To Quench Africa’s Thirst

Partners in Prague

Blake Street Barrier Breakers

Best Friends for Life

Heart to Heart

THE POWER OF TWO
In perfect weather, sunny but not too warm, the mood was joyful as Conductor Donna M. Di Grazia, David J. Baldwin Professor of Music, led the Glee Club in Amazing Grace.

Commencement returned to Marston Quad on May 15 with an air of exuberance after two years of online ceremonies due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Class of 2022 graduates, their families and the faculty shared a day of smiles and selfies. Below at left, Tomás Summers Sandovál, associate professor of history and Chicana/o-Latina/o studies, steps in as an impromptu photographer for one graduate.
“This is a day to remember. This is the first time we’ve been able to come together since 2019. And are we all ready? We’re ready!”
— President G. Gabrielle Starr as she opened the 129th Commencement ceremony of Pomona College on May 15, 2022

Stewart Smith ’68, left, a longtime supporter and chair emeritus of the Board of Trustees of Pomona College, urged the Class of 2022 to find a mission to support with volunteer work and contributions. “Engaging in frequent acts of generosity does not require wealth, nor is it consistently correlated with wealth. Anyone can be generous,” he said. Jennifer Doudna ’85, Pomona’s first Nobel Prize winner, shared the story of her scientific awakening. (See p. 7.)
Shari Evangelista and Hermo Quispe mug with Cecil during the 2022 Commencement celebration, left. Below, Emma Paulini, originally Class of ‘21, and her sister Helen Paulini ’22, right, graduated together after Emma took a gap year due to the pandemic. They’re flanked by their parents, Manfred and Ann.
The Exponential Power of Mentorship

As we set out to write about pairs of Pomona people whose lives or work are intertwined in this issue of PCM, we weren’t thinking so much about mentorship. Yet it emerged as a substitute, and not only in cases of an older person guiding a younger one. Sometimes, the roles seemed almost interchangeable, and it struck me that mentoring is a very natural outcome of the Pomona experience.

One of the best examples of Pomona’s mentoring efforts for the community returned to campus this summer for the first time since 2019. The Draper Center’s Pomona College Academy for Youth Success (PAYS)—a multi-year program to prepare high school students from low-income or traditionally underrepresented backgrounds to enter selective colleges and universities—was back in classrooms and residence halls for the core four-week summer experience after two years because of the pandemic.

What unfolded during those campus stays can be astonishing. As Biology Professor Sara Olson mentioned while introducing Nobel Prize winner Jennifer Doudna ‘85 at the Class of 2022 Commencement in May, the revolutionary gene-editing technology Doudna and Emmanuelle Charpentier pioneered is something even teenagers can learn.

“CRISPR is fast, easy and accessible, allowing even our high school PAYS students to use and understand this technology,” says Olson, who dedicates part of her summers to the program.

The first year Olson incorporated CRISPR was 2019, the last time PAYS was on campus. Students designed edits for a C. elegans student assigned one gene to delete to explore whether it was important in forming the eggshell. The students designed and created DNA plasmids that would then be injected into the worm to carry out the CRISPR edit. They nearly made it through the plasmid construction stage but didn’t quite make it to the injection stage before the summer session ended.

In 2020, the necessity of being online limited the scope of the work, but students could do this. I could do experiments that weren’t written down anywhere. There wasn’t a right answer to get because nobody knew the answer. And that’s really what research is all about. After that summer experience here at Pomona, I was absolutely hooked and I realized that this is what I want to do with my life.”

—Nobel Laureate Jennifer Doudna ’85

FEATURES

To Quench Africa’s Thirst

Anaa Jabicho ’23 and Brian Bishop ’22 take on the world’s water crisis, one water bottle at a time.

Partners in Prague

Diplomats Erik Black ’95 and Doug Morrow ’01 were posted together at the U.S. Embassy in the Czech Republic. They also spent time in Ukraine.

Blake Street Barrier Breakers

Colorado Rockies co-owner Linda Alvarado ’73 and the team’s first female scout, Emily Glass ’15, have formed a bond.

Best Friends for Life

Two 1970s Pitzer students shared a house on Indian Hill Boulevard. Today, Gaye Kates and Chet Miller are Pomona professors whose families have grown up together.

Heart to Heart

Elisa Louizos ’96 and Roxanne Meas ’94 sang together in the Glee Club. Decades later, they reconnected in response to a rare medical condition.

What I learned for the first time about myself was that I could do this. I could do experiments that weren’t written down anywhere. There wasn’t a right answer to get because nobody knew the answer. And that’s really what research is all about. After that summer experience here at Pomona, I was absolutely hooked and I realized that this is what I want to do with my life.”

—Nobel Laureate Jennifer Doudna ’85
Meeting Virginia Prince

I so enjoyed reading about Virginia Prince,'35 in the excellent piece by Michael Waters ’20 (“Crossing Boundaries,” Spring 2022). In the early 1990s I interviewed Virginia Prince at a West Hollywood café for a book I wrote on the 18th-century transgender pioneer and diplomat, the Chevalière d’Éon. In some respects Virginia modeled her life on d’Éon’s. I will never forget how Virginia embodied the spirit of d’Éon, who like Virginia, lived the second 50 years of her life as a woman, after living 20 years as a man. She stood there, bouncing the ball up and down a few times, and said, “You want to hit a few balls with me?”

We engaged in a little small talk and then she smiled at me and said, “Do you want to hit a few balls with me?” She stood there, bouncing the ball up and down a few times, and said, “Do you want me to hit shots you can return?” I had played on my high school tennis team and thought I could return any shot she could hit. I was 18 years old and felt generally invincible in all areas of life, including tennis.

“Do that again!” I said. She did. Same result. At that point, we swapped a few shots that I could return and then my tennis season with Darlene Hard came to an end. I have never forgotten that wonderful encounter and how totally gracious she was the entire time. To this day, I can picture in my mind the way that ball hit and skidded a foot under my racquet as I swung mightily at nothing but air.

—Gary Kates H. Russell Smith Foundation Chair in the Social Sciences and Professor of History Pomona College
Closing Time at Rhino Records

Rhino Records, a Claremont Village staple since 1974, has closed its doors. That echoed a Twitter lament from Professor of Politics David Monsef-Libey (@DMONSEFLIBAY) and responses from Aditya Sood ‘97 and Brian Arbour ’95.

But save your tears. A rent increase at the Yale Avenue location isn’t putting Rhino out of business, just out of walking distance. The store is moving to a new location in nearby Montclair.

The Princeton Review

Top 5 for ‘Best Financial Aid’

Pomona is No. 3 on The Princeton Review’s 2022 list for Best Financial Aid among private colleges. Pomona is one of a handful of institutions committed to need-blind admissions and to meeting the full demonstrated financial need of all students who enroll.

Watson Fellows ’22

For sheer armchair traveling pleasure, we present this year’s Thomas J. Watson Fellowship winners:

• Xiao Jiang ’22 and
• Mark Diaz ’22 are among 42 students selected from 41 private college and university partners to receive $40,000 grants to pursue research projects during 12 months of international travel.

Jiang found care and acceptance in New York City’s Chinatown at the age of 5 when she and her mother came to the U.S. from China. After arriving at Pomona as a QuestBridge Match Recipient with a full four-year scholarship, Jiang was worried about returning to her Chinatown for fear of seeing it changed—gentrified—into a place she would no longer recognize as home. As a sophomore, she took an anthropology course and studied the effects of gentrification on Los Angeles’ Chinatown. For her senior project in anthropology, she created a short documentary on how COVID-19 has affected Chinatown in New York and Los Angeles.

Jiang will spend her Watson year traveling to China, Malaysia, Singapore, Vietnam, the United Kingdom, France, and Belgium to learn how immigrants and Chinese residents of Chinatowns develop a sense of self within a community of like-minded people.

Diaz was a junior in high school when he was first introduced to kabuki, a traditional form of Japanese theatre that incorporates dance, music and mime. At Pomona, he drew Emeritus Professor Leonard Pronko out of retirement to study under him and to have Pronko teach a masterclass on kabuki. They staged a kabuki performance at Pomona’s Alumni Weekend in 2019 and more recently this year.

Diaz was first introduced to kabuki at an early age because of his Japanese heritage and his experience growing up in a multi-cultural household. He chose to study kabuki at Pomona because he wanted to immerse himself in the culture and learn about the history of kabuki. He also wanted to have an opportunity to work with Professor Pronko, who is a leading expert in the field of kabuki.

Diaz plans to continue his studies of kabuki and Japanese culture after his Watson year at Pomona. He also hopes to eventually work as a kabuki performer and help promote the art form to a wider audience.

Food Trucks on the Meal Plan

Trucks along Stover Walk became a familiar sight during the past year. The College occasionally invited food vendors that included the usual burger and taco trucks along with offerings from vendors such as West Side Banh Mi, Bollywood Bites and Sugo Italians.

Students visiting the trucks could use their meal plans. The popular food option was the creative response to temporary staffing shortages in the dining halls caused by widespread labor shortages that accompanied the pandemic.

Payton Lecture

Award-winning broadcast journalist Soledad O’Brien gave the 2022 Payton Distinguished Lecture in April, explaining how maintaining an anti-bias perspective in journalism means acknowledging our own biases.

“You need other people, other diverse voices, to push for things because your own gut is often wrong.”

—Soledad O’Brien

POMONA

And the Oscar Goes To …

Some 26,000 students from more than 4,000 colleges auditioned for the chance to be among the 56 competitors in the Jeopardy! National College Championship, televised in February.

Lauren Rodriguez ’22 made the cut and then some, taking home $20,000 after reaching the tournament semifinals.

“I had such a blast competing on the show,” says Rodriguez, a published policy analyst and sociology major whose first post-graduation job is in management consulting. “Being part of the College Championship as opposed to regular Jeopardy! made it so rewarding, because I was able to meet 38 other college kids from all across the country and form friendships with them. We all embraced our inner nerd together and had a lot of fun.”

The tournament champion, University of Texas senior Jarakan Singh, won $250,000. Besides cash, Rodriguez took home memories for a lifetime.

As she posted on Instagram to promote the show, “I’ll take Bucket List for 2022, Mayim @”.

This is Jeopardy!

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Title IX, Pomona College Trustee Onetta Brooks ’74, a basketball sponsors NCAA competition in 11 women’s sports and 10 men’s, picture of the 1903 women’s basketball team), but equity with of women Title IX opened wide the gates that had limited their related to sexual harassment and sexual violence, for generations law. Although the focus today is often on Title IX’s protections A Watershed for Women’s Sports

Fifty years ago this summer, Title IX, a federal civil rights act to ensure that students and employees in educational settings are treated equally and fairly regardless of gender, was signed into law. Although the focus today is often on Title IX’s protections related to sexual harassment and sexual violence, for generations of women Title IX opened wide the gates that had limited their opportunities to compete in high school and college athletics. Pomona has a long history of women’s athletics (see the striking picture of the 1903 women’s basketball team), but equity with men’s sports is a direct result of Title IX. Today, Pomona-Pitzer sponsors NCAA competition in 11 women’s sports and 10 men’s, including football, which requires a larger roster of athletes. As part of Sagen’s Athletics’ 50th anniversary celebration of Title IX, Pomona College Trustee Onetta Brooks ’74, a basketball and volleyball player as a Pomona student, talked with Miriam Merrill, director of athletics and chair of physical education. “What I do remember for volleyball in the initial couple years we made our own shorts,” Brooks recalls. “Somehow there was a top that had a number, and I don’t know if that was just something leftover. But of course you had to buy your own shoes. So I recall walking in the knit socks maybe had been provided. We were on our own laundry, our own clothes. It was a whole new experience.”

Beckman Scholars
Beckman Scholars who graduated from Pomona College in 2022 and 2023 are:

Daniela Pierro ’23
Kate Aris ’22
Jacinta Chen ’22
Natalie Fong ’23
Kelly Ho ’22
Rachel Huang ’22
Steven奥斯 ’22
Sayed Peer ’22
Nathan Shankar ’22
Ruby Simon ’22

Gates Cambridge Scholar
Soil Dattani ’22

Goldwater Scholars
Hannah Carus ’23
Jonathan Elisabeth ’23

Knight-Hennessy Scholars
Isaac Cui ’20

Rangel Fellow
Salamata Bal ‘20

Watson Fellows
Sarah Jin ’22
Mark Diaz ’22

Fellows travel to an array of international locations. Rangel Fellows train for careers in the U.S. Foreign Service. Knight-Hennessy Scholars pursue graduate studies at Stanford University. Goldwater Scholars are awarded to undergraduates studying sciences, mathematics and engineering. Beckman Scholars earn mentored undergraduate research experiences in chemistry, biological sciences and related areas.

Each year, Pomona graduates and undergraduates are awarded numerous teaching, research, and leadership scholarships and fellowships for study in various places around the world. Dowling Scholars and Gates Cambridge Scholars head to the University of Cambridge in England for graduate work. Fulbright Scholars and Watson Fellows travel to an array of international locations. Rangel Fellows train for careers in the U.S. Foreign Service. Knight-Hennessy Scholars pursue graduate studies at Stanford University. Goldwater Scholars are awarded to undergraduates studying sciences, mathematics and engineering. Beckman Scholars earn mentored undergraduate research experiences in chemistry, biological sciences and related areas.

Faculty Retirements
Each May, we celebrate Commencement as students begin their lives after college. It also marks the time a small group of professors begin their retirements after years of service to the College. For alumni, seeing the professors’ names might inspire nostalgia—and perhaps a note of appreciation. These are the faculty retirements from the 2021-22 academic year, along with the year they arrived at the College and email address.

Tom Leblath (1982)
Resident Artist and Professor of Theatre
tom@pomona.edu

Patricia Smiley (1989)
Professor of Psychological Sciences
Patricia.smiley@pomona.edu

Cynthia Selassie (1990)
Blaschke and Swan Professor of Science and Professor of Chemistry
cynthia@pomona.edu

Mary Coffey (1995)
Professor of Romance Languages and Literatures
mcoffey@pomona.edu

Kim Bruce (2003)
Bausch and Lomb Visiting Professor of Computer Science
kim.bruce@pomona.edu

Sandep Mukherjee (2006)
Associate Professor of Art
sandepmukherjee20@gmail.com

MILESTONES

A New Dean of the College
Professor of Computer Science Yuqing Melanie Wu, an expert in data management and query optimization whose love for teaching drew her to the liberal arts, became Pomona’s new vice president for academic affairs and dean of the College on July 1.

“A Watershed for Women’s Sports

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Sandep Mukherjee (2006)
Associate Professor of Art
sandepmukherjee20@gmail.com
Garrett Hongo ’73:

An Honored Poet in Search of the Perfect Stereo Sound

This spring, Garrett Hongo ’73 received the 2022 Aiken Taylor Award for Modern American Poetry, an annual prize presented to a writer who has had a substantial and distinguished career.

Past winners of the award, presented by the Sewanee Review each year since 1987, include Howard Nemerov, Gwendolyn Brooks, Wendell Berry, Louise Gluck and Billy Collins.

Both a poet and a memoirist, Hongo draws heavily upon his memories of growing up on the North Shore of O'ahu and in Los Angeles. His time at Pomona also figures prominently in his recollections, and his poem “Under the Oaks at Holmes Hall, Overtaken by Rain” is inscribed on a plaque in the Smith Campus Center. Now a Distinguished Professor in the College of Arts and Sciences at the University of Oregon, Hongo’s collecting of memories from The River of Heaven, which was a finalist for the Pulitzer Prize for poetry in 1989.

Shortly after Hongo visited campus for a reading this spring, PCM’s Lorraine Wu Harry ’97 talked with him about his recently published book, The Perfect Sound: A Memoir in Stereo, in which he delivers a personal memoir of his life as a poet vis-à-vis his decade-long quest for the ideal stereo setup. The interview has been edited and condensed for length and clarity.

PCM: You have such a strong memory for things that happened even long ago.

Garrett Hongo: People have told me that. Things are very vivid in my mind. I remember easily, as it were. The phrase from William Wordsworth that poetry is “emotion recollected in tranquility”—I need to do it or else I’m unhappy. It’s how I create. I don’t do it, in a way. I just want to write but to live. I live in remembrance, and that’s something I need to do.

PCM: It seems like nostalgia also plays a strong role in your writing.

Hongo: People always question my obsession with hi-fi. They thought it was insanity. I didn’t even know it myself, but it was a way for me to meditate. I really loved writing the book. I loved learning how to write the book because I didn’t know how to do this, I didn’t have all this conflict of memoir and I want to know about audio. How do you make it all work together? It was only after almost 10 years of not knowing what the hell I was doing, all of a sudden, I figured it out, and then the book came like that— boom. I’d written pieces of it. I basically wrote the whole book in a couple years, but took eight years of not figuring it out. That seems to be my pattern for every book I write. What the hell am I doing? What is all this? I’m so awful. And I go through a lot of self-hate and castigation, and all of a sudden it breaks through.

PCM: You talk about writing being for yourself. Do you do find that this book met that need?

Hongo: People always question my obsession with hi-fi. They thought it was insanity: I didn’t even know it myself, but it was a way for me to meditate. I really loved writing the book. I loved learning how to write the book because I didn’t know how to do this, I didn’t have all this conflict of memoir and I want to know about audio. How do you make it all work together? It was only after almost 10 years of not knowing what the hell I was doing, all of a sudden, I figured it out, and then the book came like that—boom. I’d written pieces of it. I basically wrote the whole book in a couple years, but took eight years of not figuring it out. That seems to be my pattern for every book I write. What the hell am I doing? What is all this? I’m so awful. And I go through a lot of self-hate and castigation, and all of a sudden it breaks through.

PCM: Did you have experiences of remembering things you had forgotten?

Hongo: That’s what the book is. It’s about recollection and realization. As they say in psychology, personality. This is how you build, and their pursuit gives you that. This is the way you build, and their pursuit gives you that. You seek confirmation, blessing as it were, in the memories, and their pursuit gives you that. This is the way you build, and their pursuit gives you that. You seek confirmation, blessing as it were, in the memories.

PCM: What feedback have you gotten from readers? You write very much about your own experience as a Japanese American, but so many people feel a resonance with your stories.

Hongo: I think people come through the different layers of hegemonic discourse and then they respond to the work because it allows them to come through those layers. Because what they are told about identity, ethnicity, even common human experience, exposes the ways that they feel they put them in positions in that blind and silence them to their own emotional resonances with their own lives. Poetry, not just mine but a lot of poetry gives them the opportunity to break through those ways in a way that reflects on our affections that has been silenced in their own histories or microhistories. I think there is a kind of initiatory connection that they feel that emerges, and I’m grateful for that.

PCM: How do you feel your time at Pomona shaped your writing and who you are now?

Hongo: It was with kindness of my time at Pomona in several episodes of my book. A liberal arts education itself afforded me a different kind of consciousness with which to engage the world. A liberal arts education gives you more freedom, allows you to be more free, allows you to be more self-creative. We’re not looking to fit. We’re looking to create.

True Blue: White Unionists in the Deep South during the Civil War and Reconstruction

Clayton Butler ’10 investigates the lives of white Unionists in three Confederate states who enforced the U.S. Army, shedding light on the complex story of the Civil War era.

John’s Turn

In his children’s book, Max Barnett ’04 explores the story of a kid who finds the courage to show off his talent for dancing.

Big Feelings: How to Be Okay When Things Are Not Okay

Liz Fosslien ’09 and Mollie West Duffy weave science with personal stories and original illustrations to examine uncomfortable feelings and lay out strategies for managing them.
NEW KNOWLEDGE

The discovery of galaxies with little or no dark matter is perplexing to scientists and challenges existing notions of how galaxies form. In a paper published in *Nature Astronomy* in February, a team of researchers led by Jorge Moreno, assistant professor of physics and astronomy, shared evidence they have found that may explain this baffling phenomenon.

In the early 20th century, astronomers believed that all galaxies had dark matter. The idea of dark matter was proposed as a way to explain the rotation of galaxies. However, in recent years, evidence has been accumulating that suggests that dark matter may not be as pervasive as previously thought.

Moreno and his team used computer simulations and supercomputers to model the evolution of the universe and look for galaxies that did not contain dark matter. They found that in some cases, galaxies could form without the need for dark matter.

Moreno explains, "We found that in some cases, galaxies could form without the need for dark matter. This suggests that the traditional view of dark matter is not necessary for the formation of galaxies." His research has implications for our understanding of the universe and the role of dark matter.

Moreno continues, "Many astrophysicists have long suspected that dark matter may not be as dominant as we once thought. Our results support this idea and offer a new perspective on the nature of the universe."
How To Become a Scientific Illustrator

A May graduate with a degree in biology—and one of Pomona’s Commencement speakers as senior class president—Andreah Pierre ’22 has been interested in marine science and conservation for as long as she can remember. After earning a Posse Foundation scholarship followed by a prestigious summer fellowship, she will combine her STEM background with a rediscovered love of art to pursue a career as a scientific illustrator.

1. Make your entrance near the ocean. Born in Miami, Pierre had an easy affinity for the nearby Atlantic. “The best part was swimming with my sister,” she remembers. “Fish would pass us by, and we were like, ‘What are they?’”

2. Stay curious. Nurture an interest in coral reefs, sea turtles and the effects of pollution as a student at South Broward High School, a marine science magnet school in Hollywood, Florida.

3. Take an Advanced Placement art class and learn to paint. “The funny thing is, after sophomore year I never picked up another paintbrush,” Pierre says. “My whole life was very much, you’ve got to do science, you’ve got to get a good job, and art did not seem like an option to me in terms of getting a good job.”

4. Find your posse. Learn about the Posse Foundation, a program that selects talented students from the same city to attend an elite out-of-state college together on full-tuition scholarships, serving as each other’s support systems. Earn a Miami STEM Posse scholarship to Pomona, where biology students go whale watching on the Pacific.

5. Apply for the prestigious Doris Duke Conservation Scholars program at the University of Washington, which provides two summers of experiential learning in the Pacific Northwest. For your second-year summer internship, join The Whale Museum staff in Washington’s San Juan Islands.

6. Tasked with entering data on whale sightings reported to the museum, follow a mentor’s suggestion to develop an illustrated field guide to whales and other marine mammals to help the public tell a gray whale from a humpback. In the process, rediscover your love of art.

7. Download a 3D app. After starting with a free point-and-shoot program, discover more sophisticated computer graphic tools that help you produce detailed images pointing out key features such as fins, flukes and surface behaviors. “What makes my field guide different from any other book you grab about whales is that the book will tell you all about the whale, versus my image is literally meant to only point out the things that you’d see if you were on the water,” Pierre says.

8. Turn your summer project into your senior thesis, testing whether your field guides help people correctly identify types of whales and other marine mammals with the tips and images you produce. [The answer is yes.]

9. Learn about Cal State Monterey Bay’s post-baccalaureate program in scientific illustration. Apply and get accepted for a one-year graduate certificate that starts in September, with courses such as botanical illustration, ecological illustration and professional practices for science illustrators, followed by a 10-week internship.

10. Stop to watch the elephant seals at Ano Nuevo State Park on a trip along the California coast and realize that state and national park signage needs science illustration too. “A lot of them are old, the paint’s chipped and there is new information from the last 10 or 20 years that should be on there,” Pierre says. Build your portfolio as you look to follow other graduates of the Monterey Bay program, whose work can be found in such places as the Smithsonian Institution, the American Museum of Natural History, National Geographic and Scientific American magazines, and at zoos, aquariums and botanical gardens across the country.

Another nearly standing-room only crowd at Haldeman Pool, another USA Water Polo Division III National Championship. This time it was the Pomona-Fitzwater Killers who took a celebratory leap into the pool after their 8-6 win over Whittier College in May gave them the national title. That completed a Sagehen sweep of the men’s and women’s Division III titles as some of the men’s players who won the title in December cheered on the women’s team from the packed stands.

“The crowd at Haldeman was part of what made this experience really special for our team,” says attacker Lucie Abele ’22. “We love hearing students, friends and family cheering us on and having fun, and that support makes games really fun and is super motivating.” Combined with the men’s cross-country team’s NCAA Division III championship in November, Sagehen Athletics teams have claimed an unprecedented three national titles this academic year.

For years, top Division III water polo teams advanced to the NCAA’s single-division water polo tournaments only to be quickly eliminated by Division I powers. The sport’s national governing body decided in 2019 to create an alternative to the NCAA tournament, a final four for Division III.

“I thank USA Water Polo,” says Alex Rodriguez, professor of physical education and leader of a staff that coaches both the men’s and women’s teams. “I’ve been pretty fortunate to have a long list of amazing women play for me and carry me to these moments. This championship is different. A national championship is different. It feels amazing. It doesn’t feel like it used to feel to win conference and go to the NCAAs against Division I teams. I was surprised on the men’s side how much love we got for winning the D-III championship, and I expected the same thing,” says Rodriguez, whose resume also includes two trips to the Olympics as an assistant men’s coach. “I am truly touched with this opportunity.”

The Sagehen women were No. 1 in the preseason Division III national rankings, and they were No. 1 at the end. But the title felt like a long time coming for the team’s five seniors: Abele, Nadia Poppin ’22, Allison Sullivan Wu ’22, Katherine Cullen FZ ’22 and Jassy Neal FZ ’22.

The seniors contributed equally as the contributions of freshman and sophomores, all playing their first college seasons. An underclassman came up big in the final, as Namhun Jachung FZ ’22 scored two goals and added four assists for the Sagehens. The SCIAC Newcomer of the Year, Jachung also was selected as national player of the year.

Abele, the Sagehens’ leading goal-scorer during the regular season, and Abigail Wiesenthal ’24 each also scored two goals in the title game. Goalkeeper Zosia Amberger ’25, the SCIAC defensive athlete of the year, held off the Poets’ attempts to come back in the second half.

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Illustrations by Andreah Pierre ’22.
Persists Despite War at Home

The road from Kyiv, Ukraine, to her senior year at Pomona College was paved with challenges for Maria “Masha” Lyven ’22. She arrived in a new country at 17 only to contend with a pandemic and then watch a war erupt at home. Despite those obstacles, she displayed remarkable resilience and became the first Ukrainian athlete of the year in women’s tennis.

“Masha is one of the hardest-working people I know,” says Malinda Dogra ’22, co-captain with Lyven of the Pomona-Pitzer women’s tennis team, which reached the Elite Eight of the NCAA Division III tournament. Though Lyven’s postseason run was curtailed by illness, teammate Angie Zhou ’25 refers to her as “a true leader” and “a strong finish as national runner-up in the NCAA Division III Singles Championship.”

When Lyven arrived at Pomona from Kyiv, she only recently had begun learning English. Studying at Pomona meant writing her papers in Ukrainian first, then translating them. She also had to interpret a new culture. The women’s tennis team was her foothold. “It was really fun to be part of a group where everyone is committed to the same goal,” she says. “It was really fun to be part of the team and be part of a group where you know when I’m going to see my parents. It’s so different here. I don’t know who my parents are. I don’t know what’s going to happen. I’m very sad, and frustrated and anxious about not being able to be there.”

Her parents, who live in the suburbs of Kyiv, were faring OK, she says. This summer, Lyven, a computer science major, has an internship at Lyft in New York City before returning for her final semester at Pomona. The offer came as a tremendous relief, because she couldn’t return home due to the unsafe conditions. She is interested in UX (user experience) and product design as a career, combining the skills in creative thinking and problem solving that she has gained at Pomona.

—Lorraine Wu Harry ’17

An Unended Defeated Regular Season, A Bright Future

Not only did Pomona-Pitzer women’s tennis sweep through the regular season and the SCIAC tournament undefeated, but the team also welcomed a new star: Shoshi Henderson ’25.

The Sagehens finished with the best record in the program’s history at 18-1, marred only by a postseason loss in the NCAA Division III Sweet 16 to Tufts, the eventual national runner-up on the Jumbos’ home court.

Henderson quickly proved herself a game-changing player in her first season, breaking the NCAA Division III record for assists in a season with 90. She also set Sagehen records for points in a season with 132 and single-game assists with 13.

“Shoshi’s just a natural feeder, and she sees the field really well and works really well with her teammates,” says Coach Sarah Queener. “You can tell if you watch our games that when Shoshi gets the ball, you see everyone looking to cut. And that’s for a reason.”

Kate Immeghjack ’22, a “super-senior” who took a pandemic gap year to have the opportunity to play a final season, agrees. “Shoshi has vision like nobody else,” says Immeghjack, a third-team All-American midfielder and the SCIAC Defensive Player of the Year. “I feel like when I’m playing offense and Shoshi’s feeding, she feeds the ball before I even know that I’m cutting. She knows the route before it’s even there. She can just anticipate the movement of the offense and I think that’s really special.” It facilitates—well you can look at the stats, but it facilitates the way that our offense has developed.”

Watch Sagehen Sports Online—with Students as the Broadcast Crew

Before the pandemic, online broadcasts of Sagehen Athletics were a straightforward stream of the game. Now broadcasts might include multiple camera angles, instant replays, graphic overlays and play-by-play commentary. The secret weapon behind these improvements? Student workers.

Alex Chu ’24 hopes to make a career of sports commentary and is gaining plenty of experience.

“I’ve always found a profound passion for not only playing sports but also commenting and writing about sports or speaking about sports,” he says. “I’ve worked as a home-event commentator for not only playing sports but also commenting and writing about sports or speaking about sports,” he says. “I’ve worked as a home-event commentator for not only playing sports but also commentary and writing about sports or speaking about sports,” he says.

Maja Nitschke-Alonso ’23 didn’t have any prior camera experience. But she has settled into the role of “camera two,” which she explains “is the one that will zoom in on the player who’s taking free throws or backpedaling after a shot, the coach getting ripped up, all that fun stuff.”

Season-per-season, the broadcasts are broadcast, with the exception of cross country, golf, and track and field, which are more difficult to film. To watch live and previously recorded broadcasts, go to sciacnetwork.com/sagehens/

—Lorraine Wu Harry ’17

Ukraine’s Lyven ’22 Persists Despite War at Home

Lyven returned to Pomona last fall, only to injure her back and be sidelined until spring. But she “overcame that and really got herself in a good place coming back,” says Mike Morgan, head women’s tennis and associate professor of physical education. At a national tournament in March, Lyven was serving “about half underhand, half overhand,” says Morgan, and “still winning.” She has a level of quiet grit about her that you just don’t see every day.”

That tournament took place a week after Russia invaded Ukraine. Lyven’s teammates wore yellow and blue ribbons to show their support, and later helped her organize a fundraiser for the Ukrainian Global Crisis Relief Fund. By selling cupcakes, flowers and Ukrainian candies, Lyven raised about $1,600.

“The war has definitely affected me negatively,” she said this spring. “I’m constantly anxious about my family. I don’t know when I’m going to see my parents. It’s very scary, and I don’t know what’s going to happen. I’m very sad, and frustrated and anxious about not being able to be there.”

Her parents, who live in the suburbs of Kyiv, were faring OK, she says. This summer, Lyven, a computer science major, has an internship at Lyft in New York City before returning for her final semester at Pomona. The offer came as a tremendous relief, because she couldn’t return home due to the unsafe conditions. She is interested in UX (user experience) and product design as a career, combining the skills in creative thinking and problem solving that she has gained at Pomona.

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Popovich Raises the Bar in NBA

Pomona’s disproportionate influence on the NBA coaching ranks continued this season as Gregg Popovich, coach of Pomona-Pitzer’s Sarah Queener for eight early seasons in his career, set the NBA record for career victories as a coach. The San Antonio Spurs coach finished his 22nd season with 1,344 regular-season wins in his career. Popovich also has won five NBA championships as a head coach, tied for third in NBA history—and a lofty goal for Mike Budenholzer ’92, the former Sagehen player who is coach of the Milwaukee Bucks and won his first NBA title in 2021. Finally, both coaches in the 2022 NBA Finals—the Golden State Warriors’ Steve Kerr and the Boston Celtics’ Ime Udoka—played for Popovich and later served as his assistant coaches, Udoka with the Spurs and Kerr at the Tokyo Olympics.

The following year, the season was cut short by the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic. Lyven couldn’t return home due to travel restrictions, so she stayed with a Pomona classmate for two months. Eventually she was able to return to Ukraine, but had to fly from Texas to Atlanta to Amsterdam to Belarus and then drive an entire day to Kyiv.

“Shoshi has vision like nobody else,” says Immeghjack, a third-team All-American midfielder and the SCIAC Defensive Player of the Year. “I feel like when I’m playing offense and Shoshi’s feeding, she feeds the ball before I even know that I’m cutting. She knows the route before it’s even there. She can just anticipate the movement of the offense and I think that’s really special.” It facilitates—well you can look at the stats, but it facilitates the way that our offense has developed.”

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Anaa Jibicho ’23 and Brian Bishop ’22 take on the world’s water crisis, one water bottle at a time.

By Carla Maria Guerrero ’06

It’s around lunchtime on a weekday when two friends meet up in the Smith Campus Center’s courtyard. A dozen or more outdoor tables are buzzing with Pomona College students as they chat, eat and work under umbrellas protecting them from the high-noon sun. In the middle of the courtyard, recycled water endlessly cascades from a spout in the iconic Smith Campus Center fountain. For Anaa Jibicho ’23, the fountain is a reminder of his mission.

At a small table, Jibicho sits with his best friend and business partner Brian Bishop ’22 as they await the lunch they’ve ordered from the Coop. Together with a third partner, Lamah Bility, they run Didomi—a social enterprise named for the ancient Greek word for giving and founded on the principle of helping the nearly a billion people around the world who don’t have access to clean, safe water near their homes. They do this by donating a portion of the profits from sales of their fashionable, reusable water bottles to WaterIsLife, a nonprofit that provides filtration systems, pumps and drilling to help people access clean and safe water. The ventures also work to spread awareness of the crisis across the world.

“Water here is an aesthetic,” Jibicho says as he points to the fountain. “To have a basic necessity so readily available, we don’t think twice about it.”
Jibicho, an economics major, started Didomi in 2019 with Bility in Minnesota, where they had separately arrived as refugees from Africa at ages 7 and 11. As a young child in Ethiopia, Jibicho suffered the ill effects of drinking unsafe water. He and his family, members of the persecuted Oromo people, were forced to drink the only available water—which was not just unsafe but lethal. Before Jibicho’s birth, his mother had already suffered the unthinkable: Two of her children had fallen ill and died after ingesting unsafe water. When 2-year-old Jibicho became sick as well, she was determined not to lose another son. They fled to Kenya, and as refugees, she secured medical care that saved her youngest child’s life.

During his Orientation Adventure as a first-year student, Jibicho opened up and told his story to others in the group. Bishop, a sophomore leader on the trip who grew up in Albuquerque, New Mexico, was staggered. “The numbers also blew me away,” says the math and media studies major. As Jibicho explains: “Nearly a billion people lack access to safe water, and unsafe water kills more people than war.”

The two students connected further as the year went on, but it was another outdoor experience that cemented their burgeoning friendship. An avid outdoorsman, Bishop invited Jibicho to the annual Ski-Beach Day, traditionally held in the spring semester. At a cost of $5 dollars per person, the trip takes a busload of 100 Pomona students to Mountain High resort in nearby Wrightwood for an early day of skiing followed by a same-day drive to the Pacific Ocean for an afternoon of fun in the sand. The trip always sells out. To secure a spot, students begin lining up early in the morning at the Associated Students of Pomona College office in a line that stretches around the second floor of the Smith Campus Center. Luckily for Bishop and Jibicho, they secured ticket numbers 98 and 99.

Bishop, a member of the five-college ski and snowboard team that competes nationally, taught Jibicho to ski. He says it took a lot of convincing to drag Jibicho to the slopes. But now, skiing is one of Jibicho’s joys.

Conventional wisdom says that friendship and business don’t mix. Bishop says that opportunities like Pomona’s Orientation Adventure and Ski-Beach Day were instrumental in building a strong and holistic relationship between the two of them. “If you have those types of relationships, you’re more able to work together,” he says. During spring break in 2020, when the COVID-19 pandemic was just beginning, Jibicho saw an opportunity to grow Didomi’s potential. Staying with Bishop in New Mexico for the week, Jibicho pitched him an idea: Join Didomi and be a part of something bigger than both of them. Bishop had been looking into summer internships where he could use his media studies and creative skills and learn from experts.

It took a lot of persuasion, says Jibicho, to steer his friend away from a traditional internship and to take a leap of faith with Didomi instead: “I pitched him to create his own opportunity at Didomi and to learn by doing.”

Today, Bishop laughs remembering how much his friend had to do to get him to say yes—probably almost as much as he had to do to convince Jibicho to join him on those early ski trips.

For more information on global access to clean drinking water, visit the website of the joint monitoring program of the World Health Organization and the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF) at wash.org.
two fingers drawn in a symbol meant to represent hope. Each bottle retails for $28, and half of the profits from a single bottle provides 10 years of access to safe water to one person in need in Africa.

Bishop took a semester off during the 2020-2021 school year, which was marked by remote classes and uncertainty caused by COVID-19. Back home in New Mexico, he continued working on Didomi while auditing a social entrepreneurship course at Claremont McKenna College. Jibicho was enrolled in the same class, and both came out of it with tangible skills they would immediately put to the test.

Their hard work has led to large-scale partnerships with several institutions, including the University of New Mexico, Boys & Girls Clubs of America and the University of Wisconsin-River Falls. In Claremont, they have partnered with the Rick and Susan Sontag Center for Collaborative Creativity (known as the Hive) and the Pomona College Office of Advancement. The latest partnership they secured in January is with George Washington University. Jibicho says they beat out larger reusable water bottle companies for the contract to supply the university with nearly 30,000 Didomi bottles that will be given to the students, faculty and staff to help nudge the community away from single-use plastic bottles. The partnership will allow Didomi to provide water access to almost 30,000 people in Ghana, Guinea and Uganda for the next decade.

Being an entrepreneur, says Jibicho, has made his coursework at Pomona seem easier. “I’m using my education as a means to make tangible change for people around the world. I’ve been pushed to follow my passion here and use my education for good.”

Last summer, Didomi provided drinking water and reusable bottles for New Mexico’s first Juneteenth festival, helping spread awareness of the water crisis. During the three-day event, Didomi partnered with the arts production company Moon Wolf and the New Mexico United soccer team to give attendees custom-made water bottles, helping make an impact on the water crisis in Africa and reduce plastic waste in America. To date, Jibicho and Bishop say, Didomi has helped 50,000 people in Africa. The future is full of opportunity for the young entrepreneurs, who have no plans to stop. Jibicho has one more year at Pomona. Bishop, a senior who took a semester off during the pandemic, is graduating at the end of 2022 and plans to focus on Didomi’s social media presence and the stories of the company’s impact that will inspire people. Bility, who already graduated from the University of Wisconsin-River Falls, is boots-on-the-ground in West Africa, managing Didomi’s impact firsthand. Their hope is to see that one day everyone in the world will have access to all the clean, safe water they need.

“Lots of people have invested in our mission but no one is more invested than us,” Jibicho says. “We are committed to the work.”

SEEKING CHANGE

By the summer of 2020, Bishop had moved in with Jibicho and Bility in their hometown of St. Paul, Minnesota, to develop brand guidelines for the reusable water bottle company. Bishop’s arrival in the Twin Cities coincided with the George Floyd protests rocking the Minneapolis area. Floyd’s death under the knee of police officer Derek Chauvin was captured on camera, sparking public outrage and unrest across the U.S. Before even going to their apartment, Jibicho, Bility and Bishop attended the protests, with Bishop’s luggage still in the trunk. The energy on the streets inspired the three young Black men, and before long they took turns on the microphone sharing about their own experiences.

The energy of that historic summer continued to fuel the trio as they drew out Didomi’s vision, mission statement and brand guidelines. They got down to the finer details, including approved fonts, color schemes and what types of brands and companies they wanted to work with.

“The drop that makes ripples throughout the world.”

Refined that summer, this quote graces Didomi’s stainless steel bottles. Their logo is a drop of water that flows into...
It’s unusual for a U.S. Embassy to have even a single Sagehen, but for three years in Prague, the capital of the Czech Republic, the entire Cultural Section was schooled in the arts of 47.

Erik Black ’95 and Doug Morrow ’01, both career diplomats, arrived together in the summer of 2018. Black, the new cultural affairs officer, had studied in Russia and served two years at the U.S. Embassy in Kyiv following Ukraine’s 2004-05 Orange Revolution. He arrived in Prague fresh from six years at the U.S. Embassy in Beijing. Morrow, his new deputy, had previously lived in Moscow and worked for two years at the U.S. Embassy in Kyiv shortly before Ukraine overthrew pro-Russia president Viktor Yanukovych in 2014.

This is their perspective on the work of diplomacy.

By Doug Morrow ’01 and Erik Black ’95
Our goal was to better explain American government and society and help strengthen our shared democratic values and ideals among Czechs who have significant influence.

That might have been part of the reason the Czech Republic’s president, who regularly praised authoritarian Russia and China, was re-elected with a comfortable majority in 2018.

We both agreed it was important to have a conversation with Czechs about why our shared democratic values still mattered.

The China Problem

At the time, China had already begun a major influence campaign in the Czech Republic. The Czech president had declared his hope it would become an “unsinkable aircraft carrier” for Chinese investment into the European Union.

A series of state visits, the opening of new Czech-Chinese institutes and Confucius Centers, and attempts to have Czech students to study in China all created concern in the embassy about long-term Czech commitments to our shared democratic values, as did increasingly favorable poll numbers for China. In response, the cultural team crafted a multi-year campaign to highlight Chinese human rights abuses and the dangers of increasing reliance on Chinese information technology.

The Chinese government did itself no favors. When the progressive mayor of Prague spoke out in favor of Taiwan and Tibet in 2019, the Chinese government retaliated by canceling planned cultural tours by any musical groups that happened to have “Prague” in their name. (In the Czech Republic, high art and classical music are sacrosanct. Don’t Mess with Dvorak.)

Erik’s team capitalized by inviting one orchestra blocked by China to perform at the Petřínské Údolí, the ambassador’s official residence—which happens to be across the street from the Chinese Embassy. To broaden the impact, we arranged for the concert to be broadcast live on national radio. One Czech journalist described the concert as “a totally badass move by the U.S. Embassy.” Combined with other programs, including expert speakers and a nationally touring public photo exhibition documenting abuses against the Muslim Uighur minority in Xinjiang andremembrances of the Tiananmen Square massacre, our teams succeeded in getting Czechs across the country talking about the values gap with China and questioning how close they really wanted to be.

What we didn’t realize when we arrived in the Czech Republic—a member of NATO since 1999 and of the European Union since 2004, but once part of the Warsaw Pact—was that most of our time would be spent blunting the impact of Russian and Chinese propaganda and disinformation campaigns. Erik was well attuned to China’s international influence efforts through its Belt and Road Initiative and network of Confucius Centers from his experience in Beijing. Doug was versed in Russian methods from his time in Moscow.

“I thought coming to the heart of Europe would mean a break from China issues after my back-to-back tours in Beijing,” Erik says. Doug had similar expectations. “Honestly, I thought this was going to be sort of a break after heading the public affairs section in the Iraqi Kurdistan Region during the middle of the ISIS war, but it was anything but,” he says.

Leading a team of three Czech nationals that included some of the most talented and experienced staff at the embassy, Erik was charged with engaging Czech opinion leaders in a variety of fields: the arts, journalism, higher education, business and civil society.

“Our goal was to better explain American government and society and help strengthen our shared democratic values and ideals among Czechs who have significant influence,” he says.

Doug’s team of four Czechs focused on the nation’s young people ages 14-38, the first generation of voters and workers in that country to have grown up without any memory of authoritarianism.

“The concern was that this lack of direct experience might weaken their resolve to maintain their 32-year-old democracy,” he says. “Before COVID, we started making the rounds to high schools and universities to engage students in discussions on why democracy matters. Polling bore out our concerns: Among the 38 countries that are members of the OECD [Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development], young Czech adults have a conversation with Czechs about why our shared democratic values still mattered.

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The Russia Problem

Meanwhile, publicly available polling data showed that the far east of the Czech Republic had the highest levels of support for political parties on the left and ethnic minorities—a clear indication of a possible return to democracy. The Ostrava residents had previously been an important cultural center for the Communist party, but in 2020, the city welcomed a new American cultural center as a platform for American speakers and culture in towns and cities unlikely to see a real life diplomat. In addition, we established a partnership with the local media and other engagement. We recruited high school students as informal ambassadors upon their return, explaining U.S. politics, society and culture to towns and cities unlikely to see a real life diplomat. In addition, we established a partnership with the local (and impressive) children’s science museum to develop a critical thinking exhibit to help local children better challenge Russian state disinformation campaigns. To address the Russia problem with another important audience, Erik’s team worked with Czech alumni of U.S. government exchange programs in Prague to discuss Russian propaganda, disinformation campaigns and cyber operations, as well as best practices and successful strategies to counter them. The conference attendees, most of whom are in positions of influence within their respective countries, reconnected themselves to working collectively to counter Russian disinformation.

Just as it did with everything else, the COVID-19 pandemic created challenges to traditional public diplomacy efforts, which typically traffic in face-to-face engagement. We had to adapt our programs, turning to Zoom and other tools to reach virtual audiences. When Secretary of State Mike Pompeo visited the Czech Republic during a COVID-19 visit in August 2020—the first high-level official U.S. visit in eight years—we helped coordinate media coverage and engagements with the traveling U.S. press, as well as with the Czech and international media reporting on the trip. Secretary Pompeo’s visit included a public speech on NATO and European security, as well as a tour of the city’s high street, and a giant Russian tank—a flashy Russian Consulate. We had to adapt our programs, turning to Zoom and other tools to reach virtual audiences. When Secretary of State Mike Pompeo visited the Czech Republic during a COVID-19 visit in August 2020—the first high-level official U.S. visit in eight years—we helped coordinate media coverage and engagements with the traveling U.S. press, as well as with the Czech and international media reporting on the trip. Secretary Pompeo’s visit included a public speech on NATO and European security, as well as a tour of the city’s high street, and a giant Russian tank—a flashy Russian Consulate on the high street, and a giant Russian tank—a flashy Russian Consulate having just announced the first trip to the Czech Republic.

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“Pomona opened our minds to new possibilities and put us on the path to diplomatic careers in the U.S. Foreign Service.”

“Pomona opened our minds to new possibilities and put us on the path to diplomatic careers in the U.S. Foreign Service.”
Colorado Rockies co-owner Linda Alvarado ’73 and the team’s first female scout, Emily Glass ’15, have formed a bond.

Story by Robyn Norwood
It’s middy at the Colorado Rockies’ Coors Field, still hours before first pitch. A couple of groundkeepers are busy mowing the grass with practical precision, and another is spraying the infield dirt with a fine mist before the evening’s game. High above the field, Linda Alvarado ’73 and Emily Glass ’15 sit in a quiet stadium lounge that soon will be buzzing with fans. They have little and yet worth in common.

Alvarado is a self-made construction manager with a net worth Forbes estimates at $230 million. The founder, president, and CEO of Alvarado Construction, a large commercial general contractor, she became the first Latina owner in Major League Baseball history—and a woman who didn’t inherit her business at all—a part of the ownership group that won an expansion bid for a new National League team in 1991 and brought the Colorado Rockies to Denver in 1993.

Glass is a new employee, only months on the job, digging her fingernails deeper into a career in baseball after being hired as the Rockies’ first female scout last November. Like Alvarado, she has gotten where she is with intelligence, a clever knack for finding her way around obstacles and a sense of humor that has served both women well in male-dominated fields. Besides the Rockies and a love for baseball, they have one other thing in common: Pomona College.

“Don’t see that going to happen,” Alvarado says. “My era was free love, communal beds, drugs. We’re talking about the late 1960s, early 1970s.”

“I think so.”

“Mudd 2!” Glass says. “It’s the only one I’ve lived in. At least, the only one we stayed in for more than a week.”

“Still Mudd 2?” Alvarado says, reaching back over the years. “I was a single parent,” Glass says. “You’re kidding.”

“No, Mudd 2 back. Did you go up the stairs in these women’s shoes?”

“I think so.”

“Mudd 2! Let’s go!” Glass says as they exchange one of the fist bumps that punctuate their conversation.

Though Alvarado and Glass’s baseball background during the scouting search and from former Rockies manager Clint Hurdle to Emily Glass’s parents didn’t discover their Pomona connection until well after Glass had started working for Marc Gustafson, the Rockies’ senior director of scouting operations, and been featured in the Denver Post.

Glass isn’t the only woman working as a scout for a major league team, and the so-called glass ceiling in baseball’s front offices has already been broken by Miami Marlins General Manager Kim Ng, who became MLB’s first female GM in 2020. But Glass, who serves as the Rockies’ scouting operations administrator in addition to scouring Colorado and beyond for amateur talent, is still part of the rarefied world of women in baseball. She’s someone with “a very bright future” at Gustafson told the Post after Glass emerged as one of the standouts from the MLB Diversity Pipeline Scout Development Program in Arizona last fall.

Alvarado and Glass followed very different paths to Pomona and had very different experiences.

Growing up in New Mexico, Alvarado shared a two-room adobe home with her parents and five brothers. “Not two bedrooms,” she says. “Two rooms.”

The captain of her high school softball team, she turned down an opportunity to play college ball in the Midwest to attend Pomona on an academic scholarship.

Glass grew up in Northern California in what she describes as a University of California family. Her brother earned degrees at various UCs, and her parents met in Berkeley. She played softball for two years at Pomona while studying business, and even enjoyed playing handball with the guys in a beer league.

“Are there league?” Glass asks. “How come they didn’t have that when I was there?”

“Mudd 2!” Alvarado says. “My era was free love, you know. Burn your bras, and I was there when they first had Earth Day.”

MLB’s FIRST LATINO OWNER

Alvarado’s girlhood was steeped in sports. “My parents didn’t embrace conventional thinking, particularly for Hispanic families, to let this girl be out there playing baseball with the boys, getting dirty, getting punked,” says Alvarado, born Linda Martinez. Her father was a catcher in summer baseball leagues, so she played catcher like him. “He would let me go clean the plate between innings—which is still the only plate I know how to clean,” she says with characteristic wit.

Thrown in the fact that Alvarado’s first date with her future husband, Robert Alvarado, was at Dodger Stadium, it’s no surprise that she never got considered for the short list: Are you committed? Are you aligned with the City? Are you a Latina? Are you a Latina from a wealthy family, on the field and fill the stands, or is this an unusual opportunity so you can have a few ‘moments’?”

A critical selection requirement was building a major league stadium, and the ownership group in Denver, with Alvarado as the first Latina owner in the major league baseball, was a six-county sales tax referendum to fund construction of a new stadium. As the classic brick-and-mortar stadium of Colorado’s poor and dilapidated downtown warehouse district, it transformed that part of the city. Resting at the intersection of grocery stores, bars and other businesses moving in, rehabilitating vacant old buildings. New condominium towers rose along with high-rise offices, creating new jobs. Alvarado, walking around the new upper deck, points to a skyline still crowded with construction cranes today. “For many decades, this had been an abandoned area in Denver,” she says. “There was nothing. Maybe just a few prairie dogs and some people who were homeless. Pick up this site really has had a huge economic impact for the city.”

The Rockies were an immediate hit when they made their debut in 1993, drawing more than 80,000 in their first home game at the Denver Broncos’ old Mile High Stadium, playing on a converted football field that accommodated baseball by using a mechanical system to temporarily move a massive section of the stands. The team set an MLB attendance record by drawing nearly 4½ million fans in its first season. Coors Field opened two years later in 1995, and with a group of partners that included Alvarado, the Rockies have hosted the MLB All-Star Game twice, and in 2007, they reached the World Series against the Boston Red Sox.

“Girls Go Food Service!”

Alvarado’s success in whatever field she chose might have been inevitable. But her gravitation toward construction began with helping her father pour a concrete sidewalk at their little adobe, and accelerated at Pomona.

Coming from New Mexico, “I was a little challenged, because I didn’t know what broccoli was, or brussels sprouts. I grew up with beans, rice and chiles,” Alvarado says. “But Pomona was great. Really game-changing in widening my knowledge and personal experiences, data analysis, risk-taking, strategic planning and motivation.

The culture also held her accountable for participation in her classes, learning experiences, getting better grades, and not only being productive but also being proactive and collaborative with others in utilizing this knowledge to make a difference.”

Her parents, she says, were living week to week, working at a social services center on campus. “You could do food service, library or groundkeeping,” she says. “I don’t know how to cook, so I applied for groundkeeper and went to find the supervisor. He said, ‘What are you doing here? Don’t you understand! You go do food service. Boys do groundkeeping.’”

She soon returned and told him, “I didn’t see the girls doing it, so I thought it was only the boys.” He said, “You can’t wear those shoes. You’re going to have to go to the gym, and I can get a tan. And I don’t pay you, you pay me to work with all these single guys? I was hurt but I think he thought I would quit or whatever. In reality, I was more comfortable in that kind of environment.

When a single parent in her family passed away leaving five kids with no resources while Alvarado was at Pomona, “I made a very difficult decision that I had to find a full-time job to provide some desperately needed financial support for these children,” she says.

Alvarado’s coworkers told her about other landscaping and commercial construction projects, and in 1972 she left Pomona College Magazine
Pomona to put her economics studies to practical purposes, working in commercial real estate development on financial practical purposes, working in commercial real estate development on financial
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popularity, Glass decided not to reapply for baseball jobs earlier in her career, referring to the woman who this season not only no, but hell no,” she says. “It would have been

“BECOMING A SCOUT
By late afternoon Glass is sitting in the

“High risk, high reward,” Glass says. “It’s

Finding talent in Colorado, where the season starts late and is often interrupted

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“I think kind of like what Linda is saying, I’m just an ‘actions speak louder than words’ person,” she says. “Trust takes time to build. It’s a process, like baseball. You keep at it every day, and over time it grows. It’s very much welcomed overall. You can focus on the bright side or not. I wouldn’t be here without the opportunities I’ve been given by the Rockies and prior to this. I’m very grateful for that.”

Alvarado nods. “We’re very proud of what she’s doing,” she says.

They are two of the more visible women with the Rockies, but far from the only ones. Sue Ann McClaren is vice president of ticket sales, operations and services. Kim Molina is senior vice president of communications, sales, marketing, corporate sponsorships, client services, engineering and facilities. And yet another is the manager of baseball research, which is a data analytics role, and two women, Jenny Cavnar and Kelsey Wengert, are part of the Rockies broadcast team for AT&T SportsNet.

Alvarado is intent on promoting talented women, but says being the first among many is a lonely and isolated struggle. “You don’t know what will happen. You don’t know if you’ll be able to break into it,” she says. "Player evaluation is a lot like that.”

Glass didn’t set out to become a scout, but has kept building a career in baseball almost like a sailor tacking, catching whatever wind she can and then finding another way to move forward when it shifts. Her first semesters at Pomona, she chose a Critical Inquiry seminar called Baseball in America, taught by Lorn Foster, now an emeritus professor. She studied abroad in Spain to bone the Spanish skills that helped her break into baseball. Her senior year, she wrote her thesis in public policy analysis and evaluation and development on what type of data can be collected and analyzed for $2,500. It was terrifying, but it was also a serious motivator because they would lose everything if I didn’t succeed. I paid the loan back, but I’ll never be able to repay them.

BECOMING A SCOUT
By late afternoon Glass is sitting in the metal stands at a school whose name she couldn’t remember. High School in the lower suburb of Arvada. She’s in asignment among the parents and fans as one can be with a stopwatch in her hand and a radar gun in the black bag she carries. But even the Rockies puppet puff jacket she wears on a changeable Colorado spring day doesn’t betray that she is someone who could help a diamond in the rough get drafted—or develop a hot prospect with high hopes.

Finding talent in Colorado, where the season starts late and is often interrupted by snow, can be a challenge. But it happens. “High risk, high reward,” Glass says. “It’s not like Texas, California or Florida.”

But there are players to be found, and the state has produced some standout pitchers. “Roy Halladay,Kyle Freeland,” she says, referring to the late Hall of Famer and a current Rockies left-hander. When a player is there to see comes to the plate, Glass reads her stopwatch. “You don’t want to see a hitter swing and not make contact. You can’t swing and miss and be a pro prospect,” she says. He hits a
Almost 50 years after they met as students at Pitzer and shared a house on Indian Hill Boulevard, Pomona College professors Gary Kates and Char Miller revel in a friendship that remained tight as they crisscrossed the country for graduate school and teaching jobs. They reunited in the 1980s as professors at Trinity University in Texas before Kates left for Pomona in 2001. In 2007, Miller followed. Back together in Claremont, they have offices two doors down from each other in Mason Hall. As Miller wrote in dedicating a book to Kates, his wife and their two children, their families’ bonds have become as thickly intertwined as the gnarled live oaks arching over the streets where they have lived. Kates and Miller recently sat down to reminisce with PCM in a conversation that has been edited for length and clarity.

A

BEST FRIENDS
FOR LIFE

From Housemates as Pitzer Students to Professors at Pomona

Gary Kates
Char Miller
Gary Kates: I think we remember when we met, but we may remember the remembering more than anything, because it was so long ago. It was in Huntley Bookstore of The Claremont Colleges, probably around the history books, and we stood a long time talking to each other.

Char Miller: I met Gary, my wife of 45 years, introduced us. Gary had been her R.A. I’ve said this to Gary before. It was like I met my brother, which I don’t have, but he has become that.

GK: It was September of 1973. Gary and I were living in a home in South Claremont. Lynne, now my wife of 44 years, and I were living at 545 Indiana Hill with John and Judy Dockworth, who remains a close friend. John felt a little like a third wheel living with a couple, which was understandable, so midway he moved out.

CM: And Judy and I moved in. The house was really funky, and that might also have driven John crazy. It’s been heavily influenced by the old Claremont; there was no insulation in the house and any wind went right through its very thin walls. But it was cheap, and it was close to the colleges.

GK: Char was much more hippie-looking then.

CM: Much more hair.

GK: Char’s hair flowed down to his shoulders and at times needed a band to be pulled back. My hair looked longer, but it was kind of curly and kinky in those days, but never as classical ’60s as Char’s.

CM: I was going for the classical ’60s. To come to California, like for many at that time, was a chance to remake yourself. It did work in some sense that it gave me a life that I couldn’t have imagined before. I got here and the chance to meet people that I wouldn’t have met had I not arrived—especially Judi!

GK: My way to Claremont my car broke down in Bridgport, California, in the Eastern Sierra. I had to hitchhike to Pitzer and got a ride from a guy in an 18-wheeler who took me all the way down Highway 395 through the Cajon Pass and dropped me off at Exit 47. Another thing about Claremont in those days, the air quality was such that there were many days when you did not go outdoors. There was what we used to call the “smell of the kck” from the Kaiser Steel Mill in Fontana, and then all the cars. The air quality was so horrific that riding a bicycle from 445 Indiana Hill to Pitzer College, you felt like you’d been running a marathon. There were days when I was just like, “I’m not going to school. This is crazy. And obviously we didn’t have Zoom.

GK: It was soReportedDaily.com, as if you actually took it.

CM: The faculty of Pitzer were fantastic. I feel so lucky being back here. It was a four-bedroom house, but we had changed two of the bedrooms into studies. For the studies, I was with Judy, and Char was with Lynne.

CM: It was also a kind of professionalized thing, that we were committed to doing this pretty early on. Part of what was so great was I had this incredible friend who was an historian who in that semester was finishing his senior thesis—on his electric typewriter. But it was so much fun to watch Gary go through this process, because I was going to try to replicate it the next year. Gary’s been my guide in a lot of things, but it started that spring.

GK: I don’t think it occurred to us until years later that it was actually very rare at that time for a Pitzer undergraduate to go to history graduate school. Pitzer [founded in 1963] wasn’t very old at that time.

CM: The faculty of Pitzer were fantastic and really helped me understand why they did do that. It was kind of a heady time.

GK: All the colleges were smaller, and certainly Pitzer being so new was under-resourced and more dependent on the other colleges. Both of us had mentors at other colleges too. Today each of the colleges is better, a little bigger and stronger than they were then.

CM: Even one of them is so strong now. I feel so lucky being back here.

The other thing we did at 445 was we had a garden in the backyard, which was problematic. I now think in retrospect, the professor had a kiln back there, and there was all sorts of debris and I suspect toxicity in the soil, which might have explained why things didn’t grow very well. But it was part of the back to the land movement. Trying to grow your own food was consistent with trying to make your own bread. We’d have these big sumptuous meals that spread across the table with 10 to 12 people sitting in totally mismatched chairs.

The thing I remember about that era is that I think it is still true with college students today, and I hope it is, I mean sure it is, that we constantly talked about what I think we were reading and learning. And there’s a way in which five years later, I wasn’t sure if I took that class or if Judy took that class and I just listened to it and learned through osmosis because she was talking about it. All kind of merged and the education you got was as much through one another and their experiences as it was being reported daily, as if you actually took it.

GK: That’s what we always say as teachers now, that you learn surely as much outside the classroom as you do inside, and that was a beautiful example of that, in part because the readings that we had were just dynamic. Absolutely fantastic and challenging, and because we were living with people who loved to talk about books and still do.

Judi is a writer and editor—she has edited most if not all of Gary’s books. Lynne went to medical school in Chicago and Gary went to graduate school at the University of Chicago. Then I went to Johns Hopkins for graduate work. When we were in Baltimore and they were in Chicago, we deliberately flew through Chicago so that Gary and Lynne could come out to the gate and we could see them, back when we could do such things. I remember we were once standing there and Gary’s looking very nervous and, finally, he said, “That’s Carl Wilson over there,” of the Beach Boys. Gary said, “I’ve got to go talk to him, but I’m not going.” Judy said, “What can he say? Go over there.” Gary went over and introduced himself, and it was like this moment of great joy, in part because we could watch it happen in real time.

CM: When Judy and Char got married in the spring of 1977, I was in Paris doing research for my dissertation. Lynne went to the wedding and I didn’t. Today people would hop on a plane and make the transatlantic trip, but in those days you didn’t do that.

GK: When Char and Judy got married in the summer of 1977, I was in Paris doing research for my dissertation. Lynne went to the wedding and I didn’t. Today people would hop on a plane and make the transatlantic trip, but in those days you didn’t do that.

GK: That’s just the way things were then, that you didn’t do that. You thought of it as a world away. But Lynne went to their wedding, and when I got back to Chicago where Lynne was in medical school, she announced to the that, well, they got married, we’re getting married. And it really was just like that, and so we met the next year because they did.

char was an unusual candidate in another respect. She was a musician, and although she had been brought up in a family that loved music, she had never been very interested in it herself. It was only after she had moved to California that she started to take it seriously, and she began to teach herself how to play the guitar. She was a quick learner, and before long she was playing in small coffee shops and bars, and even in a few larger venues.

Gary and Lynne had been friends with Char for a few years, and they had always been fascinated by her music. They encouraged her to continue playing, and they even helped her to write a few songs of her own. She was always grateful for their support, and she knew that without it she might never have started to pursue her musical career.

But it wasn't just the music that Gary and Lynne were interested in. They were also interested in the political and social issues of the time. They were very involved in the anti-war movement, and they helped Char to get involved as well. She was a natural leader, and she soon found herself at the center of many of the protests and demonstrations.

Once she had settled into her new life, Char started to think about what she wanted to do with her career. She knew that she was good at writing and speaking, and she had always been interested in social justice issues. She thought that she might like to become a professor, and she started to look for positions at other colleges and universities.

One day, she received a call from a friend who worked at a college in California. He told her about a job opening, and he encouraged her to apply. She did, and she was accepted. It was a small liberal arts college, and it was located in a small town.

Char was nervous about the move, but she was also excited. She looked forward to the new challenges and the new experiences that she would have. She was ready for anything.
Elisa Louizos ’96 and Roxanne Maas ’94 sang together in the Glee Club. Decades later, they reconnected in response to a rare medical condition.

The feeling Elisa (Mawer) Louizos ’96 noticed in her chest was odd but not entirely unfamiliar. It wasn’t quite pain—more a tightness, a bit like heartburn but not as sharp. “Bummer,” she thought to herself as she started the car and headed out with her ninth-grade son to pick up his books for virtual school. “Maybe I’m getting a flu kinda thing.” And maybe, she thought, it will just go away.

On the way home, though, Louizos had to pull over to the side of the road, violently ill. Composing herself, she made it into the house, stretched out on the sofa and tried to eat some of the ramen noodles her son brought her. The nausea passed, but the tightness in her chest remained, along with lightheadedness and a dull ache mid-back. She fell into a fitful sleep.

“When I woke up in the morning,” Louizos recalls, “I didn’t know what it was, but I had the sense that ‘something’s a bit off.’” Her doctor’s office told her to go to a local emergency room, where she was sure she’d be “wasting people’s time” and that “it was going to be a pain in the butt,” all the while surrounded by people with COVID-19.

Medical personnel who attended to Louizos ran some tests and blood work, then turned their attention to other patients. “Everything was coming back negative, negative, negative,” she remembers. “And then the final test was for a cardiac enzyme, troponin.” In an instant, Louizos’ life changed. “The doctor looked at me and said, ‘Well, it looks like you’ve had a heart attack. Where is your husband? I need to talk to him.’”

By Marilyn Thomsen
A STRANGE COINCIDENCE

When asked how it might be that two Pomona alumnae who sang in Glee Club together in the 1990s could both experience the very rare heart attack just 18 months apart, Pomona Economics Professor Gary Smith suggests selective recall coincidence. Smith is the author of What the Luck: The Surprising Role of Chance in Our Everyday Lives. “Selective recall in general means that you remember selectively, often because it supports your prior beliefs, but also because it is so striking,” Smith explains. “Like a baby born at 7:11 on 7/11 weighing 7 pounds 11 ounces. If you predict, ahead of time, that a woman’s baby will be born at that time on that day with that weight, it would be astonishing if it came true. If, instead, look at the birth records of the millions of babies born in the United States every year, it is utterly unsurprising that you will find a baby with an amusing combination of birth statistics. In any large set of data there are lots of coincidences that are memorable but meaningless.”

So it is likely that the two women’s experiences with SCAD might have remained as isolated, individual rare events were it not for the third Sagehen and mutual friend, Tori (Ashe) Erslovas ’95. “Last January I got a text message from Elisa. ‘I’m ok, but I had a mild heart attack.’” Erslovas relates. “When I talked to her and she told me what it was, I said, ‘That’s so weird. I know someone else that happened to—’ it’s Roxanne from Glee Club. Can I connect you?”

Louizos says she dialed Maas’ number with “a mix of hopefulness and anxiety.” She was just a few days past her SCAD heart attack. “I was so scared. So scared. And I had so, so many questions.”

There was much for Louizos and Maas to discuss. Maas “was great,” says Louizos. “She had already been through that initial shock and was able to keep me grounded and provide hope.” Maas talked about how her life had, for the most part, kept on as it had been, minus rollercoasters and a daily omission of stress. “Lucky is the woman who walks now more than she runs.”

The current standard of care favors conservative treatment whenever possible, as SCADs often heal on their own, and that was the route Maas and Louizos took. Both women take a couple of medications and have instructions to keep their heart rate within certain safety parameters and to focus on mild to moderate cardiovascular exercise rather than activities such as weightlifting. “We were both glad we didn’t have babies or toddlers to lift anymore,” says Louizos.

Having a heart attack in the prime of life, especially one that was so atypical, has left Louizos and Maas eager to make people aware of SCAD. Elisa is part of the SCAD Alliance’s iSCAD Registry. Both have sent their medical records to the Mayo Clinic for a virtual SCAD registry and are part of a supportive SCAD Facebook group. Fear of a recurrence has not completely disappeared. The literature indicates that 20-30% of SCAD survivors, as veterans of SCAD often call themselves, experience a subsequent episode. “I might go weeks and even months without thinking of it, and then it’ll just sort of occur to me,” says Louizos. “The scariest thing about this is that it came out of the blue,” Maas adds. “It’s not like ‘As long as I don’t run a marathon, I’ll be fine.’ It could totally happen again.”
Dear Sagehen Alumni,

It was such a thrill to have Alumni Weekend back on campus this year—our first since 2019. I’m grateful to have had this opportunity for our alumni community to reconnect and reCHIRP after the long pandemic pause and thoroughly enjoyed spending time with fellow Sagehens in person from across the generations. What a magical weekend!

I’d also like to congratulate the Class of 2022 on their Commencement—another important event to return to in person on campus—and officially welcome them to the Pomona College Alumni Association! And as there was a special campus for the Classes of 2020 and 2021 in May, I want to take a moment to remind them we are so pleased to have them join the alumni community as well.

As of June 30, my two-year term as president of the Alumni Association Board ends. Working with Pomona’s Alumni Association Board members these past two years has been such an important opportunity to make a meaningful impact on our campus and community. Alfredo Romero ’91 will step into the role of president next. I wish him all the best as he begins his term.

Chirp! Chirp!

Don Swan ’15
Alumni Association Board President
To view notes online, visit sagehenconnect.pomona.edu.
“My donation to the College is only a small token—but every penny expresses my tremendous gratitude for the stellar experience that my daughter had at Pomona. Her life was enriched and supported in every way, and her work and pursuits today reflect the opportunities, environment and humanity she encountered over her four years at the College.”
—Karen Garlick P’18

“Why do I give back to Pomona? Because Pomona is one of a handful of colleges that practice need-blind admissions, creating an even playing field for all applicants by providing generous financial aid for every student who needs that support. Alumni stewardship of the Annual Fund allows Pomona to continue to provide exceptional financial aid and a world class education to all students.”
—Megan Kaes Long ’08, Alumni Association Board Member

The Pomona College educational experience inspires intellectual passions and drives creative real-world solutions, guiding the next generation of leaders, scholars and artists who will bear their added riches in trust for all across the globe.

Give to Pomona’s Annual Fund at pomona.edu/give-today

To view notes online, visit sagehenconnect.pomona.edu.
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Dru Gladney, a leading expert on the peoples and cultures along the Silk Road of the past and present, died unexpectedly on March 17, 2022. He was 65.

Gladney was a sought-after and widely quoted academic voice on China’s Uyghurs and other Muslim minorities, appearing in media outlets such as The New York Times and CNN, and in scholarly forums around the globe. A Fulbright Research Scholar to China and Turkey, Gladney conducted field research in Western China, Central Asia and Turkey for decades.

He was in the Xinjiang province of China bordering Afghanistan at the time of the 9/11 terror attacks, and he later testified before a congressional subcommittee in response to the detention of a group of Uyghurs at Guantanamo Bay.

His books included Dislocating China: Muslims, Minorities, and Other Subaltern Subjects and Ethnic Identity in China: The Making of a Muslim Minority. He contributed to 2004’s Xinjiang: China’s Muslim Borderland, which Gladney and other scholars reported led them to be barred from travel to China for a time. He later was able to return, but not to the Western regions where he had long conducted his research.

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“His impeccable knowledge about and conviction [about] food, specifically niche Chinese foods and different types of cuisines, was enlightening,” Ding told TSL, adding that his interests in industrial cuisine, restriction and religion made an impression on her.

During nearly 16 years at Pomona, Gladney also served stints as president of the Pacific Basin Institute and as chair of the Anthropology Department. “He will be remembered for how he always looked for occasions to bring people together, break bread and tell stories,” said Associate Professor Joanne Nucho, current chair of the Anthropology Department.

Nucho also noted that Gladney was a frequent commentator for national news outlets such as NPR for his research and expertise on China. “I recall many occasions when he did not announce his interviews in advance, but I just happened to turn on the radio and hear his voice,” Nucho said. “We all mourn his passing and send our deepest condolences to his family.”
The Classes of ’20 and ’21 Return

Imagine yourself returning to Harwood, Mudd-Blaisdell or wherever you began your college days to spend a few nights. Think of rolling out of your twin bed on a Saturday morning to hit the breakfast buffet at Frary or go for a run under the oaks. In an experience that felt both “awkward” and “very nostalgic,” more than 500 members of the pandemic classes of 2020 and 2021 who didn’t get to have on-campus Commencements accepted invitations to return for a celebratory weekend in May. The College provided residence hall housing, meals at Frary and stipends to defray travel costs for the delayed and unusually exuberant Commencement on Marston Quad for the not-so-new grads—many of whom not only already have jobs and apartments, but in some cases, master’s degrees.

“I’m coming from Europe so I’m very jet lagged. It’s almost dinner time for me.” — Adelaide Wendel ’21

“I wish I had a dining hall in real life.” — Luka Green ’20

“The emotional part is I just got these pancakes, and I feel like I was about to cry. I was very conflicted about whether I was going to take blueberry or chocolate chip.” — Cristofer Arbuzinski ’20

“Everybody and their parents want to have that photo of them walking across that stage. This means being able to say that I graduated and not just digitally, which doesn’t pack as much ‘oomph’ as a cap and gown.” — Eli Liska ’20

“I skipped my grad school commencement because I just don’t have the community that I have here at Pomona. So I was willing to let that go and come out here and do all this.” — Sean Trimble ’20

“If it’s weird and it’s not weird. It seems so surreal when you first pull up, and then you just dive right back into it.” — Jake Lialios ’20

The Classes of ’20 and ’21 Return
Create a solid foundation
both within and beyond the Gates. The Pomona Plan can help secure your financial future while also supporting the education of tomorrow’s Sagehen leaders.

Sample annuity rates for individuals

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Rates valid through August 31, 2022

Pomona Plan Annuities are not available in all states; call us to confirm rates and availability in your state.

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