science at the Naval Postgraduate School in Monterey.

Marlene Benninger (MS ’92, Counseling) has joined Weichert Real Estate—The Griffin Co. in the company’s Benicia, California, office. Benninger obtained her undergraduate degree from Saint Joseph’s University in Philadelphia before pursuing her master’s at Cal State East Bay. She is a member of the Northwest Arkansas Association of Realtors.

Kathleen Waukonig (BA ’92, Social Sciences) has been a police officer and detective with various law enforcement agencies.

Damien Alcorn (BA ’04, Psychology) has been appointed superintendent of the 7,000-student Newark Unified School District. Alcorn is a U.S. Army officer who holds a master’s degree in criminal justice from Sacramento State and an associates degree in engineering technology, which led to an internship at Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory’s Ignition Facility. Anorn has also participated in NASA’s National University College Achievement Program and the NASA Intern Program and plans to pursue a second master’s in computer science at the Naval Postgraduate School in Monterey.

Jennifer Griffin (HS ’82, Counseling) is a wife, mother of four, and author of Understanding Your Child As A Spiritual Gift, which introduces a new theory on parenting. Griffin and her family live in Berkeley.

Paul Keillor (BA ’03, Criminal Justice) has served as police chief of El Monte Police Department and is now a San Diego County sheriff’s deputy in Antioch. Keillor is the first female police chief in Antioch.

Selim Stiti (BSA ’05) has taken his position as information security manager of Mechanics Bank, which serves 17 counties in the San Francisco Bay Area, after serving 17 years at the bank.

Eunny Lewis (MPA ’06) is a director at the U.S. Department of Homeland Security. Lewis also serves on the California’s Enrollment Policy Board and the Academic Senate Committee on Admissions and Enrollment.

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Lori Averill is chief financial officer and chief executive officer at Capitalize C. Averill, a Cal State East Bay alumna, is an accountant at the company.

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JOE ROMAGNA (MA ‘07, Economics) is minister of Oakland Digital Arts & Literacy (BA ‘02, Art) is the student body. Dayna Avanzino recently served on the College of Business Administration’s Student Senate, and was a member of the student chapter of the American Institute of Electrical Engineers. He says he is motivated by the prospect of serving as a role model for current students.

KAREN WHITE (MA ‘15, Human Development; MPA ‘16) is a senior professional at Omelagah, an East Bay native who wants to give back to Cal State East Bay by bridging gaps between alumni and the student body.

New and returning alumni of Cal State East Bay’s Alumni Board of Directors and the university’s Alumni Association staff gathered for their annual retreat to plan for the coming year. The group focused on alumni engagement, events, communication, and other ways to support the university.

KATELYN RADTKE (BA ’15, Ethnic Studies) is operations manager for the student chapter of the American Institute of Electrical Engineers. She says she is looking forward to using her time on the alumni board to become more involved with her peers and to support current students.

ANDREW YUNKER (BS ’15, Computer Science) is a recent graduate of Cal State East Bay and current food server. He was president of the Startup Club while on campus, which is focused on bringing students and professionals together to build startups over the course of a single weekend. He was also a member of the student chapter of the National Society of Professional Engineers. He says he is motivated by the prospect of serving as a role model for Cal State East Bay alumni as an alumni board member.

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CSU Chancellor Timothy P. White (MS ’72, Kinesiology) finds a quiet moment at Cal State East Bay’s Rising in the East gala to catch up on his alumni magazine. “When I read about the students, faculty, staff and alumni, I am reminded of the quality of instruction I received as a student,” White says. “I’m filled with pride to see my alma mater leading in so many academic disciplines while graduating highly-prepared alumni who are shaping the region’s economy and society.”

Cal State East Bay thanks each of our sponsors for their generous support of the Rising in the East gala, enabling the university to announce its first-ever comprehensive campaign and ensure a future of opportunities for our students, faculty, and the region at large.

PARTING SHOT

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Evelyn and John Dilsaver

GARVIN TSO

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