

**9 LESSONS IN
CRIMINAL JUSTICE**

Bill Keller '70 on reform

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for
privacy

FOR THE DEFENSE

A public defender's life

INSIDE OUT

50 classes behind bars

DEFY THE ODDS

Entrepreneurs in prison

COLLEGE MAGAZINE

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Winter 2020

BEHIND
BARS

WHEN BILL KELLER '70, THE FOUNDING EDITOR OF THE MARSHALL PROJECT, WAS ASKED TO ADDRESS A CONFERENCE OF FEDERAL JUDGES ON THE LESSONS HE'D LEARNED ABOUT CRIME AND PUNISHMENT, HERE'S WHAT HE HAD TO SAY.

Lessons in Criminal Justice

By Bill Keller '70

#1

It is possible to reduce incarceration and crime at the same time.

Prison guards stroll down a corridor at San Quentin State Prison in San Quentin, Calif. AP Photo/Ben Margot

A couple of summers ago, I was invited to speak to the Ninth Circuit Judicial Conference, a gathering of federal judges from the Western states, about the state of criminal justice and the campaign to reform it. I thought I had learned some lessons as editor of The Marshall Project, a nonprofit news organization focused on our troubled system of crime and punishment, but I'm not a lawyer. As if addressing a ballroom full of judges was not intimidating enough, I was scheduled to speak after Bryan Stevenson, the charismatic lawyer and champion of social justice. Anyone who saw his 2016 talk to a packed Bridges Auditorium at Pomona will know this is like having your cello recital follow Yo Yo Ma. I complained to my audience that this was a clear violation of the Eighth Amendment prohibition of cruel and unusual punishment. I think that's the only laugh I got. With a bit of updating, however, the lessons stand up pretty well.

In November 2016, a kind of fatalistic gloom settled over the advocates of reforming the criminal justice system. With a chest-beating president, a show-no-mercy attorney general and a Congress that has become even more polarized than it was in President Obama's time, reform advocates said any serious fixes to the federal system were unlikely. So reformers consoled themselves by looking to the states. After all, most of law enforcement, most of criminal jurisprudence and most incarceration takes place at the state or local level. My assignment today is to survey reform efforts at the state level and draw some tentative lessons from their experience.

"Reform" is one of those ambiguous words that mean different things to different people. For our purposes, I think of reform as something that aims to REDUCE the numbers of Americans who are removed from society and deprived of their freedom, and to do it WITHOUT making us less safe. In 1972, when I was near the beginning of my newspaper life a little north of here at *The Oregonian*, 93 out of 100,000 Americans were in state or federal prisons. By 2008 the incarceration rate had grown nearly six-fold, from 93 to 536, and it has hovered in that vicinity ever since. That's not counting the hundreds of thousands held in county jails on any given day—or those confined in the juvenile justice system or immigrant detention. We are world leaders in locking people up.

Every year about 650,000 of those prisoners are released back into the world. We know that most of them will be unemployed a year later and that two-thirds of them will be rearrested within three years. As a strategy for keeping us safe, mass incarceration has not been a roaring success.

Lesson #1 from the experience of the states is this: It is possible to reduce incarceration and crime at the same time. Between 2010 and 2015, 31 states reduced both crime and imprisonment. In the 10 states with the largest declines in imprisonment, the crime rate fell an average of more than 14 percent.

New York City, where I live, has slashed the crime rate while, simultaneously, sharply reducing arrests, incarceration—in particular the jailing of juveniles—and misdemeanor summonses. Stop-and-frisk is no longer routine. The city is a safer place and seems to have found the virtues of a lighter touch: New Yorkers who do not accumulate arrest records and jail time are more likely to stay employed, in families and out of trouble.

This does not mean that reducing incarceration necessarily leads to a drop in crime. Correlation is not causality. The question of why the crime rate declined is a subject of heated debate among social scientists. One of my colleagues at The Marshall Project wrote a piece we called "Ten Not Entirely Crazy Theories Explaining the Great Crime Decline." One thesis our writer examined is that after *Roe v. Wade* the legalization of abortion meant fewer unwanted children who were more likely to become delinquents. Other researchers have surmised that removing lead from paint and fuel has made for a less criminogenic environment. Another theory credits technology: Anti-theft devices in cars and the spread of online banking made it harder for criminals to profit. Yet another theory is that the baby boomers just aged out of crime, which tends to be a young person's game. Most experts give some credit to ►

#3

Probably the most effective way to reduce incarceration is not to lock people up in the first place—at least not so many, and not for so long.

Inmates rest and exercise by walking laps in adjacent cells at the Campbell County Jail in Jacksboro, Tenn. AP Photo/David Goldman

the increased deployment and improved equipping of police. And, of course, some of the decline is a result of the fact that more bad guys were locked up, though that is a very expensive way to keep communities safe.

Whatever the factors responsible for the relatively low crime rate, the evidence from the states is that reducing incarceration is compatible with reducing crime. Obviously, a lot depends on HOW you reduce prison populations, which is where the states have much to teach us.

Lesson #2: The embrace of criminal justice reforms is bipartisan. This is one of those rare issues in our polarized country where activists on the left and right have found a patch of common ground.

On the left, criminal justice has become an obligatory plank in the platforms of virtually every candidate to be the Democratic presidential nominee. On the right, we have fiscal conservatives who see our prisons as wasteful, libertarians who see our handling of crime as another manifestation of oppressive big government, evangelical conservatives who see aspects of the system as inhumane.

There are of course issues where left and right still part company. Controlling the proliferation of guns remains a political third rail. The left wants to talk about race, and the right mostly does not. But on issues like pre-trial diversion, indigent defense, sentencing, parole, rehabilitation, solitary confinement, voting rights for the formerly incarcerated and bail and asset forfeiture, you found the Koch brothers arm-in-arm with the ACLU. In 2018, the First Step Act, a package of modest fixes to mandatory sentencing and prison conditions, passed Congress with huge bipartisan majorities. The iniquities and unintended consequences of American punishment have so captured public concern that even President Donald Trump voices an occasional platitude about “giving our fellow citizens a chance at redemption.” Trump signed the First Step Act into law, though his administration has shown little enthusiasm for enacting it.

Conservatives rightly boast that red states have often led the way, starting with Texas during the governorship of Rick Perry. In the past decade, that state has closed four prisons, reduced its incarceration rate by 20 percent and invested \$240 million in alternatives such as drug treatment. The Texas experience is often cited as evidence that politicians can support so-called smart-on-crime reforms and live to tell about it.

The key to success in Texas was money. The state invested in alternatives, which meant judges had greater confidence that when they diverted someone to drug treatment, there would actually be drug treatment.

Two caveats regarding the Texas Story: First, Texas started out with one of the highest incarceration rates in the United States, so it had a long way to go; it is still the seventh most incarcerated state. Second, Texas accomplished its reductions by redirecting money, not by changing the legal infrastructure. Other conservative states—Georgia, South Carolina, Utah to name a few—have tackled the structure of criminal justice—reducing some felonies to misdemeanors, revising mandatory minimum sentences and three-strikes laws, funding community-based alternatives to incarceration, expanding eligibility for parole and removing barriers to reentry.

The most recent convert is Louisiana, a state long known among criminal justice reformers as a contender in every race to the bottom. Louisiana passed a remarkably comprehensive legislative overhaul. That feat was a product of strong leadership, intense lobbying by reform groups across the political spectrum and a corrections system bursting at the seams.

Lesson #3: Probably the most effective way to reduce incarceration is not to lock people up in the first place—at least not so many, and not for so long. In the last decade, 23 states have relaxed their sentencing laws—something Congress has so far been unable to do for the federal system. But I want to note a few other front-end measures that have been employed by states to keep people out of prison. ▶

One is less reliance on money bail. The people most likely to spend time in jail awaiting trial are not the worst offenders but the poorest offenders; and even a short stint in jail increases the odds that an offender will ultimately end up in prison. A number of jurisdictions have curtailed the use of cash bail—most notably New Jersey, which now requires judges to hold hearings shortly after arrest to determine whether a defendant can be safely released before trial. Since the new procedure began, the average daily jail population has dropped 19 percent. [A referendum to replace bail with risk assessments in California will be on the ballot in November 2020.]

A second measure aimed at reducing prison intake is raising the age at which juveniles are thrown into the adult system, which too often subjects them to predators and leads many to careers in crime. In the last few years, Louisiana, South Carolina, New York and North Carolina have raised the age to what is now the national norm—18. There's been talk of Connecticut becoming the first state to raise the cap to 21. In March 2018, Gov. Dannel Malloy announced the opening of a special corrections unit for young adults as old as 25.

A third way to slow the traffic into prisons is to provide better—and earlier—indigent defense. And a fourth is to elect prosecutors who don't regard maximum prison sentences as the main measure of job performance. In recent years several jurisdictions—including Chicago, St. Louis, Houston, Denver, Tampa and Orlando—have elected prosecutors who campaigned on reform platforms.

Lesson #4: Don't neglect the back end. There is abundant evidence of the effectiveness of college and vocational programs behind bars, regular contacts with family, reentry and parole and probation programs that have the resources and the mandate to land their clients safely back in society. A RAND Corporation study in 2014 concluded that "inmates who participated in correctional education programs had 43 percent lower odds of recidivating"—a verb that makes my inner English major cringe, but suggests a pretty good return on investment.

Lesson #5: Be wary of reformers who suggest you can cut incarceration drastically by setting free low-level, nonviolent offenders—in particular, low-level drug offenders. More than half of those incarcerated in state prisons are there for violent crimes. Only 16 percent are in for drug crimes, not all of them nonviolent. Decriminalizing marijuana will reduce incarceration, but to have any hope of restoring the incarceration rates of the 1990s means reducing sentences and stepping up rehabilitation for people convicted of violent crimes. The reality is: The reduction of incarceration is likely to happen incrementally. After all, the state that has been downsizing its prison population longest and most aggressively—California—has cut a bit more than 25 percent, and no other state has come close.

Lesson #6: Be wary of reformers who suggest that prison reform inevitably means a huge windfall for taxpayers—10 billions of dollars back in our pockets. That remains to be seen, for two reasons: First, the alternatives to prison aren't free. To keep crime in check, money not spent on actually confining offenders has to be spent on mental health and addiction treatment, more hands-on probation and, ideally, education, job training and housing support. Moreover, some states have found that the beneficiaries of prison—the corrections staff, the contractors, the politicians, the unions—are ferocious defenders of corrections budgets.

Here's another way of looking at the cost of mass incarceration, though. The most commonly cited estimate of how much it costs to maintain the country's prisons and jails is \$80 billion a year. If you throw in things like health and pension benefits for prison staff, the cost to governments is more like \$90 billion. But a 2016 report by researchers at Washington University in St. Louis attempted to add up the "social costs" of criminal justice as we practice it, a toll that includes lost wages, the cost of visitation, the higher mortality rates of both former inmates and their infant children, child welfare payments, evictions and relocations, divorces, diminished property values and the increased criminality of children with incarcerated parents. The bottom line they came up with was one trillion dollars a year, nearly six percent of GDP. ▸

#6

To keep crime in check, money not spent on actually confining offenders has to be spent on mental health and addiction treatment, more hands-on probation and, ideally, education, job training and housing support.

#7

It's impossible to know what works and what doesn't without reliable data, and reliable data is often in short supply.

Lesson #7: Metrics matter. It's impossible to know what works and what doesn't without reliable data, and reliable data is often in short supply. Our data guru at The Marshall Project, Tom Meigher, wrote a piece entitled "13 Important Questions About Criminal Justice We Can't Answer"—can't answer because the data is unreliable or unavailable. They include such questions as how many juvenile offenders graduate to become adult offenders, how many people have served time in prison or jail, how many people in America own guns and what percentage of inmates eligible for parole are actually granted release from prison. *The Washington Post* and the *Guardian* set out separately to count the number of civilians killed each year by police in the line of duty. The number they came up with was about 1,000. That is about double the official estimates from the Department of Justice—an astonishing margin of error.

As important as having good data is knowing what to do with it. That brings us to the debate underway in many states over the use of risk-assessment tools, basically tests aimed at helping make wise judgments at critical moments in the handling of the accused or convicted. Risk assessment tools are algorithms that examine a subject's history to mitigate the chances of re-arrest. There are various tools for various applications: to help determine whether a defendant is a flight risk, how severe a sentence should be, whether an inmate is a fit candidate for parole and what kind of supervision an offender requires upon release. The left generally hates risk assessment, because the inputs may include factors like employment stability and past encounters with the law that weigh more heavily against communities of color. Advocates of risk assessment tests respond that a) they are getting better, both more accurate and less biased; b) they are meant to assist judges and parole boards, not preempt professional judgment; and c) properly used, risk assessment tools can assure people in the system get the support they need to stay out of prison.

I'm not a worshipper at the shrine of technology, but if I were in your robes, I think I'd rather have a sense of the odds.

Lesson #8: Many states are finding that incentives work better than mandates. A good example is an approach being used in about a dozen states. Take a defendant who is probably not a threat, who would do fine returned to the community under proper supervision. But the judge knows "proper supervision" is unlikely because the local probation system is threadbare. Suppose the state agrees that for every dollar it doesn't have to spend locking people up, it will send 40 cents to the county to pay for more robust supervision? The state saves money, the county improves its oversight of former inmates, and the judge has greater assurance that the subject will be supervised.

And finally...

Lesson #9: The states have wide latitude to experiment, and they are seizing it, but the federal government sets a tone, and you will hear complaints from several states that the new administration has had a chilling effect on state legislatures. When the attorney general instructs federal prosecutors to charge the maximum, as Jeff Sessions did early in the Trump administration, when his response to a national opioid epidemic is to yearn for a revival of a discredited 1980s anti-drug program, that sends a message to state legislators contemplating new approaches.

Moreover, federal programs, especially Medicaid, which was expanded to include former inmates under the Affordable Care Act, can be essential to getting released offenders up on their feet.

In other words: What happens in Washington doesn't always stay in Washington. **PCJ**

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As Free as We Can Be

It's hard to think of two greater opposites than a school and a prison. The former is about freeing the mind—the latter, about the loss of all freedom. Of the two, I believe schools are by far the more important.

Pause for a moment to imagine a world where institutions of education did not exist, and every generation had to learn from scratch the basic requirements of life, from gathering food to caring for those who are ill. Our species would not last very long at all, and the individual costs would be high. To quote Thomas Hobbes in his *Leviathan*, life would be “nasty, brutish and short.”

Fast forward to the world we Sagehens have inherited, where the wealth of accumulated knowledge, hard-won by humanity as a whole, is waiting for us to share, to rediscover and to build upon. In this view, education is not a luxury. It is a human necessity.

But as proud as we are of the education Pomona provides and the world-within-a-world in which we live, pause for another moment to take stock of where we are more broadly. The United States has the highest number of incarcerated individuals in the world and the largest percent of its population in prison of any country worldwide. Most of those individuals do not have access to educational opportunities, and if they do, the opportunities are largely vocational or max out at high-school level courses. However, a variety of studies have shown that participating in an educational program in prison is the single best way of avoiding a return to prison for individuals who have been released.

Being included in learning, however, doesn't just mean that those formerly imprisoned might live lives of productive freedom. In my estimation, being included in learning means being given access to one of the key things that makes us human: the possibility of gaining from the past in order to make the future possible.

So Pomona proudly participates in providing a liberal arts education in California prisons, and we will continue to do so. We will continue to share the liberal arts with as many students as we can at the College and across the Los Angeles area. We will continue to produce new knowledge and to test and share what is already known, for the “liberal” of the “liberal arts” originally (taken from the Latin) meant, and still means, freedom—the knowledge needed to enable all of us to be as free as we can be.

—G. Gabrielle Starr
President of Pomona College

01

9 Lessons in Criminal Justice

When a group of federal judges asked Bill Keller '70, founding editor of The Marshall Project, to talk about the lessons he's learned, here's what he had to say.

Redacted for privacy

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For the Defense

For Emi Young '13, victories are gratifying, but for many of her clients, real justice is out of reach.

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Inside Out

Inside a medium-security prison in Norco, 5C students and incarcerated students study side by side.

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Defy the Odds

That's what Andrew Glazier '97 urges the current and former prisoners taking part in his workshops to do.

All In on Voter Turnout

At a ceremony in Washington, D.C., in November, Lucas Carmel '19 was honored as one of 10 students from across the country on the "All In" Campus Democracy Challenge Student Honor Role. The award is in recognition of his leadership last year in a nonpartisan voter participation drive on Pomona College's campus.

Carmel, along with Michaela Shelton '21, led efforts to get out the vote at Pomona. Their work paid off with voter turnout among Pomona College students almost tripling from the 2014 to 2018 midterm elections, according to a report released Sept. 20 by the National Study of Learning, Voting and Engagement (NSLVE). In 2018, 50.4% of Pomona College students voted compared to 17.4% in 2014.

A group of students at Pomona College led by Carmel and Shelton began to organize a nonpartisan effort to get out the vote in the summer of 2018. That's when the group joined the "All In" Campus Democracy Challenge, a national awards program that encourages colleges and universities to increase student voting rates.

"So many people worked to promote voting on campus last fall, and today we get to see proof of just how successful that effort was," Carmel said in September when the results were announced. "I think Pomona's status as a leader in college voting has been cemented. The challenge now becomes: How do we maintain and continue to promote voter engagement on campus?"

Carmel, who graduated last May, recently launched Vote for Astra, his organization dedicated to making it easier for college students to vote.

Papers, Politics, Policy

HOW PROF. AMANDA HOLLIS-BRUSKY'S PAPER ON THE PROMOTION OF A THEORY OF EXECUTIVE POWER AND ITS CONSEQUENCES IS MAKING ITS WAY TO THE OTHER TWO BRANCHES OF GOVERNMENT

In 2011, during her first year at Pomona College, Politics Professor Amanda Hollis-Brusky wrote a paper on the rise of the "unitary executive theory," used in recent decades to promote the notion of the primacy of presidential power and limit the autonomy of federal agencies. The paper was part of Hollis-Brusky's larger work on the conservative legal movement.

In January, U.S. Senators Sheldon Whitehouse, Richard Blumenthal and Mazie Hirono cited and relied heavily on Professor Hollis-Brusky's paper in their amicus curiae brief filed in a big U.S. Supreme Court case, *Seila Law v. CFPB*, which may decide the fate of the Obama-era Consumer Financial Protection Bureau. Arguments are set for March 3.

Marshall Scholar

Isaac Cui '20 has won a prestigious Marshall Scholarship to fund his graduate studies in the United Kingdom next year. During his two years in the U.K., Cui hopes to study at the London School of Economics as well as study political science at the University of Manchester.

Churchill Scholar

Elise Koskela '20 has been named one of only 16 American students to win this year's Winston Churchill Foundation Scholarship to study and conduct research at the University of Cambridge. She plans to study quantum magnetism and superconductivity.

Sustainable Thesis

The senior thesis of Sara Sherburne '19, titled "Let's Get Sorted: The Path to Zero Waste," was recognized last fall by the Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education as one of six winners of the national Campus Sustainability Research Award.



Above: Scenes from Pomona's productions of *Pippin* (left) and *Red Velvet* (right).

Theatre Reimagined

No two productions of a play are ever quite the same—that's one of the things that makes theatre a living art. Variations in direction, performance and design can give an old play a facelift, but now and then, there are reinterpretations so extreme that they give a play a whole new relevance and meaning. That was the case last fall for both of the major productions undertaken by Pomona's Theatre Department—the musical *Pippin* and Lolita Chakrabarti's Victorian play within a play, *Red Velvet*.

Red Velvet is the true story of the American black actor Ira Aldridge who came to London in the 1800s and was cast to play the great Shakespearean role of Othello at a time when there were public riots in the streets over the abolition of slavery. Chakrabarti chose to portray

Aldridge as a tragic figure in his own right, driven mad by rejection as the play comes to a close.

But director Kenshaka Ali and his students thought the playwright had it all wrong. So they turned the play on its head—subverting the text to transform the main character, in Ali's words, "from one who was victimized and who died a maddened or demented, enraged old man to one who indeed was a victor instead."

In the case of *Pippin*, which debuted on Broadway in the 1970s, the work of Stephen Schwartz, Roger O. Hirson and choreographer Bob Fosse, the transformation was mostly visual and musical, using hip-hop and the Japanese animation style known as anime to give the play a more contemporary look and sound—and, according to guest director Tim Dang, one that is far more familiar to the students of Generation Z.

"I don't even know if hip-hop and anime have ever been integrated," says Dang. "There might be a couple of anime stories that do incorporate a hip-hop kind of culture. But it's a very interesting mix because anime originally started in Japan and hip-hop originated in Brooklyn. We're in this together and creating something that I think is very unique for Pomona College."

Art on the Move

Sometime this fall, the Pomona College Museum of Art will cease to exist, and the Benton Museum of Art at Pomona College will be born in its beautiful new quarters on the opposite corner of the intersection of College and Second. To prepare for that change, for the past few months, the museum's associate director and registrar, Steve Comba, has been overseeing the effort to inventory, pack and safely move approximately 15,000 valuable and often fragile art objects from the museum's old storage into the new. Already in their new home are the artifacts of the museum's Native American collection, previously stored in the basement of Bridges Auditorium and brought out mainly for visiting schoolchildren.



100 YEARS AGO

It's 1920, and Pomona College is entering the Roaring Twenties—facing, among other things, the challenges of dancing and Hollywood.

Everybody Dance

With the close of World War I came a push to overturn the strict college rules against dancing on campus. As recently as 1918, an editorial in *The Student Life* had lamented that "The principle of non-dancing has become ingrained into the very fiber of the institution for reasons which the executives can best express, and it is worse than futile for us to oppose it." The post-war culture shift, however, soon carried away that prohibition, and, as informal campus dances became common, the efforts of the administration turned to managing them. A floor committee of four men and four women supervisors were authorized "to reprimand any undesirable form of dancing or to request any person to leave the floor." By 1922–23, four all-college formal dances were being conducted annually in the "Big Gym"—the Senior-Freshman Dance, the Christian Dance, the Military Ball and the Junior Prom.

Silence is Golden

As Hollywood became the movie capital of the world, the Pomona campus soon came into demand as a collegiate set. *The Charm School*, a silent feature starring Wallace Reid, was the first known movie to be shot on campus, with much of it filmed around Pomona's Sumner Hall in 1920.

1,000 Strong

The 1921 *Metate* (published in 1920) notes that for the first time the number of Pomona alumni has topped 1,000.

For more tidbits of Pomona history, go to pomona.edu/timeline.

Solar Cell Grant

Pomona and Harvey Mudd were recently awarded a National Science Foundation Major Research Instrumentation Grant of \$442,960 for new lab equipment to support research and development of next generation solar cells.

Paralympic App

While attending the 2015 Paralympic National Games in his home country of India, Arhan Bagati '21 saw athletes literally crawling up stairs. So he created an app to guide Paralympians to locations that are accessible, including bathrooms, restaurants, theatres and more. The result was InRio and its successor, the InTokyo app for the 2020 Tokyo Paralympic Games, available on iTunes and Google Play.

Post/Truth

The theme of the Humanities Studio's 2019–20 speaker series is "post/truth," exploring the various facets of today's post-truth (un)reality through a series of speakers and seminars, including a "Fake News" Colloquium.

POMONA'S NEW VICE PRESIDENT AND DEAN OF THE COLLEGE IS A FAMILIAR FACE:
PROFESSOR OF GEOLOGY ROBERT GAINES. HERE'S THE PATH HE FOLLOWED TO GET HERE.

HOW TO BECOME DEAN OF POMONA COLLEGE

1 GROWING UP in Alabama, the son of two history scholars, develop an abiding interest in ancient civilizations. Fall in love with things even older at age 5 when your mom brings you a fossil trilobite half a billion years old from a vacation in Utah.

2 DISCOVER IN GRADE SCHOOL that you can find fossils of sea creatures 80 million years old right behind your school. Carry that fascination with the geological record through high school to the College of William and Mary.

3 IN COLLEGE, GO on a road trip organized by a faculty mentor to the Grand Canyon and the White Mountains of California, including an unexpected detour to Utah where you encounter the source of your very first trilobite, the House Range.

4 GO TO THE UNIVERSITY of Cincinnati for your master's in geology. Take a course with your future Ph.D. advisor, then on sabbatical from UC Riverside, and find her interest in studying ancient ecosystems through their fossils contagious.

5 FOLLOWING YOUR MENTOR to California for doctoral studies, take your fascination with that first trilobite full circle when you decide to focus your Ph.D. thesis on the Cambrian ecosystems recorded in Utah's House Range.

6 AS A TEACHING ASSISTANT at UC Riverside, find that you love teaching and get your first administrative experience when you're hired as director of a program to train new science teaching assistants.

7 GET HIRED FOR a one-year position as visiting assistant professor of geology at Pomona and fall in love with the place and its students. Apply for a tenure track position, and to your surprise, get your dream job.

8 AS AN EXPERT on the ecosystems and geology of the Cambrian explosion of life forms, travel the world and take part in some of the biggest paleontological discoveries of our time, from Canada to China.

9 SERVE AS CHAIR of the Geology Department and take leadership roles in college governance. Among other things, help create the position of chair of the faculty and co-chair the Strategic Planning Steering Committee.

10 THOUGH YOU'RE SHOCKED to be asked, agree to lead the College's academic program as interim dean for one year; then, persuaded by the pleasure of working with the faculty, agree to serve for three years.



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POMONA COLLEGE
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PRESIDENT
G. Gabrielle Starr

NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY
Pomona College complies with all applicable state and federal civil rights laws prohibiting discrimination in education and the workplace. This policy of non-discrimination covers admission, access and service in Pomona College programs and activities, as well as hiring, promotion, compensation, benefits and all other terms and conditions of employment at Pomona College.



MILESTONES

Pomona's new Chief Operating Officer and Treasurer Brings Extensive Track Record

Robert Goldberg, formerly chief operating officer of Barnard College, became vice president, chief operating officer (COO) and treasurer of Pomona College on Jan. 1, succeeding Karen Sisson '79, who served in the role for 11 years.

President G. Gabrielle Starr said Goldberg "will bring to Pomona vast experience, a strong sense of mission and a true commitment to people. I am looking forward to working with Rob as the College moves ahead in completing our strategic plan and creating a community in which everyone can flourish."

Goldberg arrived at Barnard College in 2014, after a 25-year career in the federal government. At Barnard, he quickly made his mark by effectively managing a \$220 million budget, leading a staff of more than 500 in areas ranging from finance to dining to human resources and information technology (IT) and working in a thoughtful and open manner with faculty, staff and students.

He oversaw the design and construction of the Milstein Center for Teaching and Learning, Barnard's award-winning \$150 million library



Robert Goldberg

and academic building, which opened on time and on budget last year. And just this past year he led a process to acquire a new residence hall to expand the inventory of Barnard's student housing in New York City. He worked side-by-side with faculty committees on budgets and resources, partnering with the provost to support academic endeavors. In 2017, Barnard turned to Goldberg to serve as its interim president, a role in which he guided the College during a period of transition and oversaw the creation of Barnard's Council on Diversity and Inclusion.

In his time as Barnard's COO, he worked with students to help reduce out-of-pocket expenses for low-income and first-generation students. He also increased the transparency of the College's budgeting process through regular briefings and discussions with the faculty Budget and Planning Committee, faculty meetings and student government.

"It's important to note that with the majority of our staff members working in this division, the vice president, COO and treasurer role is a particularly important one at Pomona," adds

Starr. "Rob has a strong track record: At Barnard, he created a year-long professional development training program for new managers and worked with staff to create the Barnard Staff Advisory Council."

Before Barnard, during his government service, Goldberg served as a senior budget official for the U.S. State Department, where he was responsible for the formulation, management and implementation of a foreign assistance budget of more than \$32 billion. He received the Department of State's Distinguished Honor Award in 2013.

Earlier, working for the U.S. Office of Management and Budget (OMB), he was the senior career executive responsible for management of the U.S. government's \$52 billion international affairs budget, leading OMB's work in crafting the president's annual budget requests as well as legislative proposals for international affairs programs.

He earned both his B.A. and M.A. in international affairs from The George Washington University.

New Advancement VP Seeks to Strengthen Pomona's Culture of Support

Maria Watson joined Pomona's executive team on Jan. 6 as vice president for advancement, succeeding Pamela Besnard, who led Pomona's advancement staff for six years.

With more than 25 years of nonprofit leadership experience, Watson has followed a career path that has taken her from cultural institutions such as Lincoln Center and the New World Symphony to Fordham University and, most recently, the University of Southern California, where she served as associate vice president of development.

In her eight years at USC, she conceptualized and launched that institution's first New York City/Northeast advancement office, led major gift and regional teams and played a key role in the success of USC's \$7 billion campaign.

In Pomona, Watson says she sees a highly successful institution with true intellectual purpose, strong values and an enduring commitment to access and opportunity—what she calls the "perfect combination."

"In meeting students, faculty members, staff, trustees and alumni, I was struck by how deeply people care about Pomona and how deeply the College has affected their lives," says Watson. "There is such strong sentiment for the College—we are going to work together to build a culture of philanthropic support for the world-changing work here and strengthen our ties to one another along the way. I am honored to now be part of this community of scholars, leaders, creators and innovators."

Watson's own interest in the liberal arts began during her undergraduate days at the University of Michigan, where she earned her B.M.A. in clarinet performance with a minor in political science. She went on to lead marketing for The Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center, the New World Symphony in Miami Beach and the Brooklyn Philharmonic. From there, she became chief development director for Fordham University's WFUV, designing and launching the first capital campaign for the



Maria Watson

beloved public radio station.

After opening USC's New York office in 2011, she later moved to Southern California and joined the senior leadership team responsible for organizing, planning and executing the Campaign for USC. She has led the strategic integration and growth of USC's central major gifts and regional teams and the securing of principal gifts for USC. Watson also has shown a deep belief in and commitment to diversity in building her teams at USC.

As vice president for advancement at Pomona, Watson will lead philanthropic initiatives and oversee key programs—including major gifts, alumni and parent engagement and planned giving—while serving on President G. Gabrielle Starr's executive team.

"Maria truly understands the liberal arts and will be an energetic and effective advocate for providing the resources that allow Pomona to be Pomona, offering the best undergraduate education anywhere," says Starr.

Benton Museum Has New Director

Victoria Sancho Lobis, a talented art historian, curator and administrator whose most recent curatorial appointment was at The Art Institute of Chicago, became the director of the new Benton Museum of Art at Pomona College, starting Jan. 6.

Since 2013, Lobis has served in a range of curatorial and administrative roles at The Art Institute of Chicago, and she was interim chair of the Department of Prints and Drawings in 2016–17. She



Victoria Sancho Lobis

recently completed a multi-year project related to the Art Institute's holdings of Dutch and Flemish drawings, culminating in a scholarly catalogue and exhibition: *Rubens, Rembrandt and Drawing in the Golden Age*.

Lobis was instrumental in developing the Art Institute's permanent collection in the field of Dutch and Flemish prints and drawings, and she also contributed to an institution-wide effort to enhance the representation of Viceregal Latin American art.

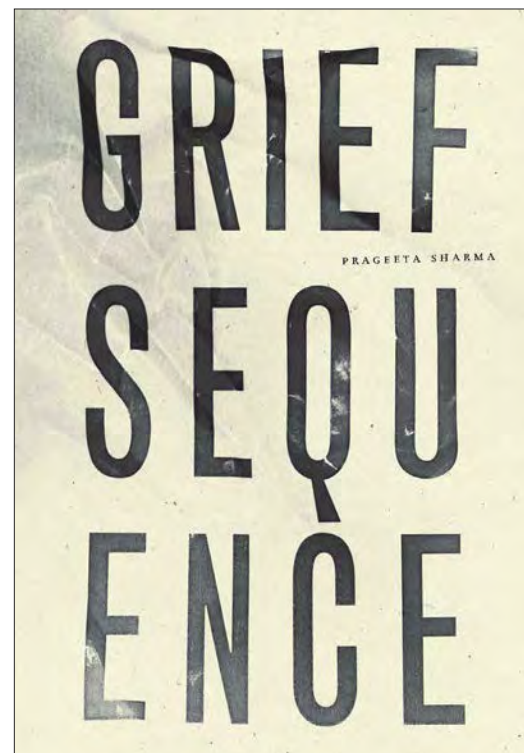
Her curatorial experience reaches across a broad range of subject areas, including projects treating medieval manuscript illuminations, early modern prints and drawings, Viceregal Latin American painting, Whistler and his influence, modern and contemporary Latin American works on paper and contemporary American drawings. She has also published in the fields of contemporary artists' books and contemporary American photography.

In addition to her role as the Sarah Rempel and Herbert S. Rempel '23 Director of Pomona's museum, Lobis will hold a co-terminous appointment in the Art History Department.

She received her B.A. from Yale University, her M.A. from Williams College and her M.Phil. and Ph.D. from Columbia University.

The Poetry of Grief

A CONVERSATION WITH POET AND PROFESSOR PRAGEETA SHARMA



Grief Sequence

By Prageeta Sharma

Wave Books

104 pages

Paperback \$20

Professor Prageeta Sharma's recently released collection of poems, *Grief Sequence*, has garnered acclaim from corners with cachet. In this, her fifth book, Sharma chronicles the loss of her husband to cancer and, as *The New York Times* put it, she "complicates her narrative away from sentimentality and into reality-fracturing emotionality." PCM's Sneha Abraham sat down with Sharma to talk about death, life and the poetry she made in the midst of it all. This interview has been edited and condensed for space and clarity.

PCM: What was the inspiration? It's loss but can you explain a little bit about it?

Sharma: This one is very different from my other books. My last book had a lot to do with race and thinking through the ideas of belonging and institutions and race and community and who gets to be a part of a community and who is outside of that community by the nature of racial differences and gender. But this one just happened because in 2014 my late husband Dale was diagnosed with esophageal cancer and he died two months after diagnosis.

And so, I was in shock and I had no sense of what had happened and, often they say with shock you lose your memory. So, for several months I couldn't remember our long marriage. I could only remember those two months of his progressing sickness. When I told my father, who's a mathematician who specializes in math education, that I was having trouble with sequencing (because it was something I was starting to notice), he said, "Oh well, you've always had trouble with sequencing. I tested you when you were five or six." So it was sort of this joke we had about the concept of sequencing. It led me to research theories of sequential thinking; I started to think about the process of sequencing events and what to do for your recall, and what you do to process trauma, deep feelings and difficulty; I started to write in a prose poem format as much as I

could: to place on a page what I could recall. And I was also doing that because I felt truly abandoned by Dale's illness and death, which were very sudden. He died of a secondary tumor that they discovered after he inexplicably lost consciousness. So, I never had any closure. I didn't get to say goodbye. We thought we had several months left and didn't prepare for his death. We had no plans of action.

He was such a complicated person that, to not have had any last conversations just put me into a state of despair. It was an

"TO NOT HAVE HAD ANY LAST CONVERSATIONS JUST PUT ME INTO A STATE OF DESPAIR. IT WAS AN UNSETTLING PLACE, SO I HAD TO WRITE MYSELF THROUGH IT." —Prageeta Sharma

unsettling place, so I had to write myself through it and speak to him and document the days through my poems. And what I didn't realize was that with such grief comes a fierce sense of loving—believing in the concept of love. Many people say this especially when they lose a spouse—they lost someone they loved, and they didn't plan on losing them, so they're still open to the world and to love. They're still open to feeling feelings. So I started to learn more about my own resilience and my strength, and I was really receptive to the process of becoming my own person. It was painful, but I wanted to document the fact that I knew that when I was at a better place of healing I would feel very differently, and the poems might look different, which they did.

PCM: People talk about the stages of grief. Did you find yourself going through that as you wrote the poems?

Sharma: The joke is that you're always going through different stages so they're never linear.

PCM: No, no. They're not linear.

Sharma: So, I think I went through them all in a jumbled way. I think they hold you in them. Dale was a really complicated person, so I had to really think about who he was, who he is. I learned you love two people at once — you stay in the living world but you still love the person you lost. *Grief Sequence* has many kinds of love poems. Towards the end of the book are love poems to my current partner Mike, a widower, who helped me through the grieving process.

PCM: You both have that understanding, what that's like.

Sharma: Yeah. The poems are about grief, love, and they're about really trying to learn to trust the journey. These poems have taught me so much about my emotions, sequencing and my community.

PCM: Is there a particular poem in "Grief Sequence" that really gets to you or pierces through all of it for you? Is there a pivotal poem in there?

Sharma: I think that there are a variety of poems here. Some poems are processing Dale getting sick. Some are processing experiences with others that are sort of surprising—people can alienate you when they witness you in deep grieving, because some gestures or reactions aren't pleasant. I began processing what gets in the way of your grief. We can sometimes get hijacked by other people's treatment, and you forget that you're really spending this time trying to just protect your feelings. Speaking to widows really helped me. Reading all the books I could find helped; my biggest joke is that the book that helped me the most, which—I mean, it's sort of embarrassing, but it's hilarious—is Dr. Joyce Brothers' *Widowed*.

PCM: No shame.

Sharma: It was so practical: You have to learn how to shovel the driveway, relearn

the basics. It was all of these lists. These basics are the ones that people don't talk about: the shared labor you have with your partner and what you then have to figure out after their death. For example, my cat brought in mice, and I didn't realize how often Dale would handle that. Things like that. So, the book was so practical that I just remember reading it cover to cover. I laughed so much when I recognized myself in there.

PCM: Those day-to-day gaps that you don't realize you're missing.

Sharma: Make sure to eat breakfast. Try to get enough sleep. So many basics.

PCM: When you're in grief, I'm sure all those ... you need it.

Sharma: All those things, yeah.

PCM: What did you find people's responses are to the poems? Did you find that people expected you've gotten over it now that you've written this book?

Sharma: It may be the book; it may be also including a new relationship in the book. I never understood how somebody could move forward, but you really understand it when you have no choice. I think the book helped me document the experiences in real time. Readers have been very generous. I think they didn't expect the book to be so explicit. One thing that I was also trying to negotiate in the book was poetic forms. Because I've taught creative writing for a long time and we teach form, and particularly the elegy, I was reacting to the beauty of the elegiac poem; it can be so crafted that often you're not feeling like it's an honest form to hold tragic grief. You can write a beautiful elegy in a certain way, but the tragic losses some of us can experience—or lots of us—may not produce a beautiful poem, and that beauty can be something that almost feels false to access. And so, I

started to question the role of how the poem works or what people expect to read as an elegy.

PCM: Talk about some of your early influences in terms of poetry.

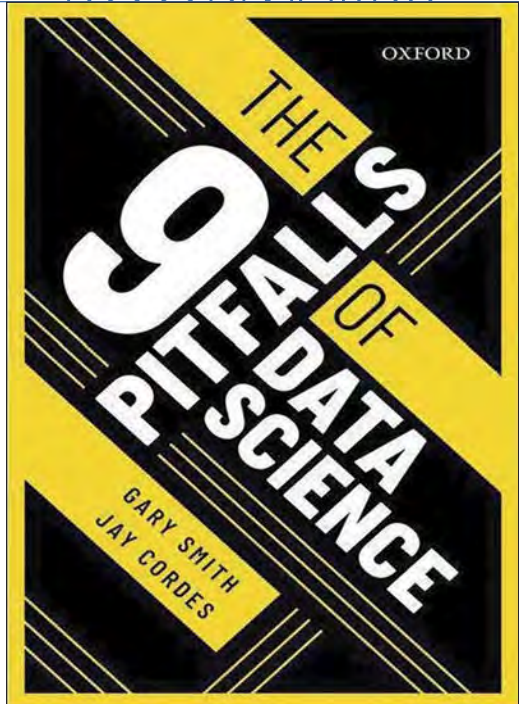
Sharma: I think I started writing poetry in high school like lots of people, and so I was really fascinated with what contemporary poetry looked like, reading it from *The Norton Anthology of Poetry*. And I think about it now and I was often interested in women writers of color, though they were very few. And then I think some women who were writing "poetry of witness" and kind of trying to figure out what their narratives in the poems were about.

Can you explain "poetry of witness"?

Sharma: According to many poets, it is poetry that feels it is morally and ethically obligated to bear witness to events and injustices like war, genocide, racism and tyranny. Many poets I read during my high school years who wrote about these events bore witness to it in other countries and often about cultures outside of their own. It led me to wonder and examine the distance between their testimony and the culture itself. It also forged the desire in me to read more internationally and in translation rather than through this particular style and method of writing.

PCM: When did it crystallize for you that you wanted to be a poet?

Sharma: I felt like it was a calling back in college but I think it was really applying to graduate school right from undergraduate and getting into a top creative writing program (also getting a fully funded scholarship). I was 21 years old and I just thought, well, this must mean something. And then when I got to grad school, I found a community of poets and that felt right to me. I am so grateful to those people—many are still very close friends today. **PCM**

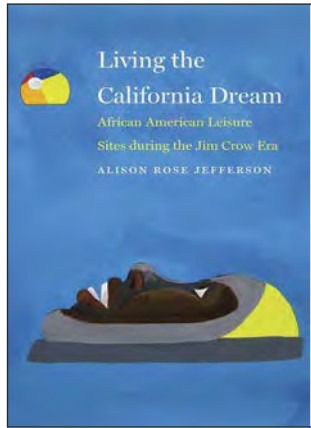


The 9 Pitfalls of Data Science

Fletcher Jones Professor of Economics **Gary Smith** and co-author **Jay Cordes** '93 tell cautionary tales of data science successes and failures, showing readers how to distinguish between good data science and nonsense.

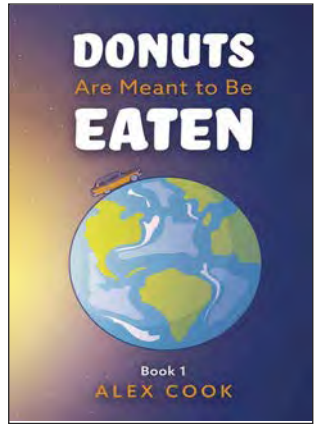
Living the California Dream: African American Leisure Sites During the Jim Crow Era

Alison Rose Jefferson '80 explores how during the Jim Crow era in Southern California, a growing population of African Americans pioneered America's "frontier of leisure" and worked to make recreational sites and public spaces open and inclusive.



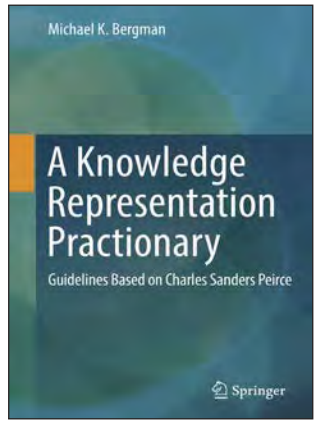
Heartthrob
del Balboa Café al Apartheid and Back

Professor of Romance Languages and Literature **Susana Chávez-Silverman** has penned a memoir that is a love story woven together in both English and Spanish, traversing from San Francisco to South Africa and asking us to consider how things could have been.



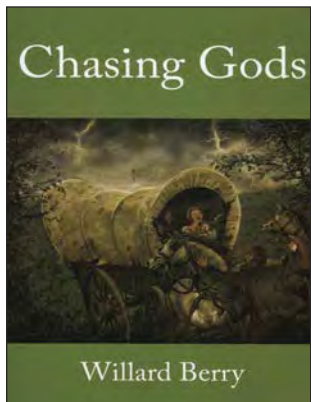
Donuts Are Meant to Be Eaten

Alex Cook '82 introduces the Barton clan in this first of a family dramedy series that covers a range of experiences: from what it feels like to be an adolescent male in the late '70s in the South to offering insight into the life of a disillusioned wife and mother in a post tech revolution world.



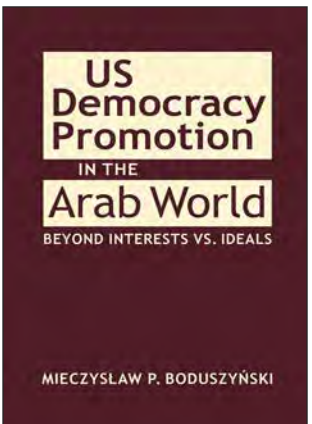
A Knowledge Representation Practionary: Guidelines Based on Charles Sanders Peirce

Mike Bergman '74, web scientist and entrepreneur for a series of internet companies, writes of his experience in installing semantic technology and artificial intelligence projects for enterprise customers over many years.



Chasing Gods

This novel by **Willard Berry** '61 is a chronicle of the calamitous life of his third great-grandfather, who lived from 1788-1852. Berry came across this ancestor's strange life while doing genealogical research.



US Democracy Promotion in the Arab World: Beyond Interests vs. Ideals

Mieczysław (Mietek) Boduszyński, professor of politics and international relations and former U.S. diplomat goes beyond the question of whether the U.S. should promote democracy in the Arab world and pushes further to examine the why, where and how.

BOOK SUBMISSIONS

If you've had a book published and would like to submit it for inclusion in Bookmarks, please send a review copy to Sneha Abraham, PCM Book Editor, 550 North College Ave., Claremont, CA 91711

POMONA'S KABUKI HERITAGE

In the early 1960s, the late Professor Leonard Pronko discovered the Japanese art of kabuki while studying theatre in Asia on a Guggenheim Fellowship. He then made history in 1970 as the first non-Japanese person ever accepted to study kabuki at the National Theatre of Japan. Bringing his fascination back to Pomona College, he directed more than 40 kabuki-related productions over the years, ranging from classic plays to original creations. (For more about Professor Pronko's life, see *In Memoriam* on page 62.)

One of about 20 wigs kept by Pomona's Department of Theatre and Dance in its restricted costume storage area, this geisha-style wig is part of a collection of props and costumes obtained by Pronko from Japan for his classic kabuki and kabuki-inspired theatre productions.

Like all wigs for female characters, it was intended to be worn by an onnagata, a male kabuki actor who performed in women's roles.

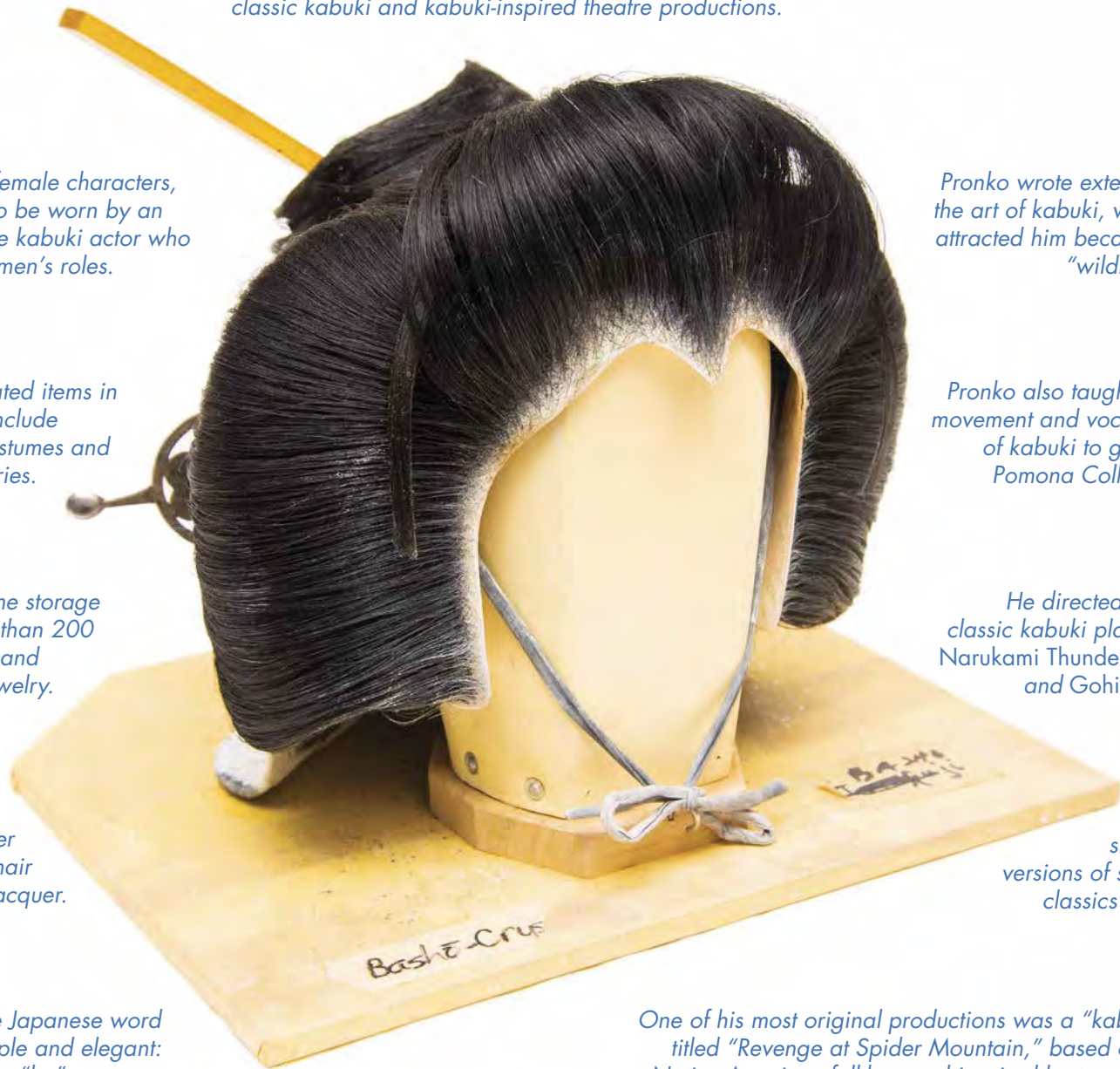
Other kabuki-related items in theatre storage include swords, wigs, costumes and costume accessories.

Today, the costume storage area holds more than 200 period garments and 300 pieces of jewelry.

Most such wigs are made of either human or horse hair and styled with lacquer.

The origins of the Japanese word "kabuki" are simple and elegant: "Ka" means song; "bu" means dance; and "ki" means skill.

One of his most original productions was a "kabuki western" titled "Revenge at Spider Mountain," based on his love of Native American folklore and inspired by two classic plays: Yoshitsune and the Thousand Cherry Trees and The Monster Spider.



Pronko wrote extensively about the art of kabuki, which he said attracted him because it was so "wildly theatrical."

Pronko also taught the stylized movement and vocal techniques of kabuki to generations of Pomona College students.

He directed a number of classic kabuki plays, including Narukami Thundergod, Ibaraki and Gohiki Kanjincho.

He also staged kabuki versions of such Western classics as Macbeth.

Outsmarting the Market

CASH. BABY. BOOM. Stocks with clever ticker symbols such as these continue to outperform the market as a whole, a new study has confirmed.

The study's authors, Professor of Economics Gary Smith, along with recent Pomona graduates Naomi Baer '19 and Erica Barry '19 studied the performance of a portfolio of 82 stocks and found that companies with clever tickers outperformed the market from 2006 to 2018.

This new study is a follow up to a 2009 study in which Professor Smith and his co-authors Alex Head '05 and Julia Wilson '05 found that a portfolio of stocks with clever ticker symbols beat the market by a substantial margin during the years 1984–

2005. Smith and his co-authors re-examined the 2009 study's surprising conclusion by updating the analysis for the subsequent years 2006 through 2018. They pursued the new study to demonstrate the resiliency of this phenomenon with respect to both the original clever-ticker stocks and a more recent set of clever-ticker NASDAQ stocks, a phenomenon that strongly contradicts the efficient market hypothesis.

The authors replicated the earlier methodology with a new list, focusing on NASDAQ stocks, which historically use four-digit ticker symbols, in contrast to the NYSE and AMEX, which use three or fewer characters. Examples include PZZA

for a pizza company, BDAY for online party supply retailer and BOOM for an explosives company, among others.

"For example, WOOF, the ticker for VCA Antech, which operates a network of animal hospitals and diagnostic laboratories, is a lot more amusing and memorable than something boring like VCAA or VCAN," says Smith.

A possible explanation to this stock overperformance is that memory involves the acquisition, storage, retention and retrieval of information and the understanding of human memory suggests that clever tickers may heighten investors' recall of companies, according to Smith and his co-authors.

—Patricia Vest

A Journey of Faith and Inquiry

Paul Kiefer's journey of faith and inquiry already has taken him great distances. An American Muslim from Seattle who converted as a teenager, Kiefer '20 studied abroad in Morocco during his junior year to experience the Arabic-speaking Muslim world. Back home in the United States, he looked toward the American South as he prepared to write his senior thesis in history.

There, he was an outsider of a different sort, a white Muslim gathering oral histories and conducting research on the Southern Black Muslim community that emerged in North Carolina in the 1950s and has grown deep roots in the Tar Heel State—a place where the festival of Eid is sometimes celebrated with fried fish and grits.

"They're doing it right, the whole Southern thing," says Kiefer, who was partly drawn to the region because of his family's history there, though his relatives were not Muslim.

The Black Muslim community in North Carolina that was first planted by the Nation of Islam and later gravitated toward the teachings of W. Deen Muhammad is the subject of Kiefer's thesis, "A Crescent Moon Rises in Dixie: The Foundation and Development of a Southern Black Muslim Community, 1955-1985."

"Paul is writing about a topic few historians have investigated. So his work is filling a gap in our collective understanding of the Nation of Islam in the South," says Tomás Summers Sandoval, associate professor of history and Chicana/o-Latina/o studies. "The archival work he's done so far is already helping to write that history."

Kiefer's research weaves source material such as mosque records and contemporary newspaper reports with oral history interviews he conducted in North Carolina during a Summer Undergraduate Research Program project before his senior year.

"We often think of Islam in the U.S. as a present-day story but Paul's work is a re-



Paul Kiefer '20 outside the Shabazz Restaurant in Durham, N.C., adjacent to the state's oldest mosque.

minder of the importance of both Islam and Muslims to the U.S. past," Summers Sandoval says. "At the same time, his work helps us better understand the roles various congregations and faiths played in the mid-century quest for Black liberation and autonomy in the South."

Islam was not truly new to the South when it was imported from Northern cities such as Philadelphia and Baltimore in the second half of the 20th century. Kiefer found records of Black mosques in the South as early as 1928 and a Black Muslim farm by 1943, though those groups were members of the Moorish Science Temple of America, not the Nation of Islam.

Even less widely known: Islam's original roots in the South preceded the Civil War.

"About 15 to 20 percent of enslaved people in what became the United States were Muslims," Kiefer says. "There are many well-documented examples of Muslims who practiced openly, who ran Friday prayers on plantations, who wrote letters home. At least three actually wound up going back to West Africa thanks to letters they wrote home in Arabic."

The history of Muslims in the South is a story worth telling, and Kiefer plans to tell many more. He has applied for a Fulbright-National Geographic Storytelling Fellowship and the NPR Kroc Fellowship, both designed to develop journalists as well as storytellers in other mediums. While awaiting fellowship announcements in the spring, Kiefer also plans to apply for public radio jobs, pursuing his determination to uncover little-known stories and histories.

—Robyn Norwood



because he had to sign a non-disclosure agreement to protect what amount to industry secrets.

Not all the alumni putting data analysis to work for major league teams are former baseball players. Jake Coleman '13 played Ultimate Frisbee at Pomona but completed a Ph.D. in statistics at Duke University in May and joined the Los Angeles Dodgers in August as a senior quantitative analyst. Nor are they all men: Christina Williamson '17, a former water polo player and swimmer who majored in math, was featured by *The Athletic* as one of 35 people under 35 shaping the game of baseball for her work with the Yankees using biomechanical data to aid player development and reduce injuries.

hitting data, measuring such things such as exit velocity—the speed of the ball off the bat—launch angle, 3D ball flight and expected landing location. Blast Motion swing sensors that attach to the knob of a bat are yet another tool in an array of devices that are used in training to aid the development of players and to help shape strategies.

Though some of the students in the class chose the course as an intriguing elective—Noah Sasaki '20 thinks it could help him in a planned sports media career—those who play baseball are earnestly using the data to improve their skills and approaches. Analyzing spin data has helped catcher Jake Lialios '20 and pitchers Luka Green '20 and Simon Heck '22 determine a particular pitcher on

Chandler says. “I don’t know if people were thinking this before they decided to enroll here, but all of a sudden we went from having almost no math major baseball players to having two or three a year.”

Hanley, who communicated with Stevens even before arriving at Pomona, would love to follow the same sort of path. For his thesis, he is building on research he began with the A’s to study swing mechanics through functional data analysis, a statistical method Chandler calls “cutting-edge stuff.”

“What I’m really interested in is the function of position or acceleration over time—not just to reduce the entire function down to one point, but to use the entire function in data analysis,” Hanley says. “Generally,

Pomona's Baseball Analysts

The following is a list of recent Pomona alumni who have worked for MLB teams in roles related to data and analytics:

Drew Hedman '09

Run Production Coordinator
Arizona Diamondbacks

Guy Stevens '13

Senior Director, Research & Development/Strategy
Kansas City Royals

Jake Coleman '13

Senior Quantitative Analyst
Los Angeles Dodgers

Mike Dairyko '13

Senior Manager, Data Science, Business Analytics
Milwaukee Brewers

Jake Bruml '15

Pro Scouting Intern
Boston Red Sox

Kevin Brice '16

Quantitative Analysis Assistant
Los Angeles Angels

Simon Rosenbaum '16

Assistant, Baseball Development
Tampa Bay Rays

Dylan Quantz '16

Player Development Assistant
Atlanta Braves

Christina Williamson '17

Research Analyst, Performance Science
New York Yankees

Peter Xenopolous '18

Former Quantitative Analyst Associate
Philadelphia Phillies

Bryce Rogan '18

Quantitative Analysis Assistant
Los Angeles Angels

Andrew Brown '19

Apprentice, Baseball Analytics
Texas Rangers

Jack Hanley '20

Former Summer Associate
New York Yankees

Nolan McCafferty '20

Former Quantitative Analyst Intern
Baltimore Orioles

Baseball by the Numbers

Gathered on the pitcher’s mound during class, Pomona College students feed balls into a pitching machine, then quickly glance down at an iPad.

On the ground between them and home plate is a boxlike device called a Rapsodo, a \$4,000 radar-based system that provides data not only on pitch velocity, but also spin rate, spin axis, horizontal and vertical break, 3D trajectory and a strike zone analysis.

The Rapsodo device provides pitching data that includes velocity, spin rate and vertical and horizontal break.

Welcome to PE 086: Baseball Analytics, a new course taught by Frank Pericolosi, a professor of physical education and coach of the Pomona-Pitzer baseball team.

The class formalizes what has emerged as a notable career path for Pomona alumni: More than a dozen graduates or current stu-

dents have put backgrounds in mathematics and computer science to work for Major League Baseball teams analyzing the game-changing explosion of data in baseball.

They’re following a trail blazed by Guy Stevens '13, a former Sagehens pitcher and math major who has risen to senior director of research and development/strategy for the Kansas City Royals. He was on staff for a World Series championship in 2015, less than three years after working with Math Professor Gabe Chandler to publish a statistical analysis of minor league data.

“Talking to Guy [Stevens] over the years, I ask, ‘What do we need to be doing on campus to make these kids better candidates for these internships and for these jobs?’” Pericolosi says. “He gave some suggestions in terms of, ‘They need to be doing creative, innovative projects on their own.’ The driv-

ing force for getting this technology on campus was initially to help our kids who want to go into analytics. Also, we’re in a heavy-data era of baseball even more so than before, and it’s going to give us good data to evaluate our players as well.”

Five of the 15 students in the class play baseball for the Sagehens. One of them, catcher and math major Jack Hanley '20, worked for the Oakland Athletics two summers ago and spent last summer as an associate in quantitative analysis with the New York Yankees. This October, he watched his former colleagues advance to the American League Championship Series.

“It’s definitely very rewarding to know that whatever small role I played this summer in making the team better, it paid dividends,” says Hanley, whose description of his research for the Yankees is vague. That’s

Pomona, Stevens is confident, is gaining a reputation in the game.

“If you think about how small the sport is, with only 30 teams, and how well-connected it is, there’s a pretty good chance if you’re in baseball, you know someone who knows someone who went to Pomona,” he says. “A lot of these jobs in baseball, it’s the same set of skills that translate anywhere: If you’re working with data, it’s curiosity and creativity and thinking outside the box. And Pomona trains you for that 100%, whether it’s baseball or finance or whatever else.”

Baseball analytics once was based on information available in a box score, but has evolved rapidly in the era since it was popularized by the 2003 book *Moneyball* and the movie that followed. It is now decidedly high-tech, requiring expensive equipment that Pericolosi was able to purchase for the course through Pomona’s Hahn Teaching with Technology Grants. He’s in the process of acquiring a second Rapsodo that gathers

the staff should throw higher in the strike zone because the spin rate makes his fastball appear higher than it is. Green suggests data also could be used to recognize injuries.

“If your slider spin rate gets cut in half, your elbow probably hurts—and sometimes people don’t tell anyone,” he says.

Hanley plans to use bat sensor data to study swing paths in a senior thesis supervised by Chandler, the math professor and former assistant baseball coach whose mentorship helped launch Stevens’ career. After Stevens showed Chandler a trove of minor league data he was struggling to shape into a project, the pair joined forces and published an article in the *Journal of Quantitative Analysis in Sports* in 2012. That, plus an introduction from Chandler to an East Coast statistics professor who also worked with the New York Mets, helped Stevens break into Major League Baseball.

“At that point, people at Pomona realized this is something that one can do,”

the project is to look at these swings and see how much information we can really glean. Let’s not limit ourselves in terms of format or data structure. Let’s see what we can really do with this stuff.”

After graduation, Hanley hopes to land a position with a baseball team, but he notes that more and more baseball analytics researchers have graduate school training and he might also go that route after a couple of years. Peter Xenopoulos '18, who has worked for the Philadelphia Phillies as a quantitative analyst associate, is now a Ph.D. student in computer science at NYU, and Mike Dairyko '13 earned a Ph.D. in applied math at Iowa State and works as a data scientist for the Milwaukee Brewers, though he is on the business side. “I do think this is something where Pomona is getting a reputation,” Hanley says. “It’s really a great breeding ground, a great incubator for baseball analytics in college.”

—Robyn Norwood



National Title for Men's Cross Country

The Pomona-Pitzer men's cross country team claimed its first national championship last fall, winning the NCAA Division III title in Louisville, Kentucky.

"This really is surreal. Words can't really describe the feelings from today," Coach Jordan Carpenter said after the Sagehens ended the three-year reign of North Central College, a perennial power from Illinois that had won seven of the last 10 titles. "So much elation and excitement for what these guys accomplished today."

The title is the first NCAA team championship for Pomona-Pitzer since the champion women's tennis team of 1992.

"We came in with the goal of finishing on the podium, but we hadn't really talked about the ability to win," Carpenter said. "We have such a young group and only had three runners with national meet experience, so I honestly thought that next year would be our chance to win. The guys proved me wrong, and we had an amazing day today."

On the women's side of the event, Pomona-Pitzer finished in 12th place.

Two Pomona-Pitzer men and two Sagehen women took All-American honors. Ethan Widlansky '22 came off his NCAA West Region Championship to take a seventh-place national finish in a time of 24:32.9. Not far behind him was Dante Paszkeicz '22, who also earned All-American honors with a 16th-place finish in 24:48.5. Lila Cardillo '22 led the way for the women with a 12th-place finish at 21:38.3 and Helen Guo '20 took 14th at 21:41.0.

The men's depth helped bring the title home. Just missing the cut for All-American honors was Daniel Rosen '20, who finished just outside the top 40, in 41st place, with a time of 24:57.9. Ethan Ashby '21 finished 68th overall with a time of 25:15.0, Owen Keiser PI '22 finished in 71st place with a time of 25:15.8, and Hugo Ward PI '21 took 122nd in 25:35.8. Rounding out the performances for the Sagehens was Joe Hesse-Withbroe '22, who was 164th with a time of 25:51.5.

"The improvement this group has made from last year is remarkable," Carpenter said.

500 WINS FOR COACH KAT

Win No. 500 arrived in January for Coach Kat—or, more formally, Professor of Physical Education and Men's Basketball Coach Charles C. Katsiaficas.

It's little surprise that the week before his milestone victory against Cal Lutheran, Katsiaficas didn't know when it might come or have any opinion on where it would rank among the most important wins in his 33 seasons as Pomona-Pitzer's coach.

That's because the biggest win in his mind is usually the last one. Or the next one. (When this issue went to press Sagehens had won 16

of their last 18 on their way to a 16-4 start.)

"I think it's hard for any coach to get outside of the current moment—moving on from the last game, preparing for your next game," Katsiaficas says. "I can say, however, those ques-

Athletic Conference championships and played in the NCAA Division III Tournament 11 times.

Those 500 wins rank Katsiaficas 15th among all active Division III men's basketball coaches,

tions and conversations definitely shine a spotlight on all the remarkable young men that have left their mark on our program through the years."

The Sagehens have had winning records in 26 of his 32 seasons, with the 27th of 33 well on its way. They have won 11 Southern California Intercollegiate

and he has won more games than any coach in any sport in Pomona-Pitzer history.

Last season's team was among his best, cracking the top 10 of the national rankings for the first time and setting a program record with 26 wins while advancing to the second round of the NCAA Division III Tournament.

Back in 1986, Katsiaficas was a Pomona-Pitzer assistant coach who got a chance to be interim head coach when the Sagehens' coach, Gregg Popovich—now the five-time NBA champion coach of the San Antonio Spurs—took a one-year leave of absence.

When Popovich returned, Katsiaficas spent one season as an assistant at the University of San Diego before returning to take over the Pomona-Pitzer program in 1988, when Popovich left to become an assistant with the Spurs.

Women's Soccer Reaches Final Four

Every senior on the Pomona-Pitzer women's soccer team that has reached the Final Four of the NCAA Division III Championship for the first time knows exactly how slender the margin between winning and losing could be

It could be a single goal by first-team All-American Bria VarnBuhler '20, who set a Pomona-Pitzer record with 21 this season—including nine game-winners, tied for third-most among all Division III players.

It could be a game-saving stop by third-team All-American Isa Berardo PZ '20, the

starting goalkeeper for a strong defense that has shut out 20 of 23 opponents on the way to a 20-1-2 record. After leading Division III in goals-against average and save percentage last season, Berardo is in the top three in both na-

tional categories again.

Or it could be as slim a margin as a single penalty kick settling into the back of the net—or tipped away by a finger.

Close games have become a specialty. They

advanced to the Final Four with three final scores of 1-0, including a win in penalty kicks after a scoreless tie against No. 3-ranked Washington University, with Berardo making the save that set off a celebration.

It was a reversal of what happened three years ago, when these seniors were playing in their first NCAA postseason and a loss to the University of Chicago in penalty kicks sent them home, one step shy of the Final Four. "I mean, gosh, it was heartbreaking after losing that," remembers VarnBuhler. "Coming back and having our season potentially end the same way as it did freshman year—that was just not really an option. We had just worked too hard for that to happen."

It didn't. The Sagehens got payback against Chicago this time with a 1-0 overtime victory in the regional semifinal on a golden goal by Anna Ponzio PZ '22. Then they edged Washington in the final, thanks in large measure to what Coach Jen Scanlon calls "this pretty amazing group of seniors."

A national championship, however, will have to wait for another year, as the team's incredible season come to a close in the Final Four with a 2-0 semifinal loss against William Smith College.

Player of the Year

Bria VarnBuhler '20, a midfielder on the first Pomona-Pitzer women's soccer team to reach the Final Four, has been named the United Soccer Coaches Division III National Player of the Year. The first-team All-American scored 21 goals this season, a Pomona-Pitzer record. VarnBuhler is the first Pomona-Pitzer soccer athlete to earn National Player of the Year honors. She also is the first player from the Southern California Intercollegiate Athletic Conference (SCIAC) to win the award.





FOR EMI YOUNG '13,

FOR

VICTORY IS GRATIFYING, BUT REAL JUSTICE IS ASPIRATIONAL.

THE DEFENSE

STORY BY ALISSA GREENBERG | PHOTOS BY ROBERT DURELL

ourt Street in Martinez,
California, lives up to
its name. On a gray
morning in December,

four imposing stone courthouses in a row loom out of the cold fog, steamy glass doors accepting the occasional be-suited prosecutor or latecomer for jury duty.

Inside one of those courthouses this morning, Emi Young '13 is waiting in a dimly lit courtroom gallery for a restitution conference to begin. Young, who works as a deputy public defender for Contra Costa County, will be representing a client who pleaded guilty to possession of a stolen vehicle. As part of the conviction process, she is participating in discussions about how much money will be awarded to the victim to help with damages—discussions that are often, but not always, straightforward, since both sides need to agree that the restitution requested is sufficiently related to the crime. (“I had a vandalism case where the city requested compensation for all of the tagging or graffiti that they thought were similar from the preceding year,” Young notes.)

The beige-carpet-on-beige-wood courtroom is crowded with cases, and the judge moves swiftly through the docket. Normally the prosecutor would have conferred with the victim’s assigned restitution specialist by now, but this time that hasn’t happened. So, a few minutes before the conference begins, Young hands him her copy of the handwritten list, which totals \$126,000. Along with the value of the stolen vehicle, the victim is requesting restitution for multiple other vehicles, several marine batteries and damage to a barn door—all seemingly unrelated to the crime for which her client was convicted.

“That... is a lot of money,” the prosecutor says, running his eyes down the list. When the judge has turned her attention to the case, she agrees, noting with raised eyebrows that the request would make for an “interesting” hearing. “What do you want to do, Ms. Young?” she asks. A pause, then Young and the prosecutor agree to delay the conference, giving more time to talk to all parties and perhaps find a solution.

“It’s frustrating that he didn’t have more time to look at the request before,” Young says as she walks through the fog back to her office a few blocks from the courthouse. Under normal circumstances, these things can take as little as 20 minutes—that is, when the prosecutor is prepared and when victims limit themselves to amounts directly related to the crime and provide adequate documentation.

It’s lucky, she notes, that her office had not yet closed the case file, leaving her client without representation. Then, the court might just have sent a letter instructing him to request a hearing or agree to pay the full amount—and many of her clients are transient, with no fixed addresses and unreliable mail service.

But such frustrations are an inherent part of a job with limited time, limited funding, limited attention. “I talk about the system I work in as the ‘criminal legal system,’” she says. “The term ‘criminal justice system’ is aspirational. It’s not the reality for many people.”



“I talk about the
system I work in
as the ‘criminal
legal system.’

At 28, Young, who favors bold colored scarves, long sweaters and a silver hoop in her nose, is, well, *young* for her profession. She was born in Omaha, Nebraska, and her parents divorced in her early childhood. Growing up with a single, Japanese mother profoundly shaped her— especially in a school district that had been created by conservative white parents who were trying to skirt anti-segregation laws. “It felt like our family was very different,” she says. “I know my mom also really struggled sometimes.”

As part of continued efforts to support her family, Young’s mother went back to school to become a paralegal. She sometimes brought home articles about important Supreme Court cases and news from the legal system to share with her daughter, who at the time aspired to be a musician. It wasn’t until Young attended Pomona, graduating in 2013, that she changed her mind. ▸

The term ‘criminal
justice system’ is
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not the reality for
many people.”

“The thing you learn with this job is that you can’t prepare for all the possibilities. You have to be okay with the unexpected sometimes.”



Her experience at Pomona was profoundly “consciousness raising,” she says. Conversations happening on campus helped her understand earlier experiences from her own life in a new light—her experience as a biracial person in a school district with segregationist roots, for example. And it was at Pomona that she first learned about what she calls the “disparate impacts of our legal system on certain communities.”

That nascent interest prompted Young to major in political science and philosophy; her Pomona education “helped me have a vocabulary for certain ways in which people are systemically disenfranchised,” she says. She volunteered for a semester at the Camp Afflerbaugh-Paige juvenile detention facility near campus, producing *Othello* with some of the students. While she was there, one of the teenaged boys disappeared for a week. When he returned, she was struck by how dramatically different he was: subdued where he had been animated, depressed where he had been bright and playful, cracking jokes.

It turned out that he had gotten in trouble and been kept in isolation for some time as a disciplinary measure. “This doesn’t seem fair or

good for a person who we hope will turn out to be happy and productive,” she remembers thinking. “I feel like I can’t advocate on his behalf right now, but it’s something I’d like to be able to do someday.” In pursuit of that goal, she attended law school at Stanford and spent her first summer interning at the New York Civil Liberties Union—but was surprised to find herself unhappy with the experience, which felt too divorced from the people she hoped to help. “I realized I should be trying to come at it from a different angle,” she says.

Young is aware that public defender stereotypes paint a picture of a harried, overburdened lawyer who doesn’t fight for her clients, “interested in trying to plead you out as quickly as possible because we don’t have the time or resources to defend you adequately.” But Contra Costa’s public defenders maintain one of the highest trial rates in California, part of the reason she applied for a job here. Encouraging plea bargains “does not lend itself towards keeping the system accountable or ensuring accurate or fair results,” she says.

The role of public defender doesn’t come with much of a runway. Once she graduated from law school, Young clerked for several months at the Contra Costa Public Defenders Office—then began representing a full load of clients on misdemeanor charges soon after she passed the bar in January 2017. “When I got hired, I quite literally had three days’ transition to begin representing 110 clients, some of whom had trials set,” she remembers with a shudder and smile.

These days, she works instead with clients facing felony charges, which run the gamut from evading the police to gun possession to attempted murder—around 40 at a time and between 50 and 60 hours a week. It’s a more manageable load than she had in misdemeanors: the cases move slower because there’s more at stake, so there’s more time to work on them. That creates opportunities to occasionally play her violin; take a bread-making class; or go on walks with her mother (who moved to the Bay Area several years ago) and the family dog, Teeter.

Beyond the frantic pace, Young has slowly adjusted to a professional life that can demand a difficult balancing act between practicality and justice. Some clients with immigration concerns prioritize protecting that status, even beyond proving their innocence; some clients value the chance to have the proverbial “day in court” and tell a judge what happened over the safety of a plea bargain. There have been cases where she believed her clients were innocent but struggled with how to advise them, because their prior history put them at deep risk if they were to be convicted of a serious crime. And when her clients are kept in custody as they await trial, she must decide how to ask to schedule their hearings, keeping in mind that the longer she spends preparing their cases, the longer they’ll spend away from their families, friends, worlds.

“There’s an older philosophy that as attorney you’re the person who is educated and knows the law, and you should be the person responsible for making decisions about best outcomes,” she says. Instead, “our duty is to learn about and understand our client’s perspective.”

It’s also a professional life that melds stereotypical courtroom drama with the ordinary, obligatory mechanics of the justice system: jail visits, written motions, the series of hearings that precede a jury trial. The fabric of Young’s daily routine is threaded with the half-hour drives between courtrooms in various towns; the waits to get

into jails; the police officers who are late to give testimony; the judges trying to sort out the daily docket. In the week that I shadowed her, she had three separate hearings delayed at the last minute. That week featured pockets of the pursuit of justice, yes—but they were glued together with pauses during which judges took bathroom breaks and bailiffs watched pet videos on the phones of district attorneys.

The stops, starts and delays can be “really frustrating,” she says, but they have had a surprising benefit: teaching her adaptability, honing her capacity to adjust and respond to new tasks at a moment’s notice. Before this work, “I was very good at planning for something, preparing a lot for something and doing it,” she says. “But the thing you learn with this job is that you can’t prepare for all the possibilities. You have to be okay with the unexpected sometimes.”

After the canceled restitution hearing, Young settles in at her office to spend the rest of the day wading through the seas of mundane justice: drafting motions, reviewing new evidence, preparing for an upcoming trial. The room is small but friendly, featuring a coffee machine tucked into a corner and an assortment of button-down shirts hanging off the doorknob for clients to try on. The walls are decorated with photos of Teeter and a few pieces of art.

Beside a selection of client thank you notes hangs a Ta-Nahesi Coates quote on a note card that reads, in part: a society that “can only protect you with a club of criminal justice has failed at enforcing its good intention or has succeeded at something much darker.” It’s a reminder of the losses and disappointments: the young man who was prevented by his co-defendant from taking a probation plea deal and ended up in prison; the client whose immigration status she worked to protect during a DUI case but who ended up in ICE custody later, anyway.

Even victory, when it comes, has been bittersweet. Young remembers one client who was charged with elder abuse of his own mother. During the trial, it became clear that the mother’s mental state was deteriorating, especially as her reports of abuse were not corroborated by evidence; she died soon after the verdict. Although Young’s client was cleared of wrongdoing, she struggles to find vindication when thinking about how he must have felt—accused of a cruel and violent act, separated from a beloved parent during the last weeks of her life. “There’s nothing that the acquittal in and of itself can do to repair the damage,” she says, sighing.

A victory is “gratifying,” she adds, but “just because a case was ultimately dismissed, or was acquitted, it doesn’t mean the experience hasn’t taken a toll.” Even with positive outcomes, her clients still deal with negative impacts: the costs of bail, missed work and immigration risks.

Taking a moment to celebrate the work that’s done can be difficult when there’s always another seven things to do. Yes, today’s delayed restitution hearing was a small victory. In this case, she hadn’t been reassigned, so she was able to continue to represent her client in a quest for a fairer outcome. She’ll likely be able to renegotiate that request, saving him money and helping him start fresh.

Tomorrow will bring another hearing, another jail visit, another trial. More new clients will arrive, more new evidence will be unearthed, as the American penal organism churns on. But today, she added a little justice to that system. That has to be enough. **PCM**



INSIDE A MEDIUM-SECURITY PRISON IN NORCO,
STUDY SIDE BY SIDE IN CLASSES TAUGHT

5C STUDENTS AND INCARCERATED STUDENTS
BY CLAREMONT COLLEGES PROFESSORS.

inside out

BY ROBYN NORWOOD

Behind

fences topped with razor-sharp wire,

"I thought I would just be an outcast for the rest of my life, but my interactions with the outside students showed me that not everyone will judge me, and maybe I'll get to find a place I fit into society after all."

"Being treated as human and not a monster."

students from the 5Cs sit next to incarcerated students each semester in classes taught by Claremont Colleges professors at the California state prison in Norco.

They are part of the Inside-Out Prison Exchange program, an international effort introduced locally by Pitzer College in 2014 and expanded in 2018 to include courses from Pomona College and the other 5Cs. The classes inside the 3,600-inmate California Rehabilitation Center (CRC) are part of the groundbreaking Inside-Out program created by Temple University Professor Lori Pompa in 1997—an effort that took ‘outside’ undergraduate students into classes with ‘inside’ students serving sentences in Pennsylvania prisons. Since then, it has expanded to more than 150 colleges and universities at some 200 jails and prisons.

Education isn’t the only goal of the college-credit classes; it’s also an attempt to create dialogue between groups with profound social differences. But the inside and outside students are equals in the classroom: They read the same materials, complete the same assignments, earn the same college credit and in small ways start to echo each other. As one incarcerated student in Professor Jo Hardin’s Math 57 class, Thinking with Data, writes:

In the future I hope to organize communities that focus on sustainable, environmentally beneficial practices. With the skills I learned in this class I feel prepared to communicate and interpret complex scientific data in ways that are easily understood and enjoyable to contemplate. Also by broadening my interactions with young scholars I'm exposed to the issues pertinent to the change makers of tomorrow.

Ultimately, the differences are stark. The outside students get to leave after class and return to a bus where their cell phones and lives await. The inside students at the medium-security men’s facility will eventually be eligible for release, but for now their lives are confined by both fences and regulations. They answered questions about the program in anonymous handwritten responses, including this one from a student in Linguistics 114, a course on language and discrimination taught by Nicole Holliday, an assistant professor of linguistics at Pomona:

I thought I would just be an outcast for the rest of my life, but my interactions with the outside students showed me that not everyone will judge me, and maybe I'll get to find a place I fit into society after all.

And another student:

Being part of an "inside-out" class also makes me feel like a regular person, not an inmate. It is a welcome reprieve from the highly punitive correctional environment that I live in.

And another:

Being treated like a human and not a monster.

The buses leave The Claremont Colleges at 12:30 p.m. on the days of classes at the prison. Six courses were offered in fall 2019 and another half-dozen this spring, each meeting once a week. The students and professors must be cleared by prison security and undergo orientation, as well as being tested for tuberculosis before classes begin. They invest a full afternoon for one class, often returning to

campus as late as 5:30. “Walking into the prison for the first time, it felt incredibly surreal,” says Pomona student Sarah Sundermeyer ’21. “But I think that feeling of trepidation dissipated as soon as we were inside the classroom with the other students. They were so warm and friendly and just open and willing to share in a way that I don’t know that I expected.”

An experience different from what they expected is a common refrain. “I guess it’s been more striking how unremarkable it is,” Hardin says. “You think, ‘Oh, this is a really big deal.’ Everybody says it’s really impactful, and in some ways it has been. But in terms of the class structure and the class dynamics, it’s really just a class.”

“And that’s what you’re actually trying to do, right?” interjects Holliday. “Part of the innovation is treating people who are incarcerated like people—and that means treating them like students, for us.”

The courses are partly tailored for the setting, with Hardin’s data class focused on interpreting such information as census statistics and medical research, but also on the probabilities involved in DNA analysis of the sort used in criminal investigations and trials. Discussion is also an integral part of the model. “The topic was statistics and right off the bat people were saying, ‘I feel I’m reduced to a number in the system,’” says Ahana Ganguly ’21.

Holliday’s class examines linguistic prejudice in the educational system as well as the criminal justice system. “Every single inside student had a story about being told that they talked ‘ghetto’ or literally having the Spanish beaten out of them in school,” she says. “When people tell you your language doesn’t work because of their racism, you don’t use your language. And then what happens to you in

school? It’s really, really powerful. And maybe in some small way, you know, what the program is trying to do is just restore a little bit of the dignity that they lost through the way they were treated in the educational system to begin with.”

Inside students earn course credits and a small amount of time off their sentences. Outside students earn credit and a first-person experience of a system most had considered only in theory.

“I think the greatest benefit actually—I hope—accrues to the larger society,” Holliday says. “What does a world look like when every judge, every lawyer, every politician has had a real human connection with someone that’s incarcerated? And we know our students go on to do wonderful things. They’re going to grad school; they’re going to law school; they’re going to be important and powerful. I want a generation of people that have had that experience and seen how fundamentally unfair our system is, that have the power to change it when they get out.”

Involvement in research or activism involving the criminal justice system is nothing new at The Claremont Colleges, with a decades-long tradition among many faculty, particularly at Pitzer. Pomona Professor of Religious Studies Erin Runions has facilitated writing workshops inside a women’s prison and teaches a popular course on Religion, Punishment and Restoration that is now part of the Inside-Out program.

But it was Pitzer’s Tessa Hicks Peterson—an associate professor of urban studies and assistant vice president of community engagement who also heads the Office of Consortial Academic Collaboration—who piloted the first Inside-Out course, Healing Arts and Social ▸

Change, which took place at CRC in the spring of 2014. Since then she has worked to spread this model to the other Claremont Colleges, with the support from the 7C Deans and many engaged faculty.

The expansion came with the support of a \$1.1 million grant Pitzer received from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation in 2018 and is now run by Pitzer's Tyee Griffith, founding manager of the Justice Education Initiative. In fall 2020, Pitzer will become the first Inside-Out program in the nation to offer a pathway to a bachelor's degree for incarcerated students, who previously only have been able to earn associate's degrees. The first class of incarcerated students to earn bachelor's degrees in organizational studies from Pitzer would be in 2022.

All of these are complex issues, of course, involved in crime and

punishment. Even on the Claremont campuses, a club called the 5C Prison Abolition Collective staged a panel last fall examining the ethics of Inside-Out that included formerly incarcerated speakers as well as Pomona's Runions, a longtime activist and Inside-Out professor. Some who support the dismantling or reduction of the prison system over traditional reform contend that the Inside-Out program makes participants complicit with the system itself.

"There's an idea that this 'makes the prison look good,'" Peterson says. "But the prison is not necessarily pushing for this: We are really advocating for it on behalf of those inside who have asked us to do it. We're there because we're invited; we're there because it's their right to education, just like anyone else's. And the educational experience is really transformative and does often provide a level of agency, like any

educational experience does. That in and of itself is what we hope will change the system—both girding the folks inside with that sense of agency and education but also girding our 5C undergraduates with knowledge about this system, that for many people they have a luxury to not have to know and care what's happening in these facilities that are state-run, that our tax dollars are going to. So we're complicit with these institutions, regardless of whether we're teaching inside or sitting here ignoring them. Those of us involved feel like we'd much rather be complicit with a solution of educating ourselves about these institutions so that we can become better advocates. Because certainly, you can't teach inside without having resulting very strong feelings about the prison-industrial complex. It's just impossible."

The ideas a professor or student comes in with are not often the

ones they leave with, says Darryl Yong, a professor of mathematics at Harvey Mudd who serves as faculty liaison for Inside-Out.

"It's so black and white at first for many students," he says. "Then when they see it and experience it, they realize it's way more complicated than they could have possibly imagined. I think that complication is part of the learning. You learn by feeling squeezed in both worlds. Even the experience of having to walk through the gate, walk to our classroom, just being in the space, understanding what people are subjected to, it opens your eyes."

Pomona students and others say they walk away changed.

"I love that idea that learning could provide an escape, and education could provide a kind of inner freedom for them and for us as well, as Claremont students," Sundermeyer says. **PCM**

Talking While Black

Simple traffic stops escalate, ending in unnecessary deaths. In courtrooms, justice is not always served. And in prisons, the voices of many of the incarcerated sound alike.

As a sociolinguist, Assistant Professor of Linguistics Nicole Holliday specializes in the study of how language and identity interact. More specifically, she focuses on the many implications of a central question: What does it mean to sound Black?

Holliday's research on race and intonational variation examines wide aspects of society, including political speech. Yet there are few areas where the impact of race and linguistic differences is more stark than in the criminal justice system.

In just one example, in 2015 a college-educated African American woman named Sandra Bland was arrested in Texas after a minor traffic stop turned into a confrontation. Three days later, Bland died in jail in a

suspicious death that was ruled a suicide.

After hearing the dash-cam audio of the incident, Holliday and fellow linguists Rachel Burdin and Joseph Tyler analyzed it and wrote an article, "Sandra Bland: Talking While Black," that was published by Language Log, a linguistics blog hosted by the University of Pennsylvania.

With the help of linguistics tools such as the software program Praat and spectrograms that provide visual representations of variation in pitch, the researchers argued that the state trooper and Bland were, in essence, speaking different languages.

"What we did is we went through and used this annotation system, and we coded where the phrases are broken up and where the pitch moves up and down, the voice moves up and down, for each of them," Holliday says.

"What we came to was she is using an identifiably African

American tone pattern and he is not really matching her. So she starts in one place. He starts in another place. And it's clear that as the situation escalates, he's increasingly interpreting her as disrespectful, hostile, something like that. She does a few things in particular where she uses these kinds of tones, where her voice falls and rises on the same syllable. This is a pattern that we see more frequently with African American speakers.

"With the officer, he doesn't really do that at first, but as he moves through the interaction with her, he starts to be more like that. So we think there is a mismatch in his expectations of what she was supposed to sound like as a respectful citizen. But this mismatch is fundamentally about the fact that she speaks African American English and he doesn't."

Bland died in jail after an incident that appeared to start with no more than a failure to

signal. Her family ultimately sued, settling a wrongful death suit for \$1.9 million. A misdemeanor perjury charge against the state trooper, Brian Encinia, was dismissed after he surrendered his law enforcement license and agreed not to work in the field again.

Another prominent case examined by linguists is the outcome of the trial in the shooting death of unarmed Black teenager Trayvon Martin in Florida in 2012. George Zimmerman, a neighborhood watch volunteer, was acquitted of second-degree murder and manslaughter in Martin's death.

In a paper titled "Language and Linguistics on Trial," Stanford University Professor John Rickford, now retired, and co-author Sharese King, now an assistant professor at the University of Chicago, argued that the testimony of key prosecution witness Rachel Jeantel, a 19-year-old Black teenager, was dismissed as

not credible because she spoke in African American English, contributing to the not-guilty verdicts. Jeantel was on the phone with Martin as the incident unfolded.

"They lay out all of these moments where she's using these features of African American English that could clearly be misinterpreted by people unfamiliar with the variety," Holliday says. "So basically, she's speaking really differently than the lawyers, than the jury, than the public."

"There are a number of features of African American English that Jeantel employs that may be unfamiliar to mainstream listeners. For example, Rickford and King point out the use of 'zero copula', or the omission of the overt 'is' or 'are' verb in a sentence. Jeantel also uses differences in use of plural and possessive forms, which are also forms that may distinguish African American English from mainstream varieties."

Jeantel's testimony included phrases incorporating those styles, and some listeners may be unable or unwilling to hear beyond a highly socially stigmatized way of speaking.

"So when you hear somebody speak this way and you have these biases, you might just say, 'Oh, this person is not educated and I'm going to stop listening,'" Holliday says.

"People attach a lot of judgments about morality and character to the way that people talk. And these biases that we have are almost always racist, classist, sexist, problematic in some other way, but it's not the fault of the language. The language just varies. And that's a natural part of what language does. But the variation gets interpreted as a problem."

"It's very transparent that people's ideas about language aren't really about language," she says. "They're about other sociological phenomena."



ANDREW GLAZIER '97, CEO OF DEFY VENTURES,
WANTS THE CURRENT AND FORMER PRISONERS HE WORKS
WITH TO DO THE SAME THING HIS NONPROFIT HAS DONE...

DEFY THE ODDS

BY AGUSTIN GURZA

*Entrepreneurs in
Training (EITs)
welcome Andrew
Glazier '97 and
other volunteers at
a prison event in
Lancaster, Calif.*

Games and icebreakers are often used at business conferences to create some fun and make strangers comfortable with each other. But at a recent meeting of Defy Ventures, which helps people from prisons prepare for life on the outside, one empathy-building exercise quickly turns dead serious. It's called Step to the Line, and though not a word is spoken, much is revealed.

On a sunny Saturday in mid-January, about a dozen former inmates from two Los Angeles halfway houses gather for the event at a modern downtown office complex. They are met there by a group of volunteers, men and women from the business world recruited to lend their expertise on writing résumés, polishing personal statements and perfecting business plans.

Defy calls the event a Business Coaching Day, and it's led by Andrew Glazier '97, the nonprofit's national president and CEO. It's part of the organization's overall prison rehabilitation program called CEO of Your New Life, which aims to build self-confidence as well as skills.

At Defy, the group exercises are meant to be healing. They help participants develop a healthy self-image and positive attitudes. The organizers provide a well-studied set of aphorisms to live by.

Shame is destructive. Learn to forgive, not judge. You are not defined by your mistakes. You deserve a second chance. Foreswear negative labels. You are not criminals, convicts or felons. You are EITs—Entrepreneurs In Training.

Above all, realize that the solution is already inside you. Many of the same skills that brought you success as, say, a drug dealer can be applied to any legal enterprise.

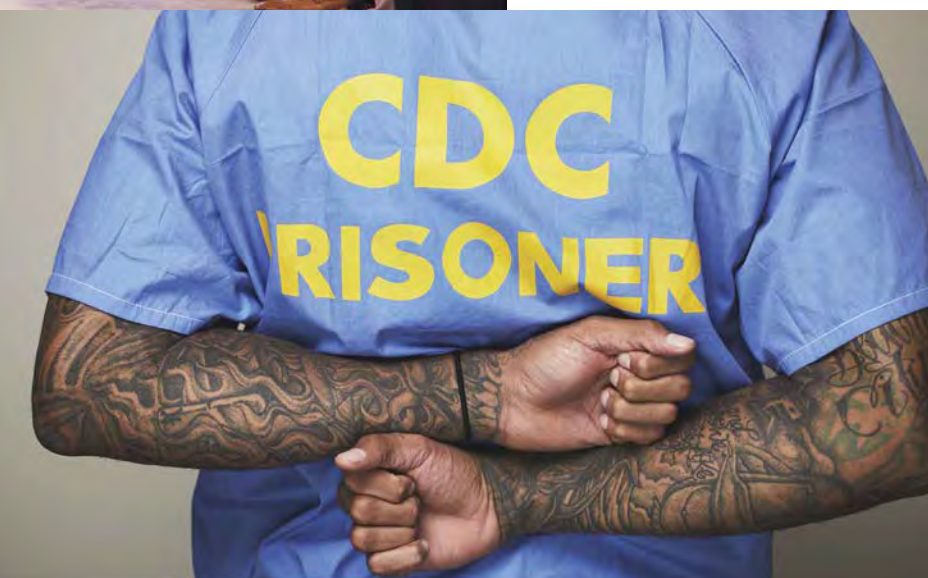
In short, to quote Defy's main motto: Transform the Hustle.

Glazier himself comes from a privileged background that could not be more remote from the life experience of his incarcerated clientele. For the public face of Defy Ventures and its chief fundraiser, that disparity can be a handicap, he concedes. Sometimes he finds himself forced to answer questions of class and race when pitching new potential donors.

"In the funding community now there's a lot of interest in seeing people who have 'lived experience' running organizations and working in the nonprofit space," he explains. "I think part of it comes from the idea that, look, for a long time it's been just a bunch of



Clockwise from top: Andrew Glazier '97 leading one of Defy's signature exercises, Step to the Line; One of Defy's entrepreneurs in training, referred to as EITs; and Glazier listening to an EIT share his personal statement during a coaching day.



well-meaning white people who come and work in communities of color. So sometimes I find I still battle this credibility stuff: *What are you doing here?*"

Glazier understands why people perceive a disconnect between his upbringing and his prison work and why they might challenge his street cred, so to speak. But he bristles at being "on the receiving end" of that mistrust. "It can be an uncomfortable spot to be in," he says. "Look, I can't change who I am. I do know that it's critical to have people with lived experience within our organization, informing our work. And we do."

If you're looking for personal information on Glazier, you won't find much on social media. He's not one to overshare; so he keeps a light digital footprint, mostly on LinkedIn and all about business. But Glazier opened up during a casual lunch recently at the Wasabi ▸

Japanese Noodle House, a five-minute walk from his Wilshire Boulevard offices in Koreatown. He talked easily about his evolving life goals, his family, education and the circuitous career path that brought him to the transformative prison work he never dreamed he'd be doing.

Unlike many other Angelenos, Glazier's roots in the city run deep. His mother descended from immigrants with a long history in Los Angeles. Her maternal relatives arrived from Italy, just in time for his great-grandmother to be "born off the boat from Sicily" in 1908.

Glazier's father was a doctor who worked for the Veteran's Administration, where he met his mother, who worked as a secretary for the agency. They married, had three children and settled in Studio City, a well-to-do neighborhood in the eastern San Fernando Valley.

Glazier attended Harvard-Westlake, a college prep he calls "the most elite private school in Los Angeles." Today, he concedes that his exclusive education had put him in a protective bubble, cloistered from the social ills mushrooming all around him.

But all that changed on April 29, 1992, the day the Los Angeles Riots erupted over the verdict in the Rodney King case.

Glazier was 16. "I had lived my whole childhood in the valley, and I had no idea what was going on eight miles away," he says. "Then the riots happened. I remember seeing Rodney

recently, if you had told this classically trained cellist with an MBA and a medium build that he would someday wind up working with hard-core prison inmates, he would have scoffed at the notion.

Nothing was further from his mind when he applied to college. He picked Pomona because he wanted a small school, and his parents wanted him to stay close-by.

The Claremont campus also had a strong academic appeal. "I'm a huge fan of the liberal arts," he says. "It doesn't matter what you get a degree in, because you're learning critical thinking and writing. And that's the education I came out with—a degree in critical thinking and knowing how to write, both important skills that are hard to find."

Glazier majored in international relations, studied Spanish and Japanese, and spent a semester in Pomona's program at Tokyo's International Christian University. At first, he considered joining the foreign service, but that plan never materialized. (Fun fact: his suitemate during junior year was David Holmes '97, a U.S. State Department employee based in Ukraine who recently testified during the impeachment hearings against President Donald Trump.)

After graduation, Glazier took time to explore. He returned to Japan and taught English for a year. He travelled, settled down and started a family. From 2001 to 2004, he was chief of staff to Marlene Canter, then a newly elected member of the Los Angeles City Board of Education.

life in private education; now suddenly I have this front-row seat in public schools, and you think, 'How is this even possible?'"

Glazier then switched gears and joined a small real estate development team, managing an award-winning restoration of historic bungalows in Silverlake. On that job, he recalls, he met and interacted with people with criminal histories for the first time, giving him a glimpse into the challenges they face after prison.

Meanwhile, Glazier also went back to school, earning his master's in business administration from UCLA's Anderson School of Management in 2006.

Two years later, he decided he'd had enough of real estate, which "didn't feel meaningful to me." In October of 2009, he took a job with City Year Los Angeles, a nonprofit that plunged him back into those vexing education problems. The agency works with AmeriCorps volunteers to serve as tutors, mentors, and role models for students in Los Angeles, grades three through 10.

The job gave Glazier his entrée into nonprofit work, where he

**"THEN THE RIOTS
HAPPENED. I
REMEMBER SEEING
RODNEY KING
GETTING BEATEN
ON TV. THEN THE
CITY BURNING."**

explains. "So some of the basic reform ideas that apply to public education apply to prisons too."

In either system, steering an organization in a new direction can be a herculean task. Glazier was well aware of the enormous challenge when he entered the criminal justice reform world three years ago, full of optimism and ambition. But he had no idea of the organizational landmines that awaited him at Defy Ventures, where a scandal was about to shake the nonprofit to its foundation while abruptly catapulting Glazier to the top job.

Defy Ventures was founded in 2010 in New York by a charismatic woman named Catherine Hoke, a UC Berkeley graduate and former Wall Street executive. But in 2018,

she was forced to resign in the midst of accusations of sexual harassment, misuse of funds and misleading donors with inflated performance reports.

Glazier said the controversial leader had come to personify the organization. She had a golden touch for fundraising and promotion; she courted powerful people in politics and Silicon Valley and had a knack for drawing high-profile media coverage. When she stepped

From left: EITs welcoming a volunteer at the start of a Defy coaching day; a volunteer giving résumé feedback; and another volunteer offering feedback to an EIT at a California prison.

King getting beaten on TV. Then the city burning. And even in the valley, where it wasn't nearly as intense, you could still see all the smoke coming over the hill.

"That was really a moment for me of waking up: Oh, my life is not their life. There are things happening that are really close-by that I'm really not aware of. And when I suddenly had greater awareness of my opportunity and privilege, it felt all the more extreme, which in part, I think, drives me to do this work."

Yet, Glazier never actually planned to work in prison reform. Until

"Originally, I wanted to be an elected official," he recalls, "but five years of working in local and state government sort of cured me of that impulse."

Nevertheless, the experience continued to stoke a civic calling. The problems he saw in L.A. schools opened his eyes to new realities—kids who are afraid to go to school, who can't read, who smoke weed in the hallways.

"This is where you really start to see inequities in the system, to see more of the injustices that exist in society," he says. "I spent my

finally found his mission. He stayed eight years with the education agency, having ascended to second in command in the Los Angeles chapter. When he decided to leave—again with no job lined up—a friend referred him to the opening at Defy, which had recently launched a new Southern California branch.

Glazier has come to see parallels between the problems in public schools and those in public prisons. "They are both large bureaucracies within the state government that are dealing with large numbers of people who are in need of intervention and education," he

down, Glazier says, Defy seemed doomed, as donors rapidly retreated.

Hoke has denied the allegations, though she previously admitted having sex with ex-prisoners participating in a similar program she had established in Houston in 2004. After being banned from Texas prisons in 2009, she resurfaced in New York where she later faced the new allegations from former Defy employees. An internal investigation, conducted by an outside law firm, found evidence of personal impropriety, but no proof that program results were embellished, donors misled or funds misused. ▶

GLAZIER RECALLS HOW HE PERCEIVED THE PROMOTION: “YOU’RE IN CHARGE. HERE’S A DUMPSTER FIRE.”

Glazier joined Defy in May of 2017, charged with building the new L.A. chapter. But before he had completed his first year on the job, the scandal hit, and he was suddenly promoted to president and CEO as the organization ran out of money.

Glazier recalls how he perceived the promotion: “You’re in charge. Here’s a dumpster fire.”

The newcomer scrambled to keep the sinking agency afloat. He was forced to lay off two thirds of the staff, then proceeded “to engineer a turnaround.” Today, the agency is back on solid footing.

Defy’s top goal, says Glazier, is cutting the rate of recidivism, the all-important measure that tracks the proportion of released offenders who return to prison over time. Nationwide, the rate has remained stubbornly high for decades. According to the most recent study released in 2018 by the federal Bureau of Justice Statistics, more than 83 percent of inmates released in 2005 had been re-arrested at least once within nine years. Most, 68 percent, were re-arrested within the first three years. The study followed a random sample of 67,966 prisoners from 30 states, including California, Colorado and New York, all places where Defy programs operate.

Defy’s strategy is essentially simple: Help men and women inside prisons prepare for a successful re-entry by teaching them business and career skills and personal development. Once they’re released, the agency provides continued support through a structured program to help them get a job or start a business.

While still in prison, participants engage in a seven-month curriculum that culminates in a Shark Tank-style competition, in which they pitch their ideas to a panel of business leaders and investors. After graduation and release, winners can bring their ideas to fruition through Defy’s Business Incubator.

On its website, Defy tracks results by the numbers: More than 5,200 prison participants, 4,800 volunteers, a one-year recidivism rate of 7.2 percent, an 84 percent employment rate and 143 businesses incorporated over the past eight years.

Like Defy itself, several of these small enterprises go on to employ former prisoners. Two Defy graduates work for Glazier at the agency’s spare and utilitarian offices, where the décor is corkboards and calendars.

Quan Huynh, the organization’s post-release program manager, joined the Defy program as a participant in 2015 while serving a life sentence for murder. He had been convicted in connection with a car-to-car shootout on the Santa Ana Freeway between his Vietnamese gang and members of a rival gang in the other car. He did time in some of the state’s toughest prisons, including Soledad and Pelican Bay.

“For the first 10 or 12 years, I never thought I was going to go home,” says Quan, whose parents fled the Vietnam War when he was an infant. At his parole hearing, he gambled on telling the truth, admitting he had lied in court and coached witnesses. His honesty paid off.

After his release, Defy helped him start his own cleaning company in Fountain Valley. Today, he is founder and CEO of Jade Janitors, cur-

rently with six employees, including five who were formerly incarcerated. He was Glazier’s first hire at Defy in 2017.

When asked, Quan thinks before offering a job assessment on his boss. “He’s very strategic and organized,” he says. “He’s all about systems and processes. He does not micromanage me at all. He empowers me. He sets the goal and sets high expectations, and we follow through with it.”

For Quan, that management style says, “I trust you.”

Privately, Glazier can “sometimes seem a little socially awkward,” Quan says, but he’s confident in the spotlight as Defy’s workshop leader. “He’s right in his comfort zone right there, actually connecting with the participants.”

During the recent Business Coaching Day, Glazier is clearly comfortable leading the icebreakers. In one, he asks people to introduce themselves by dancing their way from their seats to the front of the large hall.

“Quan, have you got some good dance music ready?”

There is no room to be bashful in this exercise. The participants, both budding entrepreneurs and volunteer counselors, make their way to the front, displaying individuality in their step. They strut, stroll, glide, vamp and slow-walk their way to the front, announcing the nicknames they gave themselves. There is Graceful Grace, Fantastic Frank, Kind Kyra and Bashful Benny. And here come Musical Michele, Ambitious Albert, Incredible Ian and Resilient Raul.

In the role of moderator, Glazier as Awesome Andrew is a cross between a motivational speaker, group therapy leader and game-show host. By the time these icebreakers work their wonder, the room is buzzing with laughter and chatter like a nightclub at midnight.

But when it comes time for Step to the Line, Glazier asks for silence. He instructs the group to form two lines along blue tape laid on the floor a few feet apart. Volunteers stand shoulder-to-shoulder on one side facing the Entrepreneurs in Training on the other. Then they all take two steps back from their respective lines, making the distance greater between them.

Glazier then reads a series of questions. For each one, participants must step forward to their line if they feel the statement is “true for you.” As the exercise goes along, people on both sides of the divide step forward and back with each question, revealing both differences and commonalities.

Soothing guitar and piano music start playing, relaxing as a spa. Glazier’s words float over the room like spiritual meditations. “We don’t do shame at Defy,” he says, speaking slowly with deliberate pauses. “We’re forward-looking. We do empathy. Now, empathy is not pity. Nobody is asking for anybody to feel sorry for them. Feeling sorry for someone isn’t built on respect. But empathy is built on respect and shared humanity. Empathy says that I see you. I hear you. And I understand.”

The first few questions are for fun.

I like scary movies.

I know who Billie Eilish is.

I was the class clown.



An EIT hugs members of his family during an emotional Defy Ventures graduation exercise.

As the statements get more probing, responses reveal social divisions. Only two of the EITs, but half of the volunteers, indicate their parents paid for private schools. Only one former prisoner earned a four-year college degree; most dropped out of high school.

Yet people on both sides share sad experiences, with random movements back and forth from the line of truth.

I struggle with my self-confidence to this day.

My mother or father have been to jail or prison.

My parents split up and their divorce deeply wounded me.

I’ve lost someone I love to violence.

When the questions turn to crime, the results are both surprising and shocking. Surprising to learn that many of the mostly white mentors have been stopped or questioned by police for no reason, and almost all have been arrested. Shocking to see what the EITs have endured in prison. The majority have spent more than four years behind bars, a few more than 20. The visual of men stepping back or remaining on the line as the number of years are called out makes for a powerful moment. Even more so when Glazier asks about a harsh

psychological punishment.

I’ve spent time in solitary confinement. (All but two step forward.)

More than two years. (Two men step back.)

Three years. (Three men remain.)

Five years. (Two left.)

Seven. (One man still on the line.)

Ten years. (Finally, all have stepped back.)

The exercise has succeeded. It has stirred passion and compassion, even from this casual observer. And it has forged strong bonds among this unlikely team of strangers, as indicated by their collective shared movement when Glazier delivers the final statements.

I feel proud of the person I am becoming.

Everybody steps up to the lines, and a couple give high fives across the quickly closing gap.

Okay, last one. If it’s true for you, let me hear it. I love being part of the Defy community.

The session ends with cheers, laughter, spontaneous hugs all around. **PCN**



Ari Shapiro of NPR's "All Things Considered" speaking at the Ideas@Pomona Summit in San Francisco. For more about the Summit, see Final Bow on page 64.

2020 Winter Break Parties

This past January, Pomona's annual Winter Break Parties welcomed over 400 Sagehen alumni, students, families and friends at events in New York City, San Francisco, Washington D.C., Seattle, Portland, Los Angeles and Orange County, Calif. Attendees enjoyed time to reconnect, meet new members of the Pomona community and learn about news from campus. Thank you to everyone who attended and to our hosts Elizabeth Bailey and David Bither P'21, Donna Yoshida Castro '83 P'21, Jim McCallum '70, Kathryn & Charles Wickham P'20, Tricia and Steve Sipowicz P'22, Meg Lodise '85 and Diane Ung '85 and the Orange County Alumni Chapter, all of whom helped make each event memorable for everyone!



Clockwise from left: Alumni at Pomona College Winter Break parties in Newport Beach, New York City and Los Angeles



Pomona Now and Next Campaign Raises Nearly \$400,000 For Scholarships

Running in tandem with the Ideas@Pomona Summit, the Pomona Now and Next crowdfunding campaign set out to support the Pomona liberal arts experience and scholarships and to meet a goal of 1,000 donors with \$250,000 in bonus gifts unlocked by the end of the Summit. Thanks to the generosity of several Pomona College Trustees who contributed to create the unlocking gifts and the 1,200+ donors who exceeded the goal and gave almost \$150,000 by the campaign's close, Sagehens collectively raised nearly \$400,000!

Our most successful crowdfunding campaign to date, Pomona Now and Next received gifts from over a third of the Summit attendees who excitedly watched the progress bar increase during the event and counted alumni, parents and more than 100 students among its donors.

Thank you to everyone for the incredible generosity shown in support of Pomona students. Chirp! Chirp!

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For more information: pomona.edu/reunion-weekend

Join the All-New Sagehen Connect

Announcing the launch of the all-new Sagehen Connect alumni community! New features include desktop and mobile versions, updated privacy settings and Sage Coaching for career interests and graduate school. For those who still have the previous Sagehen Connect mobile app, please be sure to remove it from your device as it is no longer functional.

With the new Sagehen Connect, alumni can:

- Access Pomona's full, official alumni directory with multiple search options.
- Choose what profile information you want to display and share with fellow Sagehens.
- Log in with email, LinkedIn, Google or Facebook.
- Easily integrate your LinkedIn information with your profile.
- Register as a Sage Coach to help alumni or students with career and graduate school advising, job and internship search, resume review, career panels and presentations and more. You choose your level of involvement.
- See who has already registered on the site and invite your Pomona friends to join Sagehen Connect directly from the site, using email or social media.
- Opt-out at any time.

Visit pomona.edu/sagehenconnect to learn more and set up your login today.

Call for Alumni Association Board Nominations

The Pomona College Alumni Association Board consists of highly-engaged alumni who foster connection, action and impact among the 25,000-person strong alumni community. Members serve three-year terms and are selected based on self-nominations and recommendations from active alumni. The Board represents a diverse range of backgrounds, experiences and professions and spans every decade from the 1960s through the 2010s.

Nominate yourself or another alumnus/a for the Alumni Association Board online at pomona.edu/alumni/alumni-association-board/alumni-association-board-nomination.

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Leonard Pronko

Professor Emeritus of Theatre and Dance

1927–2019

During his remarkable 57-year career as a beloved member of the Pomona faculty, Professor Emeritus of Theatre and Dance Leonard Pronko was known for his infectious love of theatre—and, particularly, for his dedication to kabuki, the traditional Japanese art form combining stylized drama and dance, on which he became one of America's leading experts.

An embodiment of the liberal arts, Pronko possessed great depth and breadth of knowledge in several fields. He originally came to Pomona as a professor of French and continued in that capacity for almost 30 years. Coupled with his love of French literature, however, was his passion for the performing arts. He started directing theatre productions at Pomona almost as soon as he arrived in Claremont, bringing to the stage works by such playwrights as Shakespeare, Molière and Ibsen. Following his interest in acting and performance and his research interest in French avant-garde theatre and kabuki theatre, over the next half-century he would transition fully into the world of theatre. In 1985, he was officially invited to join Pomona's Theatre Department, which he did, eventually becoming its chair.

Pronko was probably best known for offering at Pomona one of the nation's first opportunities for students to learn the authentic basics of kabuki performance and to join in kabuki-style productions. First introduced to the art form during a sabbatical in the early 1960s, he made history in 1970 as the first non-Japanese person ever accepted to study kabuki at the National Theatre of Japan, and in the years after, as he practiced and taught the art at Pomona, he became known as its un-

official ambassador in the United States. With his broad knowledge of international theatre, he helped to turn Pomona into a hub of dramatic experimentation, infusing classic works such as Macbeth with kabuki elements and leading students in his own original productions, such as *Revenge at Spider Mountain*, which he termed “a kabuki western.” In 1985, the Japanese government awarded him the Order of the Sacred Treasure, Third Class, for his efforts to promote knowledge and appreciation of kabuki in the U.S.

Pronko was the author of several books, including *Theatre East and West: Perspectives Toward a Total Theatre*, *Guide to Japanese Drama*, *Avant Garde: The Experimental Theatre in France* and *The World of Jean Anouilh*. Among his diverse honors were two Wig Distinguished Professor Awards, a prestigious Guggenheim Fellowship, a 1972 Los Angeles Drama Critic's Circle Award for his kabuki productions and the Association for Theatre in Education's Outstanding Teacher of Theatre in Higher Education Award in 1997.

Born in the Philippines, Pronko earned his B.A. from Drury College, his master's degree from Washington University in St. Louis and his Ph.D. in French literature from Tulane University. He also studied at the École Charles Dullin in Paris. He taught at the University of Kansas and Lake Erie College, in Painesville, Ohio, before joining the Pomona faculty in 1957.

Though he retired in 2014, Pronko had remained actively engaged with the College community and the Theatre Department right up until his recent illness.

Jonathan Wright

The William A. Hilton Zoology Professor and Professor of Biology

1962–2019

Professor Jonathan Wright, the William A. Hilton Zoology Professor and Professor of Biology, will be remembered for his enormous enthusiasm for both science and music—at both of which he was equally gifted and dedicated—as well as his unsurpassed ability to communicate not only his encyclopedic knowledge in his chosen field of comparative physiology, but also his untiring sense of wonder at the big and little mysteries he had devoted his life to studying.

As one of his recent students noted, his knowledge and enthusiasm inspired his students “to see and explore how science can make the seemingly mundane seem incredible.”

A native of Great Britain, Wright earned his B.A., M.A. and D.Phil. degrees from Oxford University before coming first to Canada, then to the United States, where he spent five years on the faculty of Northern State University in Aberdeen, S.D., before coming to Pomona in 1998. At Pomona, he rose to hold the title of the William Atwood Hilton Professor of Zoology. Wright was a two-time winner of the Wig Distinguished Professor Award for Excellence in Teaching in 2001 and 2009.

One student who nominated Wright in 2009 wrote: “Jonathan Wright cares so much about his students. A true mentor, role-model and friend to his pupils, as well as an excellent professor and an incredibly knowledgeable biologist and natural historian.”

Another student wrote in 2001 that Wright “... is one of the nicest guys I've met on campus. He is extremely passionate about

what he teaches, and that passion rubs off on his students (I can now see the ‘beauty’ in a cockroach). ... He is extremely knowledgeable in just about anything. Students have a running joke in trying to stump him with a question he can't answer.”

Yet another student noted: “Dr. Wright is not only a fantastic teacher, he genuinely cares about all students' success and strives to help in any way he can ... walking through Bernard Field Station with him is so much fun because everywhere you go, he has something interesting to say about the surrounding flora and fauna. I enjoyed having him as a professor to the point where I have built my schedule for next semester around taking the other class that he teaches.”

Wright was an active scholar, he was also a deeply engaged member of the College community, serving in the past as associate dean of the college and as chair of the Biology Department. Recipient of numerous grants for his research from such organizations as the National Science Foundation, Wright also served on numerous committees, including the Faculty Advisory Committee for the Bernard Field Station.

His life as a musician was just as important to him as his love of science. Having studied classical violin from an early age, he performed regularly in orchestral, chamber and solo repertoires. In Claremont, he played with the Pomona College Symphony, the faculty string quartet Euphoria, a violin-piano duo and other ad-hoc ensembles.

Ideas@Pomona: The Summit



The Ideas@Pomona Summit, Pomona's premier lifelong learning event, brought together more than 200 Sagehen alumni, families, students and friends from around the globe for an energetic day-and-a-half conference under the theme Liberal Arts NOW and NEXT. Dedicated to meaningful connection and active dialogue around timely, newsworthy and captivating ideas, the inaugural event took place October 25-26, 2019, at the Hyatt Centric Fisherman's Wharf in San Francisco.

What does cutting-edge research tell us about who we are and where we are going? How are liberal arts values such as critical thinking and creative learning being brought to bear on today's unique challenges and tomorrow's opportunities? The sold-out event featured sessions led by alumni, parents, faculty and friends of the College including featured speaker Ari Shapiro, host of NPR's "All Things Considered," Laszlo Bock '93, Liz Fosslien '09, professors Kevin Dettmar, Nicholas Ball, Nicole Holliday and more.

Attendees left invigorated, with an increased enthusiasm for the liberal arts and a strong sense of a visit back to class on campus. Planning is underway for the next Summit in 2021. Watch for details at pomona.edu/ideas-pomona-summit.

Clockwise from top right Ari Shapiro of NPR's "All Things Considered" speaks to a sold-out crowd on Saturday morning; Professor Alexandra Papoutsaki and Laszlo Bock '93 discuss "Liberal Arts and the Future of Work"; Alumni Association Board member Alfredo Romero '91 and Cecil Sagehen; Professor Nicholas Ball on "The Challenges of a Petroleum-Free Society"; Fabian Fernandez-Han '20 and Peter Han P'20 lead an interactive workshop showcasing the creative power Human-Centered Design; "Creating a Healthcare System that Works for Everyone" panelists (Brian Prestwich P'20) take audience questions.





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