

CCS Notes



50th Anniversary Newsletter

UCSB

Message from the Interim Dean

What an exciting year for the College of Creative Studies! We have welcomed a new cohort of students into our community of junior colleagues, hosted two Transdisciplinary Fellows already, and were wowed by the first annual CCS Research and Creative Activities Conference (RACA-CON, see page 27). Sixty-seven students from all eight majors presented their creative and research efforts to an audience of almost 300 attendees. Anyone who has doubts about this generation of young people and their ability to make a difference needs to meet these students!



▲ Interim Dean Kathy Foltz

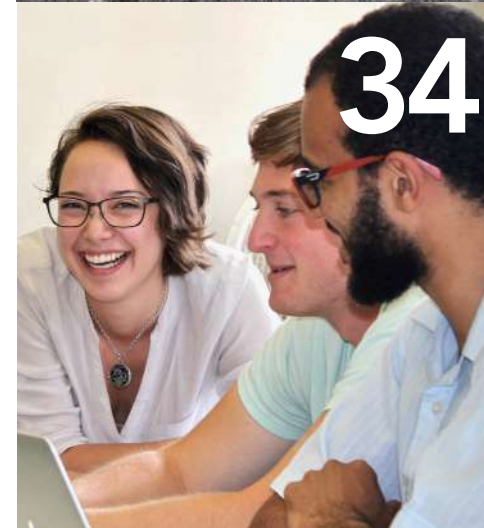
We have many more special events scheduled throughout the year, and I hope you can join us at least once. I encourage each of you to share a story about your CCS experience on the CCS 50th website (ccs.ucsb.edu/50).

In reading the stories already posted, I am reminded that CCS offers students the opportunity to drive their own education, while preparing them for unexpected journeys. The common threads since 1967 are curiosity and passion. Perhaps this is the true essence of CCS—to nurture these core human characteristics. As a living entity, CCS evolves, but students continue to thrive in the framework that remains centered on this aspect of individualized curiosity and passion. How do we measure this? I believe it is best viewed not through the lens of awards or rankings, but through a lens of individual success. Can students take what they've experienced and learned and then apply it to what they end up doing? Do they continue learning? We have no idea what a student will need to know 10, even 5 years from now, except that communication skills, problem solving, ability to learn, creativity, and critical thinking will be required. The CCS stories reveal that there is no single path to a particular career and, often, no way to predict where paths will lead. Rather, the fearless spirit and sheer persistence that flows from the confidence to pursue a passion (and a realization that failing does not make one a failure) result in the myriad of success stories. People who continue to learn, who can communicate across disciplines, and who think creatively can contribute most effectively to solving the many complex challenges of our world.

Another common thread revealed in the stories is the "CCS experience"—the opportunity to work with faculty as junior colleagues throughout the undergraduate years. CCS is recognized as an integral part of the UCSB campus, providing an educational path for students who wish to immerse and accelerate in a discipline. UC Santa Barbara is internationally recognized as a top research university and faculty across campus welcome CCS undergraduates into their studios, offices, and laboratories to create new knowledge and conduct research. On behalf of the College, I thank campus leadership, faculty, staff, graduate students, and postdoctoral scholars who have made it possible for CCS students to experience this aspect of a world class university. It clearly makes a difference. Support for students to travel to professional conferences and to pursue summer research is the result of the generosity of donors, and on behalf of the many students who have benefited from these programs over the years - thank you! The Create Fund, a new initiative in CCS, will expand the opportunities for students to carry out research and pursue creative and entrepreneurial work across all eight majors (see more on page 34).

Enjoy this special 50th Anniversary edition, and also browse the CCS 50th Anniversary web page for photos, stories, videos, and more. COME VISIT! CCS would love to welcome you home.

KATHY



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Give Them a Hand: 2017 Commencement

The College of Creative Studies (CCS) topped off another outstanding year by conferring degrees to a phenomenal cohort of graduates at the 2017 CCS Commencement Ceremony on Sunday, June 11, 2017 in UCSB's Campbell Hall. 92 graduates, some wearing beach attire and others in full graduation cap and gown—the College does not limit its graduates to traditional graduation garb—celebrated the conclusion of their CCS journey. Chancellor Yang opened the ceremony, the first of eight UCSB Commencements, by thanking CCS Interim Dean Kathy Foltz for her dedication to the College.

Interim Dean Foltz has spent her tenure at the helm of CCS trying to explain what exactly the College is. Her first commencement address was no different. "It is hard to define this College—each student has a unique story and path," said Foltz in her speech. "But that is part of its beauty and its strength. I believe, though, that there is a common thread that runs through the students here." The biologist pointed to a quote from Rachel Carson, one of her favorite authors, to describe a commonality of all CCS students: "A child's world is [...] full of wonder and excitement" but for most of us the "true instinct for what is beautiful and awe-inspiring is [...] lost before we reach adulthood." Dean Foltz believes CCS students, through their desire to make and discover, have maintained "that sense of wonder." Dean Foltz urged the graduates to use the tools and experiences CCS provided them to keep wonder alive in their day-to-day lives and to remember

that they are "part of something good. CCS. This cool little College on a wonderful campus, joined in the collective battle against ignorance."

Following her remarks, Kathy turned the podium over to Norman Badler (CCS Mathematics '70), who gave the annual Alumni Speech. The Rachleff Professor of Computer and Information Science at the University of Pennsylvania was one of the original 50 students when the College opened its doors in 1967. Badler, the founding Director of the SIG Center for Computer Graphics, said that many commencement speeches that talk about 'following your passion' are missing one vital piece: how to *find* your passion. "People don't really have enough time or experiences to find [...] their passion," he said. He used the idea of 'creativity' to address this question.

While there are six universal expressions—surprise, sadness, disgust, anger, joy, and fear—fear is the emotion that, according to Badler's thesis, often brings about passion and creativity. "Passion because the mind and body must become powerful to break the emotion," he explained, "and creative because responsive actions may not come from rote or typical actions." To Badler, "creativity is often the impassioned response to fear; the need to make a situation meaningfully better for oneself and for others."

After years of searching for his passion, Badler identified that 'challenge' is what made him the most passionate.

More specifically, "challenge that triggered awareness of the unknown, the consequent fear of meeting that challenge and the passion to bring my skills, my past and, yes, others to address it." He advocated that the graduates seize their fear about their future and turn it into an opportunity to "make that unknown future" their passion.

Then three graduates, Qicheng Zhang, (CCS Physics), Corrine Guichard (CCS Literature), and Jiajie (Jerry) Luo (CCS Mathematics), sequentially took the stage to give their remarks. Each student focused on how CCS impacted his or her life. Although they studied a range of disciplines, each student conveyed how CCS helped them harness their passion while pushing them to achieve their goals.

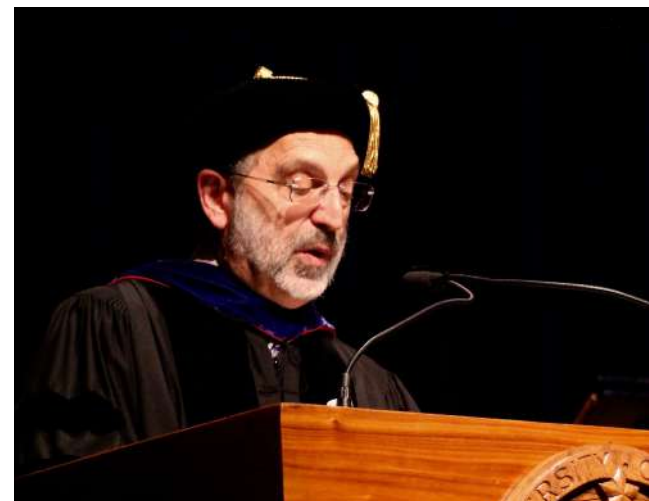
Zhang, who is now pursuing a PhD in Planetary Science at Cal Tech, posited that every day in CCS there is an opportunity to learn. "In CCS, a new today means a new opportunity to learn, to leave our comfort zones, to grow," he said. He went on to explain the force that brings together CCS students. "Each of us here may have our own goals we're working to achieve, but we're united in our resolve and efforts to attain them." Zhang concluded that while he cannot see the future, he can predict that each graduate is ready to take on the next chapters of their lives and that CCS has prepared them to "challenge each and every one of our goals, whatever they may be."

Luo focused on how one needs to harness passion and perseverance to achieve ambitious goals. When he entered CCS, he and his classmates "were passionate [...and] thought we could take on the world." When he met the older students, he noticed that many had lost most of this passion. At the time Luo wondered, "How could someone who had so much passion and excitement just settle for so much less?" As he progressed through CCS he realized, he had personally experienced this phenomenon "not once, not twice, but pretty much every quarter." He was burnt out from the same subjects he recently was so passionate about. He quickly learned that passion and excitement only get you so far and perseverance is needed "to get the job done." Luo closed by urging his fellow graduates to "dream big and dream wide, but more importantly [...] remember why we had these dreams in the first place." Because those dreams give them "a reason to get back up when we fall."

The final student speaker, Guichard continued on the theme of passion. In CCS "so many people [are] pouring themselves into what they are doing just for the sake of passion," Spectrum's (CCS' Literary Magazine) Editor in Chief explained. "CCS is full [...] of people searching for meaning beyond their homework assignments." While there are eight distinct disciplines and each with students truly dedicated to their field, every student in the College is united "through the search for something greater." Although the answers are often unsatisfying, CCS prepares

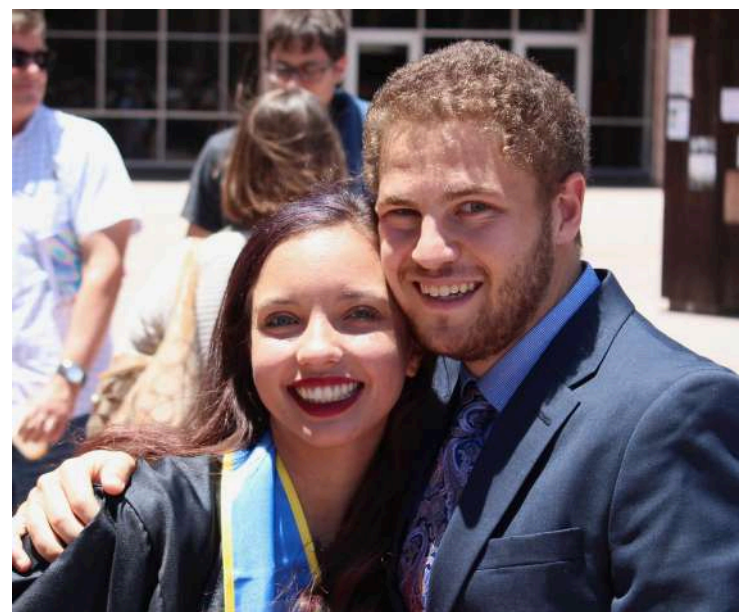


◀ The stage of the 2017 CCS Commencement
 (from left to right) Jerry Luo (CCS Mathematics '17),
 ▼ Heeba Kaleem (CCS Literature '17), Norman Badler,
 (CCS Mathematics '70)



◀ 2017 CCS Physics graduates with Dr. Bibilashvili (CCS Physics faculty)

Maddie Marcin (left, CCS Music Composition '17) and ▶ Noah Rubin (right, CCS Biology '17)



its students to solve real world problems. "We will have to use our creativity and the skills we've learned from CCS," she said, "to solve problems that don't necessarily have straightforward answers."

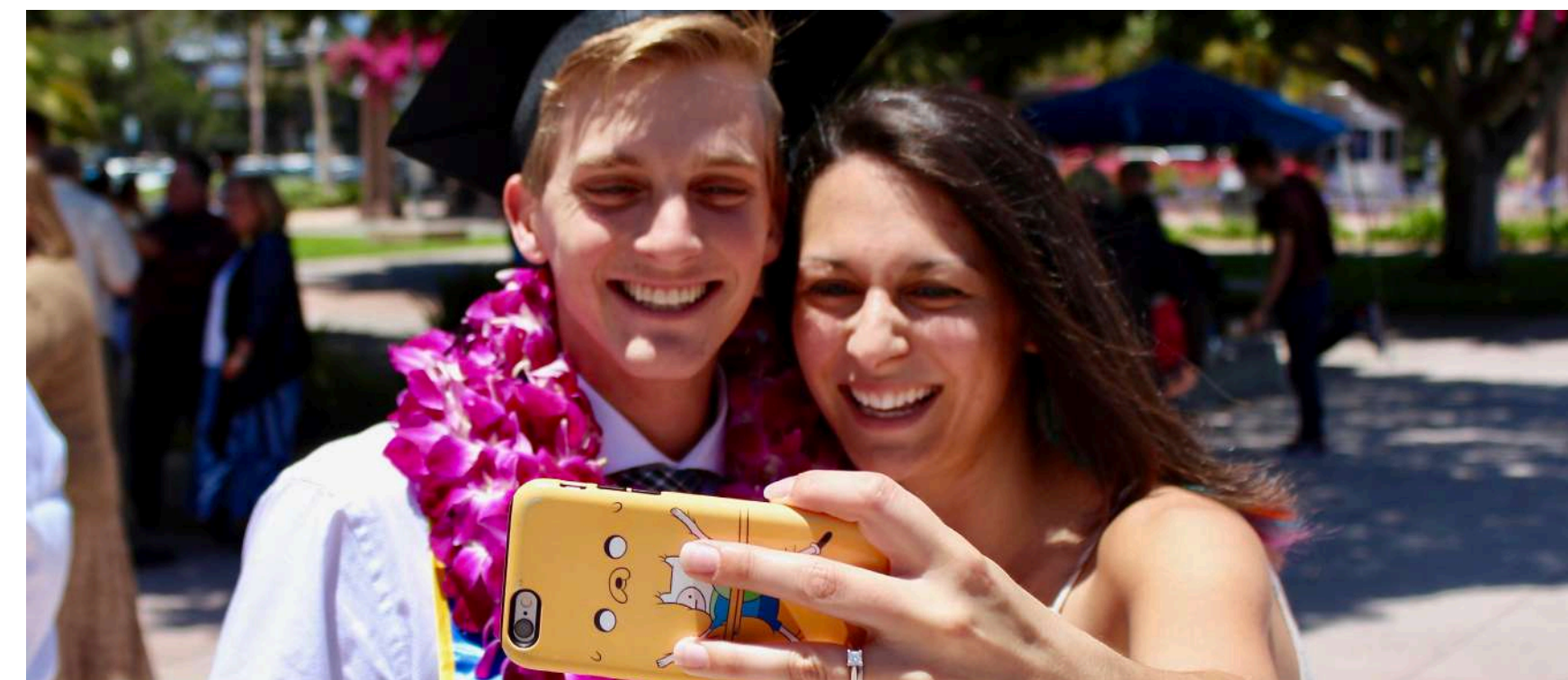
The student speeches were followed by two musical pieces written and performed by CCS Music Composition students. A tradition dating back to the early days of CCS, the musical numbers add a personal touch to the ceremony each year. This year, Maddie Marcin performed her piano piece "San Francisco, Someday" and Helen Tanubrata played her song "Hitchhiker" on the piano, assisted by Sara Bashore on the violin and Claire Garvi on the bassoon.

Chancellor Yang and Dean Foltz then bestowed the annual UCSB and CCS awards. Chancellor Yang began by bestowing the Chancellor's Award for Excellence in Undergraduate Research, an award given to one UCSB student each year and recognized as the highest academic honor an undergraduate can receive, to Daniel Spokoyny (CCS Computer Science). During his time at CCS, Spokoyny worked on fact checking the web, led seminars on natural language processing and machine learning, and published several manuscripts. He is now working on his PhD at

Carnegie Mellon University. Dean Foltz, on behalf of the CCS Faculty Executive Committee (FEC), honored Morgan Brubaker (CCS Physics), Sammy Guo (CCS Computer Science), Amy Peterson (CCS Biology) and Qicheng Zhang (CCS Physics) with the CCS FEC Commendation of Excellence Awards. This accolade recognizes students for their truly outstanding performance in their overall intellectual and creative endeavors. The CCS Student Service Award—the afternoon's final award—was given to Gabby Najm for her contributions to the intellectual and social functions of the College.

The event concluded with the moment all of the graduates (and their families) had been waiting for. Years of hard work and dedication to their fields had led up to them shaking hands with Chancellor Yang. Adding a personal touch to the proceedings, Interim Dean Foltz personally read the names of each graduate and informed the crowd of their future plans.

For a full recording of the ceremony, visit ccs.ucsb.edu/events/commencement.



▲ Duncan Proctor (CCS Biology '17) taking a selfie with CCS Student Advisor Sara Sterphone

Lifelong Learning



CCS Art Faculty member, alumnus, and renowned artist shares his CCS experience and how childhood shaped his art

Hank Pitcher (CCS Art '71) was one of the original 50 students when the College of Creative Studies (CCS) opened its doors in Fall 1967. He joined the CCS Art faculty upon his graduation in 1971 and has remained with the College ever since. Now a renowned landscape painter, he teaches Art in CCS. Pitcher, a native of Isla Vista, graciously invited us to his studio on UCSB's West Campus to talk about how the College has evolved over the past 50 years and how his early experiences impacted his work.

How did you first hear about CCS?

Well, when I was a senior in high school, my mother showed me a small article in the Santa Barbara News Press announcing a newly formed College of Creative Studies at UCSB and that seemed interesting to me. In high school, representatives from different colleges and universities were coming in to talk to students, and I used to go to those meetings. A week or so after I saw the announcement, [Marvin] Mudrick [the founder of CCS] came and spoke to a small group of students, and he was very interesting. It was something that I hadn't experienced before. The way he talked, his energy, and his intellectualism were so impressive.

At that point I was a senior at San Marcos High School and looking at different colleges to go to mostly focused around football because I was offered a lot of good football scholarships. I was looking at big powerhouse schools across the nation. UCSB had a football team at the time and they had wanted me to play there, but it wasn't a big time program and I figured if I was going to play I wanted to play with the best. Ed Loomis, who was the chair of the English Department at the time, set up a meeting with me and said that he had heard from Mudrick that I was interested in the CCS program so he wanted to talk to me. Both Loomis and Mudrick were much more interesting than the football recruiters. It was a different kind of dialogue than I had with any other adults. The more I found out about CCS, the more interesting it got to be. The people who were recruiting me to play football were talking about how there were weight rooms in the dorms and easy classes. The emphasis was on how easy the classes were going to be and I was not interested in easy classes. I was interested in learning about art and literature. The College wasn't about being easy—it was about being rigorous. I decided to go to the College of Creative Studies and I figured I could still play football because they had a team here. School started and the football coaches kept advising not to take hard classes, but I went to a lecture by

Buckminster Fuller that the College had hosted the first week of school and that was a whole other level and just so interesting and I thought to myself, 'this is what I want to be doing. I want to be hanging out in the College with people like this and painting, not hanging out with people on the football team.' So I quit the football team that day and just focused on CCS.

“The College wasn't about being easy—it was about being rigorous.”



▲ Buckminster Fuller speaking at CCS, late 1960's

From what we have seen, the Buckminster Fuller lectures were very important in the early years of the College. Can you tell us more about these lectures?

The first year, he came for about two weeks and every evening he would go into this room and he would look around at the audience and then he would close his eyes and just start talking. Occasionally he would open his eyes, which were magnified by his thick glasses, and he would look intently at people in the audience to see if they were following him. Then he would close his eyes and take off again. He would go on wild tangents but always end up tying everything together into a remarkable new way of seeing the world. I am still thinking about things he said back then.

Over the years, what has surprised you about what has changed and hasn't changed?

Over the last 50 years, there has been pressure to make CCS more conventional, more like everything else. I am surprised that CCS has been able to resist things like changing the name and having grades—making it more conventional. A non-punitive grading system was a radical idea

considered one of America's most important sculptors, was criticized for teaching "Astral Traveling." That course description was very good.

With turnover in the faculty and students, why do you think the College has stayed so true to Mudrick's ideals?

It is a funny thing. The College just attracts certain people. Around Coal Oil Point where my studio is, they did some restoration and took out some exotic/invasive plants. All of a sudden all of these animals started showing up that nobody had seen for years and years. Where did they come from? How did they know? The College is like that. The thing about Mudrick is he had the highest respect for students. He was really interested in students and he believed that they could do great and valuable things. Don't tell them what they should do; find what they want to do. Ask them questions, let them ask you questions and free them up. I think the faculty at the College have the same feeling. They aren't coming in as authorities, they don't have all the answers, they are coming to learn and to develop colleagues. You invest a lot of time in a student because you want them to get to the point where they can ask you hard questions and you can start to learn from them. The best Creative Studies teachers are teaching new and different classes all the time and are evolving, even when it is the same subject.

Did you become a faculty member right after you graduated in 1971?

When I was a senior, getting ready to graduate, I started traveling around and looking at graduate programs and visiting other Colleges and I wasn't finding anything that was really exciting to me. For the last 50 years, including when I was a student, there has been a theme in academia

in 1967 and still is. One change that I miss is the tradition of unusual / humorous course titles and descriptions. "Walking Biology" has survived. But John McCracken, now



Pitcher advising Nancy Hanover-Reyes (CCS Art '88) during a landscape painting class, mid 1980's

that painting is dead. I was not interested in that idea. It is still being talked about, but painting continues to be, in some ways, the most popular and the most economically important field of visual art. I was lucky as an undergraduate to work with Paul Wonner, who was a significant painter, and I learned a lot from him. The other programs I was looking at were not so interested in painting. I was thinking about this one afternoon and Mudrick came to me and he asked me if I was interested in staying on for the year as a lecturer. I was having some recognition and success professionally, and I thought, 'Well that might be a good idea,' because I could continue to do the work I wanted to do and I could keep looking for a place to go for graduate work, find a better place. But one thing led to another and I just haven't found a better place to be, so I am still here.

A lot of people would be burnt out after teaching for over 45 years. What keeps you coming back?

I have only taught half time over these many years. My

primary focus is on my own work—painting this landscape, this lifestyle, and this part of the world. I think if I had a traditional full time teaching position and I had to give grades and I had to deal with students who wanted a grade to stay on a sports team, I wouldn't do that. I am just so uninterested in that kind of teaching. In every class that I teach here, by and large everyone who is in that classroom is there because they want to be. The students ask interesting questions and I can ask them questions. It is stimulating—intellectually and artistically. Additionally, the faculty that are on campus, many could teach anywhere in the world, have decided to teach here. They choose to be here because of the place—it is a privilege to get to know them. Over the years, I have taught classes with people from other disciplines. From Bruce Tiffney I have learned about geology, botany, and other aspects of science that are thrilling and important to me. I don't know of and can't imagine a place where it could be as good as that.

I am of that age now where a lot of my contemporaries

are retiring. I think you retire when you are doing something that is not interesting or that you don't want to do or maybe can't do anymore. If you are interested in what you are doing, you want to keep doing it. It is more than 'life long learning' it is just being alive. Being alive is being curious.

Take us through the class that you taught with Bruce Tiffney.

We did that class for almost 20 years. It evolved into three weekend meetings during the summer. The first weekend we would meet on West Campus for an introductory lecture and then paint all day with two critiques. It was a run through for the following two weekends when we would go up to the Sedgewick reserve and stay there from Friday through Sunday. We woke everyone up before dawn to paint the sunrise.

Bruce gave a lecture every afternoon about the botany and geology we painted. Things like the different types of oak trees and the subduction zone that ran through the reserve. After a break in the middle of the day, we would paint until sunset. Then we had amazing meals. A benefactor donated money to allow us to cater all organic local food from a French trained chef. Then we often sat outside and looked at the stars and talked. That was the basic structure of the class.

How do you approach teaching a typical CCS class?

Most students are used to classes where they are told what they should do to get a grade. I discuss what they could do to expand their own work and increase their understanding of the history and tradition of drawing and painting.



Pitcher talking with CCS Art students, 1970's

What was an example of one of these classes?

Well I taught a class with Charles Garabedian titled 'Man, Tragic and Heroic: Narrative Paintings and War Movies.' We watched old war movies and looked at narrative painting and looked for connections between them. It was a fabulous class and I learned a lot about war movies and

World War II because he was a gunner on warplanes flying over Germany.

What do your paintings focus on?

My paintings are about the natural and social history of this part of California - mostly the beach. I see surfing and the beach as mythic subjects and I see the Greek myths acted out constantly on and just off shore. Also I am interested in the incredible biodiversity and the geology here. In the stretch of beach between Campus Point and slough on West Campus there is more invertebrate biodiversity than anywhere else known on the planet.

You were raised in Santa Barbara...

Yes, I grew up about 400 yards from where we are sitting—in Isla Vista.

How did growing up here influence your work?

When I was young, UCSB was still primarily focused on teaching and at that time there was a very strong relationship with the IV elementary school (where I was in the first graduating class). The facilities of the University were open to us. I loved the library and the pool and the range of public events. That was a very positive thing, but seeing how the growth of the University affected the landscape—there were only 100 families living here when I was growing up—was a negative. We lived in the middle of Abrego road and from Abrego road to the freeway it was just fields of wildflowers. Seeing the growth and to see the really shoddy apartment buildings that were built and to see the destruction of this paradise has been very difficult.

How did the fact that you have seen that destruction first hand affect what you paint?

Well it has affected me in complex ways. When we were kids, the developers came in and destroyed what for us was sacred ground—these fields of wildflowers, eucalyptus forests, and vernal pools full of frogs. And the crowds of new residents stripped the beaches clean of crabs and

abalone and mussels. As kids we would try to save our beloved landscape. We snuck out at night and moved surveying stakes around, hid tools and buried supplies. Once we got a tractor started and drove it over the cliff. We were very young and naïve. Later I came to realize that painting, celebrating the landscape by painting it, not in a sentimental way, but in a truthful way, helps preserve it. If you have never seen it, you don't care if somebody destroys it. That has become part of my teaching; I try to inoculate the landscape into the students. When you learn a little bit about nature, when you get exposed to it, you realize it is really interesting. It is much more interesting than, well,

Game of Thrones—being out in nature is much more interesting than TV. I think in some ways I realized that obstructing the construction was not going to do me any good or the landscape any good, but painting it and being excited about painting it and sharing that enthusiasm with people outdoors sort of changes the discussion.

How do you think paintings compare with photography?

I think they are different. A photograph is usually a fraction of a second and it documents where everything was at that exact moment. Paintings take a long time, and are about experience over a period of time and moving things around in the picture to talk about experience. This is a generalization – there are definitely photographs with long exposures and that have been manipulated in many ways, but I think that photography is more about documentation and painting is more about contemplation.

Anything else you would like to say about CCS?

Early on I was surprised that there wasn't a line down the street of students wanting to enroll here. After a while I realized that not many undergraduate students are sure about what they want to do in their life. A few do, and they quickly understand that CCS is a place for them and they want to enroll here. There are not that many. I relate to those students because I was one of them.

CCS Student Awards

Students in the College of Creative Studies receive many prestigious awards, ranging from college-specific and departmental awards to university-wide and national awards. The following is a list of awards received by our students during the 2016-2017 academic year.

2017 Chancellor's Award for Excellence in Undergraduate Research

Daniel Spokoyko, CCS Computer Science

CCS Faculty Executive Committee (FEC) Commendation of Excellence Awards

Morgan Brubaker, CCS Physics
Sammy Guo, CCS Computer Science
Amy Peterson, CCS Biology
Qicheng Zhang, CCS Physics

2017 Barry Goldwater Scholarship

Dolev Bluvstein, CCS Physics
Shelby Shankel, CCS Chemistry/Biochemistry

2017 Worster Summer Research Fellowship

James Chow, CCS Physics
Aidan Herderschee, CCS Physics
Neeraj Kulkarni, CCS Physics
Avik Mondal, CCS Physics

2016 Undergraduate Physics Research Symposium

1st Place- Dolev Bluvstein, CCS Physics

2017-2018 IEEE Power & Energy Society (PES) Scholarship Plus Recipient

Erica Fagnan, CCS Math

Presentation Awards at Annual Biomedical Research Conference for Minority Students (ABRCMS)

Colin Kim, CCS Chemistry/Biochemistry
Rachel Liu, CCS Biology
David Lowe, CCS Biology

UCSB MRL Research Internships in Science and Engineering (RISE) Scholarship

Dolev Bluvstein, CCS Physics

William Dole Memorial Scholarship

Leila Youssefi, CCS Art
Juan Silverio, CCS Art
Bonnie Huang, CCS Art
Sophie Nebeker, CCS Art
Ashleigh Pillay, CCS Art
Fernando Tapia, CCS Art

The Promising Artist Achievement Award

Fernando Tapia, CCS Art

The Fenton Award

Alison Young, CCS Art

The Bruce Award

Aimee Hanna, CCS Art

Faculty Awards of Distinction, Art Department

Vanessa Ayala, CCS Art
Fernando Tapia, CCS Art

2017 Travelling Undergraduate Research Fund (TURF) Recipients

Chloe Avery, CCS Math
Jacob Corina, CCS Computer Science
Cassandra Cunningham, CCS Biology and CCS Art
Corinne Guichard, CCS Literature
Aimee Hanna, CCS Art
Sierra McLinn, CCS Biology
Landon Settle, CCS Math
Juan Silverio, CCS Art
Sharon Tamir, CCS Biology
Steenalisa Tilcock, CCS Literature
Qicheng Zhang, CCS Physics

2017 Summer Undergraduate Research Fellowship (SURF) Recipients

Dolev Bluvstein, CCS Physics
Aaron Stanek, CCS Physics
Mitchell Koerner, CCS Physics
Trevor Cohen, CCS Chemistry/Biochemistry
Aaron Chan, CCS Physics

Benjamin Siegel, CCS Physics
Christian Jeske, CCS Physics
Christian Lloyd, CCS Computing
Dana Nguyen, CCS Computing
Dylan Pizzo, CCS Math
Gavin Niendorf, CCS Physics
James Ehrets II, CCS Physics
Jasmin Kwak, CCS Physics
Kai Schwennicke, CCS Chemistry/Biochemistry
Koe Inlow, CCS Biology
Kunal Lakhanpal, CCS Physics
Linye Chen, CCS Chemistry/Biochemistry
Mai Rajborirug, CCS Physics
Mi Yu, CCS Math
Mingru Li, CCS Physics
Nathaniel Bunner, CCS Math
Ryan Stuart, CCS Physics and CCS Math
Shulin Li, CCS Physics
Sydney Hunt, CCS Biology
Talon Stark, CCS Math
Zhouyang (Tracky) Huang, CCS Chemistry/Biochemistry

2017 Melbourne R. Carriker Student Research Award

Cristiana Antonino, CCS Biology

Undergraduate Research and Creative Activities Slam

3rd Place - Anoop Praturu, CCS Physics

Undergraduate Research and Creative Activities Grants

David Lowe, CCS Biology
Sarath Pathuri, CCS Chemistry/Biochemistry
Michael Maser, CCS Chemistry/Biochemistry
Corinne Guichard, CCS Literature
Juan Silverio, CCS Art
Jason Nomburg, CCS Biology
Rachel Bromberg, CCS Biology
Chris Sercel, CCS Physics
Dolev Bluvstein, CCS Physics
Chris Reetz, CCS Physics
April Savage, CCS Biology
Kevin Dervishi, CCS Biology
Yunkai Zhang, CCS Math
Nicki Nikkhouy, CCS Biology
Jasen Liu, CCS Biology
Steenalisa Tilcock, CCS Literature

2016 Society for Advancement of Chicanos/Hispanics and Native Americans in Science (SACNAS)

Undergraduate Student Poster Presentation Award

Catrina Wilson, CCS Chemistry/Biochemistry

2017 Stanford Summer Research Program/Amgen Scholars Program

Colin Kim, CCS Chemistry/Biochemistry

Sigma Xi Grant-in-Aid of Research (GIAR)

Sierra McLinn, CCS Biology

UCSB Adventure Programs Charles "Chuck" Schonder Excellence Award

Dustin Harris, CCS Chemistry/Biochemistry

UC Leadership Excellence Through Advanced Degrees (LEADS) Scholars

Kathryn Feerst, CCS Biology
Anoop Praturu, CCS Physics
David Lowe, CCS Biology
Rachel Liu, CCS Biology

Presentation Award at UC LEADS Symposium

David Lowe, CCS Biology

2017 Getty Multicultural Undergraduate Internship

Juan Silverio, CCS Art

2017 National Oceanic & Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Ernest F. Hollings Scholar

Brett McKim, CCS Physics

2017 UCSB MRL California Alliance for Minority Participation (CAMP) Internship

Cristian Sharma, CCS Biology
Catrina Wilson, CCS Chemistry/Biochemistry

2017 CAMP Symposium Poster Presentation Award

Catrina Wilson, CCS Chemistry/Biochemistry

NSF Research Experience for Undergraduates (REU) Awards

Phoebe Coy, CCS Math
Phillip Masterson, CCS Physics and CCS Computer Science
Niyati Rodricks, CCS Biology
Tamara Gomez, CCS Math
Richard Carini, CCS Math

NSF Partnerships for Research and Education in Materials (PREM) Award

Allison Koopman, CCS Chemistry/Biochemistry

Arnold Nordsieck Award

Qicheng Zhang, CCS Physics
Morgan Brubaker, CCS Physics

Physics Dept. Research Excellence

Riley Peterson, CCS Physics
Chris Reetz, CCS Physics
Samuel Aronson, CCS Physics

Physics Dept. Academic Excellence

Zach Johnson, CCS Physics
Brunel Odegard, CCS Physics
Christopher Sercel, CCS Physics

Physics Dept. Research Honors

Riley Peterson, CCS Physics
Samuel Aronson, CCS Physics
Michael Balcewicz, CCS Physics
Zach Johnson, CCS Physics
Chris Sercel, CCS Physics

2017 McNair Scholars

Sarah Amiri, CCS Biology
Jordan Mitchell, CCS Music Composition
Kerry Jones, CCS Chemistry/Biochemistry

Koch Scholarship Award

Thomas Masterson, CCS Chemistry/Biochemistry

Dorothy and Sherrill C. Corwin Award for Excellence in Music

2nd Place (tie)- Electronic/Electronic-Acoustic Work: Preston Towers, CCS Music Composition
3rd Place- Work for Large Ensemble: Nick Mazuk, CCS Music Composition

Roche Bioscience Undergraduate Excellence Award

Kerry Jones, CCS Chemistry/Biochemistry

Elmer Carvey Scholarship

Catrina Wilson, CCS Chemistry/Biochemistry

Raab Writing Fellowship, UCSB Writing Program

Komal Surani, CCS Writing & Literature

CCS Writing Competition- Most Excellent Awards

Narrative Prose

1st Place: Ted Tinker, CCS Math
2nd Place: Corinne Guichard, CCS Literature

Poetry

2nd Place: Corinne Guichard, CCS Literature
Honorable Mention: Abigail Brenneman, CCS Literature

Essay

1st Place: Abigail Brenneman, CCS Literature
2nd Place: Steenalisa Tilcock, CCS Literature

"Celebrating the landscape by painting it, not in a sentimental way, but in a truthful way, helps preserve it."



First Students

Travel to the early days of CCS

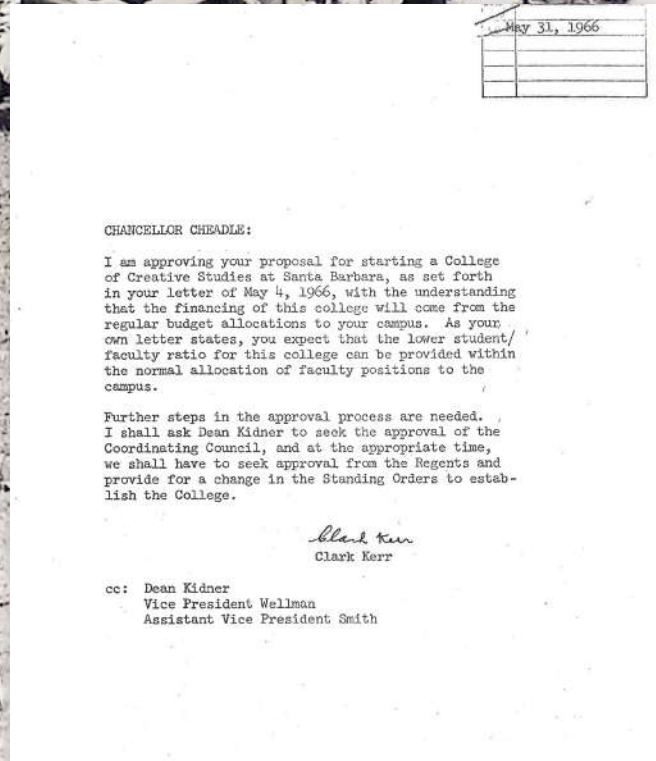
When Norman Badler (Mathematics '70) arrived at the beautiful UCSB campus in fall 1966, he, like so many first year students before and after him, was unsure about what classes he needed to take. Badler made friends in the dorms and they helped him decide on a schedule—it was the story of a typical first year college student. One of his new friends, Virginia, told him about the College of Creative Studies (CCS), a new experimental learning program set to commence on the campus the following year. Badler had been involved in experimental math programs since elementary school so he jumped at the opportunity to apply to CCS. He was admitted and a year later was part of the inaugural class of CCS.

In 1967, Marvin Mudrick, the founding provost, welcomed Badler and the original cohort of 50 CCS students to his educational experiment. The College offered a hands-on learning environment to students in seven disciplines—Art, Biology, Chemistry, Literature, Mathematics, Music Composition and Physics—all still offered, in some form, today. A few of these first students recently shared their experiences of the early days of the College and what they have been up to since graduation.

Fresh and Unconventional

Students were attracted to the College for a variety of reasons. Some wanted to experiment and challenge the status quo. John Nava (CCS Art '69) recalled the reason he chose to join the inaugural class, "It was the sixties – it was unconventional, experimental, non-institutional, 'creative,' anti-establishment." But this was not the case for all of Nava's classmates. Others joined to immerse themselves in their field of study and to receive a more personal level of instruction. Jan Cornish, a Mathematics major, simply remembered, that she "was excited to be able to concentrate in studying mathematics." David Holt (CCS Biology '71) shared this sentiment, "The College of Creative Studies gave me a chance to combine my interests in biology and art."

The original CCS building was a temporary U.S. Marine barracks building, which Ethlie Vare (Literature '71) described as a "Quonset hut." The building was left



CHANCELLOR CHEADLE:

I am approving your proposal for starting a College of Creative Studies at Santa Barbara, as set forth in your letter of May 4, 1966, with the understanding that the financing of this college will come from the regular budget allocations to your campus. As your own letter states, you expect that the lower student/faculty ratio for this college can be provided within the normal allocation of faculty positions to the campus.

Further steps in the approval process are needed. I shall ask Dean Kidner to seek the approval of the Coordinating Council, and at the appropriate time, we shall have to seek approval from the Regents and provide for a change in the Standing Orders to establish the College.

Clark Kerr
Clark Kerr

cc: Dean Kidner
Vice President Wellman
Assistant Vice President Smith

1971 CCS All College Photo taken in front of the original CCS building

University of California President Clark Kerr's memo to UC Santa Barbara Chancellor Vernon Cheadle approving the proposal for the establishment of CCS



over from when the campus was a military base during World War II. Gerald Edgar (Mathematics '70) characterized the original building as "a large, but ancient, building [...] that had] space for many things, such as a dance studio, an art studio, classrooms, and of course the College office." When the original CCS building was demolished to make way for the expansion of the UCSB Library in 1975, the College moved to the present site, a (slightly) larger and (slightly) less temporary former U.S. Marine barracks building.

Many of the classes, while small, did not fit within the confines of the building. "Classes were tiny and often held outside," remembered Vare. Students were encouraged to challenge themselves academically. "Some teachers had you attend their classes for UCSB graduate students," said Holt. "Others taught classes just for CCS students and some had individual sessions with CCS students. It was exciting and fun."

Marvin Mudrick, the founder of the College, had a profound impact on many of these students. Ross Robins (Literature '70) described how he thought of Mudrick while he was a student: "I was awestruck by him because he was such a powerful and original thinker, and so effortlessly articulate in conversation." Mudrick truly believed in students' ability to create new knowledge. He did not let traditional norms impede what he thought would help students be creative. "His greatest contribution, in my opinion, was his belief that creativity was not isolated by discipline but arose as well through exposure to a variety of creative talents," said Badler. Daniel Farkas (Mathematics '70) expressed the same feeling, "A physics student could sit next to a guitar virtuoso participating in a short course about the cultural impact of modern architecture. And that was considered normal."

Mudrick did not focus on grades in regard to the admission of a student. Instead he placed



▲ CCS Founder and first Provost Marvin Mudrick

▶ Music Composition students, early 1970's

▼ List of the original CCS students, fall 1967

ART	BIOLOGY	CHEMISTRY	LITERATURE	MUSIC	PHYSICS		
Stakley, L.	Maltman V.	Clark J.	Herman B.	Egan H.	Badler H.	Stobop P.	Cliand C.
Brown G.	Swanson E.	Sivland J.	Paulsen B.	Evig D.	Gornish J.	Chasey L.	Rappel E.
Freiburger J.		Kroth G.	Pitcher B.	Fleck J.	Edgar G.	Gubos A.	Johnston D.
Jacobs B.		Händler W.	Nilans L.	Gandy B.	Farkas D.	Kanal T.	Myers E.
Erig E.		Schell J.	Bank V.	Harris S.	Hann S.	Kanal T-W	
Hava J.		Stukaloff A.	Schorr B.	Chambers D.	Hood G.	McGraw J.	
Oguri C.			Yashinsky D.			Miller J.	
Stephens J.						Butler P.	
Tatum B.							
Wisherly L.							
			Emmody T.	Hansen D.		Butler P.	

the emphasis on being a good for the College. Farkas remembered that although he himself was accepted to all of the colleges to which he applied, Daniel's parents decided that he could not attend college because he was not offered financial aid. Then unexpectedly, as he was graduating high school, Farkas found a CCS brochure that Mudrick sent him after he was a finalist in a high school science talent search. Farkas wrote to the College's founder "asking if there were any opportunities available at that late date in Creative Studies." Without ever seeing Farkas' transcripts, Mudrick called and offered him a spot in the College, with the financial aid he needed, over the phone. Farkas remembered, "Four months later I got on a plane by myself to California without an earlier visit to campus. It was a risky gamble, but I hit the jackpot!"



▲ Badler (left) reconnecting with his advisor Max Weiss (right), a former CCS Provost, at the 2017 CCS Commencement Ceremony

Since Graduation

A self-described research mathematician, Farkas received his PhD from the University of Chicago three years after he graduated from CCS. Farkas was awarded a postdoctoral fellowship at Brandeis University, and then taught at Virginia Tech for 31 years. Said Farkas, "CCS unquestionably influenced my teaching and lecture styles." Following his stint at Virginia Tech, he, "in an unexpected turn of

events," joined the U.S. National Security Agency, where he worked for eight years.

Although Holt received his BA in Biology and stayed at UCSB for a year to earn a teaching credential, his passion was always music. "In 1968 I fell in love with the sound of the banjo and traveled to the Blue Ridge Mountains in search of traditional music," he said. "I have spent the last 45 years collecting, learning, and performing mountain music. I learned self-motivation, in part, from my CCS days." Holt is now a television host and a Grammy winning recording artist. He still performs concerts across the U.S. and hosts two PBS shows titled David Holt's State of Music and Great Scenic Railway Journeys. He resides in Asheville, North Carolina with his wife Ginny Callaway.

Vare graduated from the CCS Literature program in 1971. After working as a disc jockey on the radio and as a television and radio correspondent, she became a professional writer. "CCS impacted me most by exposing me to real live published authors, proving that it is actually something one can do for a living," Vare observed. Vare spent many years as a newspaper and magazine journalist, and now is a published author, having written 11 books as well as for a number of television shows.

After graduating from CCS with a BA in Mathematics, Badler traveled north to receive his Masters in Mathematics from the University of Toronto. While he completed his masters, he became irked by the requirements of a doctorate in mathematics. "I became increasingly frustrated [...] with the volume of mathematics knowledge that I would have to assimilate in order to get my PhD," Badler said. He had been working professionally as a computer programmer (while a CCS student) and figured a PhD in Computer Science would better fit his career goals. So that's exactly what he did, earning his Computer Science degree from University of Toronto in 1975. Later that year, he became a professor at the University of Pennsylvania, where he still teaches today. In 2018, Badler will be celebrating his 50th wedding anniversary with his wife Virginia, his friend from the dorms who told him about CCS all those many years ago.

Straight From Them

Students give insight on the CCS experience

Chloe Avery, Class of 2018

CCS Mathematics

I adore being a part of the College of Creative studies because it is an environment where everyone around you is excited about what they are doing, whether or not it is the same thing that brings you excitement. CCS really is a community and we all support each other. In mathematics in particular, the classes are designed to be challenging. But rather than being a competitive environment, people are encouraged to work together and learn from each other. Mathematics really is a collaborative subject, so having the space and support to do that is one of the amazing things about CCS and helps create this sense of community.

In CCS, I have also been gifted with these amazing professors who care deeply about my education and actually get to help me shape it by way of an advising meeting every quarter. This has allowed me the freedom to take courses at a pace where I can quench my thirst for knowledge without getting in over my head.

My ultimate goal is to get a PhD in math and CCS has been invaluable in preparing me for graduate school. Because I am in CCS, I have been able to do research for all three summers that I've been here and take a bunch of graduate math classes. One of the unique things about CCS is that it provides you with rigorous courses, but is not self-contained in that we are encouraged to use the resources of the rest of the university such as the fact that we have a great graduate school. CCS has given me the freedom to learn as much math as I wanted, a community of passionate people, and the preparation for the next step in my education.

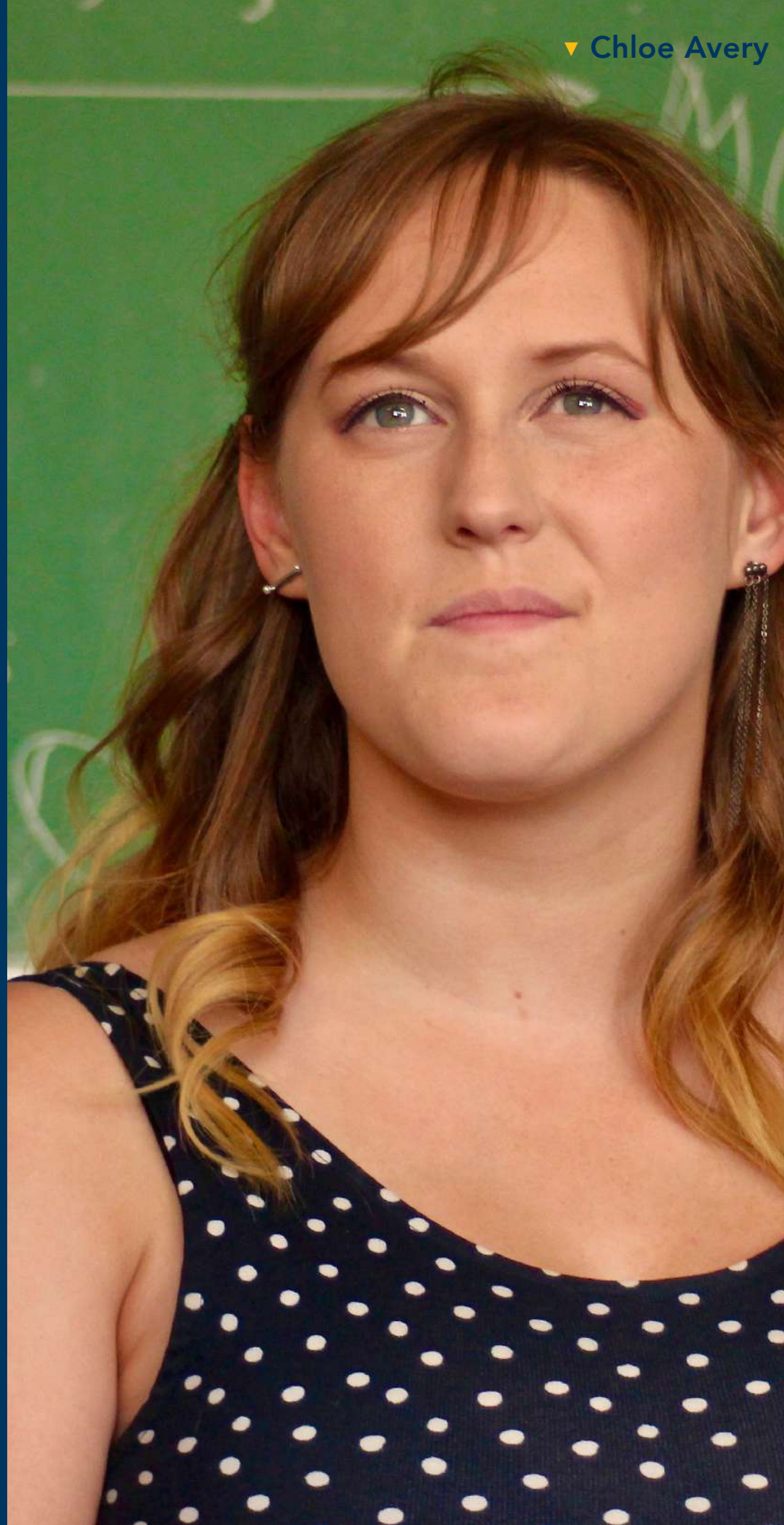
Juan Silverio, Class of 2018

CCS Art

Ever since transferring to the CCS Book Arts program, my life has definitely moved about so much more fluidly. I think one of the benefits of being in the program has been being able to navigate different spaces within the university a lot more dynamically. CCS has pretty high expectations and nurtures students to be ambitious and self-motivated, and I think I exemplify that as best as I can. Ultimately as an artist, student, and scholar CCS has opened new gateways and connections to faculty and to departments that have allowed me to be a lot more flexible and more interdisciplinary.

I think the connections with faculty and the small class sizes are some of the best things about the program. A lot of the classes I've taken through this college have been a lot more intimate and beneficial because I have someone who can keep me accountable- someone who is really persistent, who wants to check up on me and cares about me. Having advisors follow up on the work I'm doing in and out of the classroom has been really beneficial to my growth as a scholar and artist.

▼ Chloe Avery



► Juan Silverio





Unconventional Success

CCS Alumnus wins Emmy for work on Disney television show

Although he won a 2017 Daytime Emmy for his song “I’m Not Very Nice” on the Disney television show *The 7D* and toured the world as the lead singer for the band Nerf Herder, UCSB alumnus Parry Gripp (CCS Literature ’92) doesn’t think of himself as a good musician—at least in the formal sense. But this is not a fair assessment: his music and his career are anything but formal.

A native of Santa Barbara, Gripp entered UCSB after graduating from Dos Pueblos High School and felt lost during his first few quarters as an undeclared freshman. “I was really flailing and floundering,” explained Gripp. “I was just taking general education classes and had no idea what I was going to do.” He had the inkling that he would get into the sciences, but he was not passionate about any of the classes he was taking. That all changed when he took a general education English class from Bob Blaisdell. Blaisdell, a CCS Literature faculty member, noticed Gripp’s writing and invited him to apply to CCS. “He basically grabbed me and picked me up and took me to CCS and forced me to [apply],” remembered Gripp. He attributes Blaisdell’s initiative and persistence to having “really changed my life for the better.”

Once at CCS, Gripp began to thrive. He blossomed with the independence and flexibility that the College offers. He recalled fondly that there “was a freedom to do what you wanted to do,” and was encouraged to explore

opportunities that may have been frowned upon in other, more scripted majors. He went on, “I really didn’t fit in anywhere else.”

One of Gripp’s most memorable experiences at CCS was taking a writing class from Marvin Mudrick, CCS founder and first Provost, during Mudrick’s last year teaching at UCSB. “To us, he was a saint of the place and everyone was always talking about him,” said Gripp, “so it was neat that I got to take one of his last classes.” Gripp remembers Mudrick as an intense person who was passionate about CCS and had a strong personality. Gripp summed it up succinctly, “he was great.”

Champagne in Limousines

While at UCSB, Gripp began to dabble in music when he started taking CCS Music Composition classes. At the time, Blaisdell was also the Arts Editor for the Santa Barbara Independent. Knowing Gripp was interested in music, Blaisdell, who at the time needed a music writer, asked him to start covering local concerts and bands. Gripp began to many of the Santa Barbara musicians and bands through his writing gig with the Santa Barbara Independent and eventually started playing in some of the bands as well. “It was the mid-90’s and there was a really good music scene,” he said. “If you were just a guy around town, you were in a band. There were a ton of bands and everyone was in one.”

Nerf Herder began with little expectations of mainstream success. “We were just a local band at the time,” recalled Gripp, “It was just a fun thing for us to do and we never in a million years expected to be signed and tour.” But that is exactly what happened. They were signed to a major record label and were touring all over the world after one of their songs titled “Van Halen” hit the national music scene in 1996. Once the song got a lot of playtime on MTV, the rest was history. They soon were being flown around the globe, drinking expensive champagne in limousines and meeting famous people. Nerf Herder even wrote and performed the theme song for the popular television series *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*. They had made it—or at least that is what Gripp thought.

Reinvention

Jump to 2003: The band had retired and Gripp realized this part of his life was over—he wasn’t drinking champagne in limos anymore. “I was like, ‘Woah, maybe I haven’t made it.’” He felt incredibly lucky for what he had experienced—most bands never reach that level of success—but he realized he had to reinvent his career.

Surprisingly, his career reinvention was not something he did consciously. He saw himself as a serious musician and did not want to be thought of as anything else. While at CCS, Gripp played a song he wrote for one of his CCS classmates and when he finished the song his classmate said, “You should write music for kids.” In the moment,



▲ Gripp (second from the right) with his Nerf Herder band-mates

this upset Gripp, who wanted to write and perform rock songs for people like himself. “I was so angry because I thought I was cool and I wanted to write cool music for adults,” he said. He did not know it at the time, but his classmate was right.

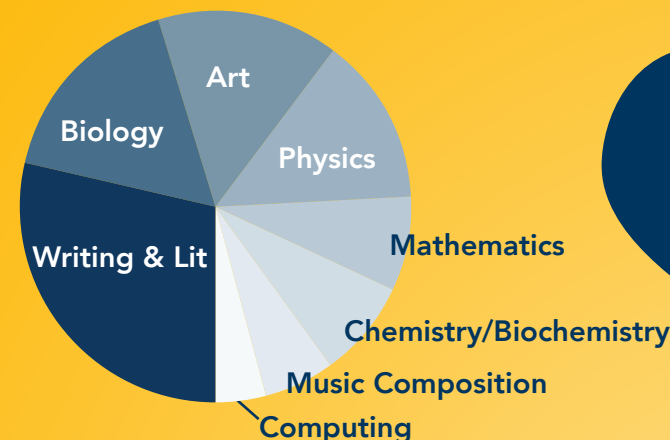
Gripp’s music after Nerf Herder began to morph; instead of rock n’ roll, he was creating jingles simply to entertain himself. Gripp thought it would be fun to put videos of these songs on Youtube. Over time the videos became very popular, accumulating millions of views. As of this writing, his songs “Nom Nom Nom Nom Nom Nom Nom” and “Baby Monkey (Going Backwards on a Pig)” have about 30 million and 25 million views, respectively. Although children weren’t his intended audience, those who found the videos could not get enough of the tunes. Slowly, people in Hollywood began recognizing the Santa Barbara originality and he began getting advertising and television gigs. His songs have been featured in Amazon Echo commercials and he has written jingles for restaurant chains. Gripp recounted an example of how he gets gigs, “A Disney executive really liked my videos. He thought they were funny, so he brought me in to see what types of ideas I had. I went to talk to the executive and he had me try out for different things and I ended up getting hired for the show *The 7D*.”

After his career transitioned in a new direction, Gripp realized that his former CCS classmate who encouraged him to write songs for kids was right all along. “It became really obvious that she was right because kids really liked the songs,” he admitted. Having the flexibility to go wherever his career took him, even if it was not his first choice, and not sticking to one type of music enabled Gripp to recreate his career. “You have to be open-minded to what works,” he stated. “I definitely have a niche, but it is not what I would have expected.”

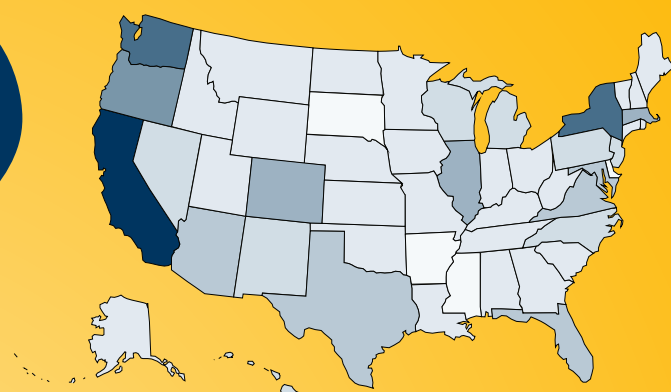
Naiveté Leads to an Emmy

Although he had worked on many television series over his career, *The 7D* was Gripp’s first time being a part of the creative process of a show. While on the show, the writers would leave gaps in the script for Gripp to fill with a song—or that is how it was supposed to work. Not knowing this process, Gripp naively wrote a variety of extra songs thinking that maybe the show runners would

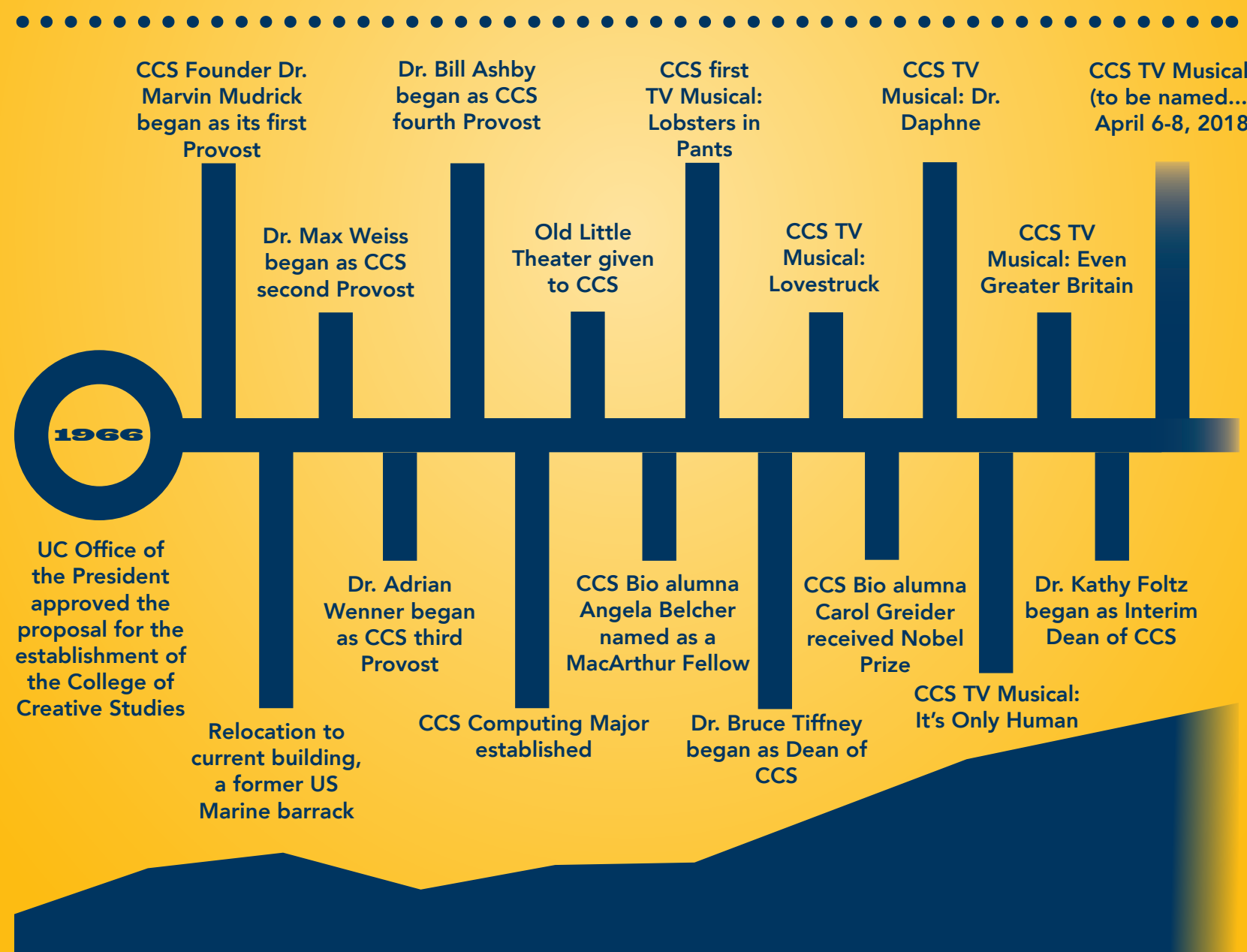
50 YEARS OF CCS



Degrees awarded by major 1969-2017



74% of CCS alumni reside in California



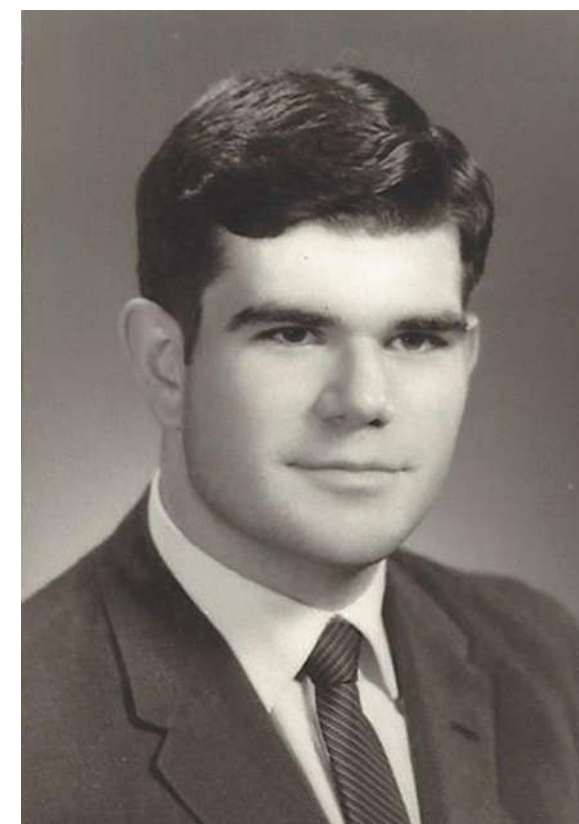
like it. Most of these songs never made it in the final cut of the show, but one song, titled "I'm Not Very Nice," made it onto the small screen. "The song almost didn't make it in and actually was squeezed into the last episode of the series," said Gripp. "I'm Not Very Nice" ended up winning the show's only Emmy. "It was great because it made the show become an Emmy award winning show," Gripp proclaimed proudly. "It was sort of a last-minute Hail Mary touchdown."

Gripp associates his continued success in the music industry to CCS. He said, "I definitely would not be doing what I am doing without CCS." To him, a successful songwriter needs to be able to write and he attributes his success as a songwriter to his writing abilities learned at CCS. As a result, he has stayed involved with the College, making a lasting impact to generations of CCS students. In the early 2000's, he told the Literature faculty he was writing a book and he was invited back to CCS give a talk. When he got behind the podium he told the audience of

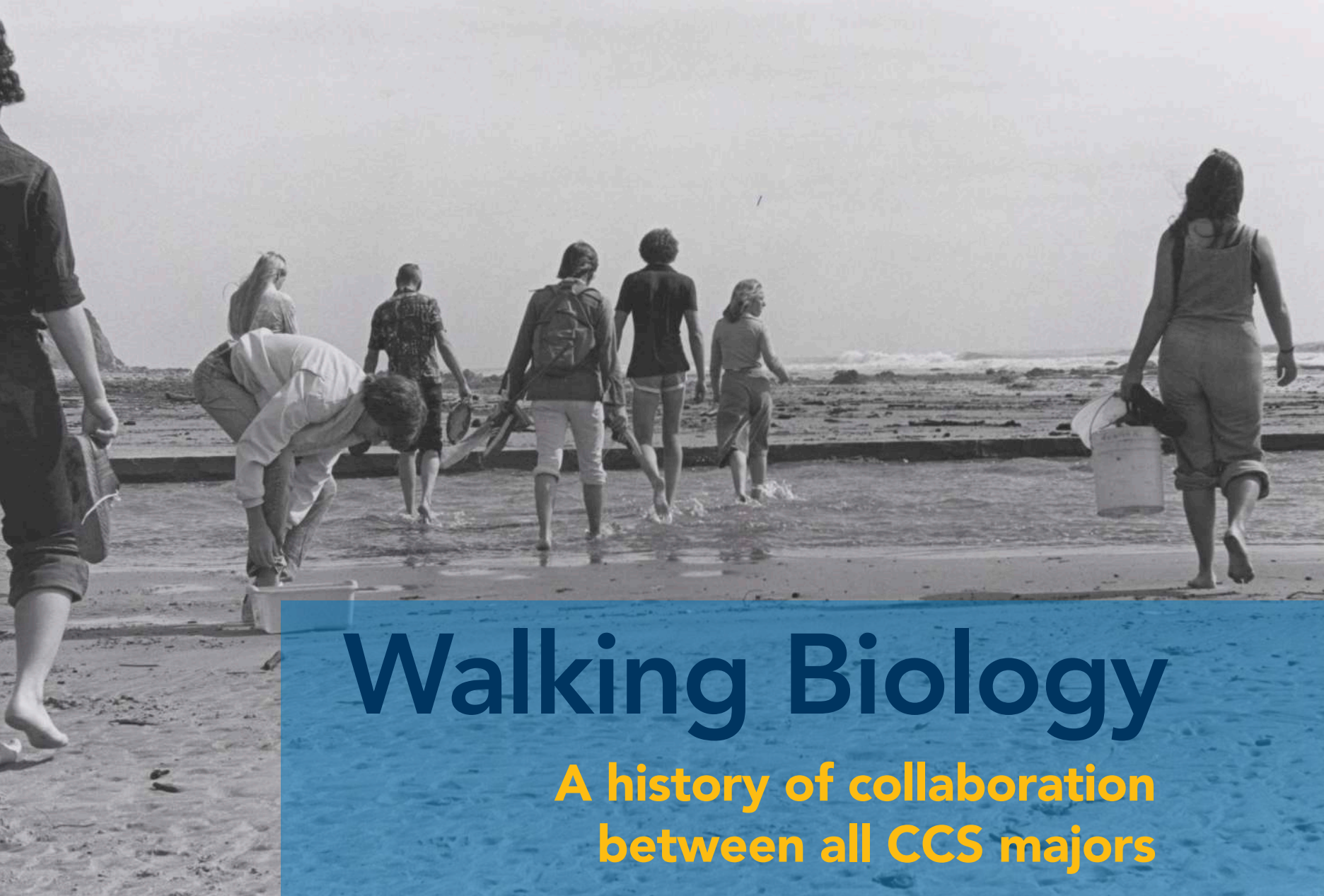
eager CCS students that even though he was a CCS Literature alumnus, he was not writing a novel and he just came to play some songs he wrote. Alex Scordelis (CCS Literature, '04), an Emmy nominated television writer, was one of the students in the audience and unprovoked brought up this event in an interview about his Emmy nomination. Scordelis recalled, "Moments like that made me think that there are different career paths you can take. Parry was definitely a hero, somebody that I looked up to, who was a CCS graduate and was doing cool things out in the world." Gripp exhibits how one does not need to follow a traditional career path to become successful and serves as a model of how unconventionality can lead to success.

Gripp returned to CCS to be a keynote speaker at the first annual Research and Creative Activities Conference this past November.

When I was an Undergrad...



"My undergraduate years were over a half-century ago, yet I still remember them vividly. I was what is now called a first-generation college student, and I was initially overwhelmed by the thought of pursuing higher education. A high school teacher tried to talk me into applying to Harvard, where she was sure my academic record and her family connections would get me in, but I couldn't imagine it. Instead, I attended a small liberal arts college in Michigan. My immediate appreciation for CCS grew out of that early experience of being part of a small academic/living community. In those days and in that place, community also meant dressing for dinner, obligatory chapel attendance, and an 11 p.m. curfew for the women (only the women!)—all of which I found less than appealing. Somehow, I screwed up enough courage to expand my horizons by flying to New York (my first flight) and sailing to France, where I spent my junior year. The Civil Rights movement was underway, and the French and international students were keenly interested in discussing it. That fall, President Kennedy was assassinated. I remember being glued to the television in the student lounge and being impressed by how well Jacqueline Kennedy spoke French. While I had a good undergraduate education, undergraduate research was an alien concept back then. In fact, I really didn't know what research was until I attended grad school. In that regard, CCS students have a leg up on undergrads of my generation." -Bill Ashby, former CCS Provost (Alma College)



Walking Biology

A history of collaboration between all CCS majors

A class where Arts and Humanities students collaborate. A class where students explore the natural environment. A class dating back to the beginning of CCS. This is **Walking Biology**.

Designed around beloved UCSB and CCS Professor Beatrice Sweeney's (1914-1989) informal chats with non-science students, this field class is an opportunity for CCS students to learn by doing. Although it has been around for nearly five decades, it has seen only three instructors —Sweeney, Christina Sandoval and Claudia Tyler (the current instructor). While the general structure of the class has remained, each faculty member evolved the content around personal and professional experiences.

Informal Chats

Walking Biology can trace its origins back to the first days of the College. Hank Pitcher (CCS Art Faculty) was an Art student keenly interested in learning about subjects outside

of his discipline. Before it was an official course, he would go to Sweeney's office to ask her a variety of ecological and biological questions. "It was really informal," remembered Pitcher. "I used to go to her office to ask her questions about this or that because it was so interesting to talk to her. Then, in order to explain something she would say, 'Well let's go walk down to the beach.'" The class evolved from this idea of students walking around campus and picking Sweeney's brain about the surroundings. Pitcher recalled: "It really started with curious Art students going and asking [Sweeney] questions."

Sweeney was passionate about Biology from as early as she could remember. However, since she did not take a formal Biology class until she was a freshman at Smith's College, she lived her "early scientific life entirely out of school," she said in her 1987 autobiography¹. This included identifying and recording flowers around her New England home and

¹ Beatrice Sweeney, "Living in the Golden Age of Biology," Annual Review of Plant Physiology (1987) 38:1, 1-10.

attempting to create a bog in her backyard. Sweeney was revolutionary for women in science. Her college botany professors, she explained, "were fine women, but they were all spinsters without private lives." She vowed to be different—to be a scientist and have a family. "After all,

From these chats with Art students, the class soon became formalized (under a less creative name—the *Walking Biology* moniker came a number of years later) and opened to students of all majors. Over the years, the class became more structured and a set curriculum was



men in science did not have to give up family life." Over her career, Sweeney published 139 scientific manuscripts and was a champion not only for women in science, but for any young person who had an interest².

Sweeney was also committed to teaching undergraduates at CCS. She took an interest in every student that came to talk to her. "She always had a smile on her face [...] it wasn't that she made you feel important, it was the excitement of what is possible. I would just go to her office and talk to her because it was so interesting," recalled Pitcher fondly. "She seemed to be interested in what I had to say, too. She was just so remarkably open and it was just fun for her to talk about it with us." The biologist enjoyed chatting with students across disciplines. "Their questions enlivened discussions and their ideas were an inspiration," Sweeney wrote of CCS students in her autobiography.

² University of California (System) Academic Senate, "1989, University of California: In Memoriam," University of California Regents (1989), 210.

developed, but to this day it continues to be designed around the CCS ethos of spontaneous chats between students and faculty.

Modern Iteration

Sweeney became emerita in 1982 continued to teach the class until she passed in 1989. The reigns were then passed to Sandoval who taught the class for about five years. She then left the College to become the full-time Reserve Director at the University of California Coal Oil Point Reserve.

Since *Walking Biology* is quintessential CCS, Tyler was recruited to CCS based on her enthusiasm for the class when Sandoval left the College. "I was initially hired to do *Walking Biology*," said Tyler. "We did not have the CCS Introductory Biology series yet, [...] so they needed somebody to teach *Walking Biology* and then a couple other classes." Once she was hired, Tyler was able to use her

training as a community ecologist to evolve the class even further.

Tyler's iteration of Walking Biology explores the UCSB campus as well as the greater Santa Barbara area. "I absolutely wanted to talk about, in general, ecological principles and evolutionary concepts," said Tyler. "I really wanted to

Many UCSB and CCS students do not take full advantage of the amazing Santa Barbara wilderness while they are on campus. One of the main goals of Walking Biology is to get the students to experience and appreciate the region's natural beauty. "The secret agenda is to give the students a chance to see places that are basically in their backyard but [of] which they might not be aware," said

Tyler. Even if the students have been to the site before, Tyler hopes "...we see things in a little different way."

Keeping up with tradition, *Walking Biology* is open to students from all majors. The class attracts non-biology students who like being outside, enjoy hiking, or just love learning about biology. "Having a variety of students is so fun because I get to know some of our students that are not studying biology," Tyler said enthusiastically. Tyler just asks that the students come each week with an open mind. "They have to be open," she explained. Counterintuitively, this is sometimes harder for biologists. "Sometimes the biology students are the ones that are a little bit tougher. It is really easy [for them] to hear something and go, 'Oh yeah, I know that, I've heard that before,' and then not listen. That is how they miss stuff."

The class, like all CCS classes, is not taken for a grade but rather for variable units, allowing Tyler to focus on concepts rather than memorization. "It gives students a little bit of room to breathe and to absorb a little bit more of the patterns." Students are required to write journal entries each week, asked to identify two new species, and encouraged to draw sketches and write haikus. Some even bring out watercolors and paint. The only other requirements are attendance and a group final at the end of the quarter. "Maybe one more requirement," Tyler joked, "is they all have to be able to identify poison oak!"

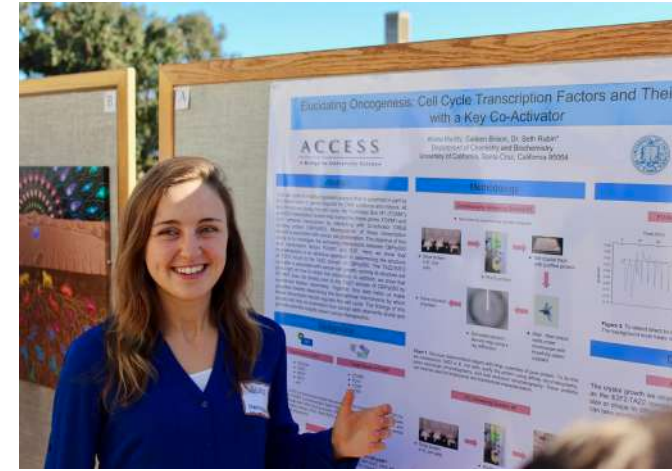


▲ Tyler (right) with students from her Walking Biology class, 2017

get students to see the diversity of habitat types that we have in this region." The class is offered once a year and, although there are some places she visits every year, Tyler's goal is to see a variety of places in our beautiful county. She always takes students down to the Carpinteria Bluffs to see the harbor seals and to Coal Oil Point; sometimes they visit Knapp's Castle, Lizard's Mouth, or Arroyo Hondo Preserve. Nature is always changing the landscape so regardless of whether it is a site her class visits every year or for the first time, Tyler checks out the locations before each trip. She explained: "It is true that even if I go back to the same site every year, it's different for me."

Expanding Knowledge

CCS holds first annual Research and Creative Activities Conference



▲ Alisha Maddy (CCS Chemistry/Biochemistry) presenting her research and an original painting at RACA-CON

The College of Creative Studies has long adhered to the belief that no research or creative activity is complete until communicated. The Research and Creative Activities Conference (RACA-CON) was founded on this idea and the conviction that collaboration between disciplines expands knowledge.

The first-annual RACA-CON, held on November 4, 2017, at the beautiful seaside Loma Pelona Center on the UC Santa Barbara campus, featured 33 student talks, 55 research posters and pieces of original work, and two alumni keynote speakers. Each of the almost 300 guests listened to talks and viewed posters from all eight CCS majors—Art, Biology, Chemistry/Biochemistry, Computing, Mathematics, Music Composition, Physics, and Writing & Literature.

Conference planning started last Spring and although most academic conferences focus on one topic, the RACA-CON organizing committee set out to establish an interdisciplinary conference to bring together and celebrate all majors. "From the beginning, we wanted to highlight talks and posters from both the sciences and the arts," said Tengiz Bibilashvili, CCS Physics faculty and member of the RACA-CON Committee. "The interdisciplinary sections were intentional and our goal always was to organize the discussions that already happen every day between students in the College."

RACA-CON opened and closed with alumni keynote talks by Alex Filippenko (CCS Physics '79) and Parry Gripp (CCS Literature '92), respectively. Both inspiring lectures demonstrated how the non-traditional CCS education can, for the right student, provide a path for success. Filippenko, a Miller Senior Fellow in the Miller Institute for Basic Research in Science at UC Berkeley (UCB), spoke about how he turned his childhood passion for science into a career as an astrophysicist. Filippenko, who has won the most prestigious teaching awards at UCB and is one of the most cited astronomers in the world, shared anecdotes about his time at CCS, including a story about how he published his first paper while a CCS student. Gripp is an Emmy-winning songwriter and recording artist. His talk followed a similar theme—how CCS helped him get to where he is today. While describing how he reinvented his career from being the lead singer of the 90's rock band Nerf Herder to winning an Emmy for a children's television show, he shared a number of videos from his YouTube channel, which has over 450,000 subscribers and 200 million views.

From a discussion on the discovery of a kilonova to readings of an unpublished novel to explaining convex binary code, each of the 33 student talks was the culmination of many hours of hard work by both the students and their faculty and research mentors. CCS Art student Bailey Clark gave a talk on her fellowship at the Penland School of Crafts,

an international center for craft education dedicated to helping people live creative lives in North Carolina. "I started by talking about where I grew up and my influences," said Clark, "then moved on to describing what Penland is and what my daily responsibilities were as an artist when I got there." RACA-CON was Clark's first time giving an academic talk, and she was elated to take part in the event. "It was an awesome experience," she recounted. "I was really excited to participate and not only share what it means to be an artist, but also hear what the other majors had to say about their fields of research." Sydney Hunt's (CCS Biology) presentation, her first at a



▲ Filippenko at RACA-CON

conference and with her family in attendance—was on the mechanism of the low-concentration citronellal detection in the fruit fly, essentially investigating how insects detect odors. She explained that RACA-CON gave her confidence and prepared her "for all the future conferences I hope to present posters and talks at in my career as a scientist."

The talks were divided into six sessions, with each section having a medley from both the sciences and humanities. Hence, the students were instructed to organize and present their talks at a level appropriate for a general audience. "I made sure to explain what all of the math and physics terms meant in my presentation," said Phoebe Coy, a CCS Math student who spoke on her research in

hydrodynamics as part of a National Science Foundation REU program at San Diego State this summer. She "focused on the big picture rather than the details, given the broad audience." Dolev Bluvstein, a CSS Physics student, furthered this sentiment and explained his approach. "I structured the talk in a way that I presented very little data," said Bluvstein. "I wanted to instill a fascination in exploration because that's something everyone can connect with, not just the physics." Although many of the students had previously presented their research, RACA-CON was, for many, their first time giving an academic talk to an audience outside of their field. "This opportunity was extremely helpful in figuring out how to collect all of my main points and condense it in a way that will inspire and interest the general public," noted Koe Inlow, a fourth-year CCS Biology student who gave a talk on characterizing the biophysical properties of granular nanoparticles embedded in mussel thread cuticle. Learning to captivate an outside audience is an important skill that most undergraduates do not get to practice. This was not lost on the students. "[Speaking to a general audience] is an important skill to develop," Inlow pointed out. "In order for any scientific research project to be successful, it must be delivered in a way that will make it seem as important to the people as it is to the scientists!"

Since the event coincided with UCSB's annual Parents Weekend, many CCS parents were in attendance to see the research and original works their students have been working on while at CCS. Although April and Brian O'Dea attended to see their son Nick, their son encouraged them to come regardless. "Nick wanted us to have a chance to learn about the projects being done by CCS students and join in the 50th anniversary celebration," said Mrs. O'Dea. RACA-CON was an opportunity for parents to chat with their student's peers and faculty advisor. Mrs. O'Dea explained, "We most enjoyed meeting Nick's CCS friends both from his major and other majors, and hearing them talk about their projects and research. We really appreciated the friendliness of the students and their willingness to share the results of their creative process and research projects."

The College intends to continue this tradition—mark your calendars!

Making Our Mark

The first-ever CCS logo and the 50th Anniversary logo, seen on the cover, was created by Jon Ritt, a former CCS student. Below is a story, written by Ritt about his journey through art.

"Mr. Mouse"

That's what I titled a drawing I made in Kindergarten of a mouse in a man's clothing. I remember it got some attention, and somehow resulted in me skipping ahead a grade. Something to do with the fact that I included finger nails on the mouse.

From then on I took extra art classes on weekends and AP Art courses starting in the 9th grade. When I was fifteen my parents hired a private tutor to help me explore various painting styles and I changed high schools for a more progressive Art Department (and a larger student body). I like people.

I then discovered a school called College of Creative Studies at UCSB. Turns out that its facilities happen to sit right next to a beautiful right hand point break. This is a great thing if you're a surfer, which I am. So I got better at art, surfing and socializing. When I arrived at Art Center College of Design, it was like coming home. Maybe it was the back lit helvetica signage? Or the Craig Elwood bridge-building? In any case, I was hooked, and spent the next three sleepless years pouring everything I had into learning design.

Throughout my career I've been called a designer, art director, creative director...I like to tell people that I help brands come to life, that I help companies express the very best of themselves, to be truly seen and heard by the people who matter most. That a magical mix of art and commerce can create stories full of distinction, intrigue and attraction. That great design can be the difference maker for a company.

50 for 50

CCS is honored to showcase 50 individuals and activities during our 50th Anniversary to share our rich history and amazing people responsible for making our unconventional College possible!



"My teaching was focused on presenting the fundamental principles of physics clearly and rigorously. Each course was accompanied by a weekly two hour long problem-solving seminar, where the students would present and defend solutions to the problems assigned for the week. At times it amazed me to see that some students who started out having difficulties caught up with the pace and level of the class over time and were able to present their solutions clearly and to answer questions that I put to them. At other times I actually learned from the students because they presented solutions which were highly innovative and elegant, solutions that I hadn't thought of. Teaching the CCS students presented me with a great opportunity to learn physics in greater depth because I would have to answer their insightful questions and to prepare classes really well."
-Francesc Roig, CCS Physics Faculty

See all of the 50 for 50 showcases:
CCS.UCSB.EDU/50

How Hard Can It Be?

CCS alumna and MacArthur "Genius" Fellow returns to CCS

Earlier this year, CCS alumna and MacArthur Fellow Angela Belcher (Biology '91) returned to CCS under The Transdisciplinary Fund for a workshop with CCS students. Belcher talked about a range of topics, including how the College impacted her PhD and career. Below is an edited version of the conversation.

How has CCS impacted your life?

I would say the best career decision I ever made was Creative Studies. It has meant so much to me in terms of how I think about science and think about the world, and my career, in general.

If you ask me what I think [is] the single most important part of my success, I'll say College of Creative Studies, and the reason is because it taught me very early on that you have the power to set your own way of thinking, that there are no boundaries between disciplines, and that you can have a really, really positive relationship with your professors and your mentors where you're treated more as a person and colleague. I give at least one talk a week at a university



or someplace, and they always introduce me and say, "She has a degree from the College of Creative Studies, and now you'll see why when she starts to speak." I've always been so proud of that, because it's always an interesting talking point. The audience goes "Wow, what's Creative Studies? How did you do it?" I always tell the story of having the ability to write my own education and figure out what I think is the most important thing for my learning and my life—that's been really important for me.

Why did you choose to come to CCS? How did you find out about the College?

I heard about this idea of being able to "design your own major" and this sounded really good to me because I don't like to follow rules. So fewer rules was an attraction. Part of it was through field research out on Santa Cruz Island where I met Adrian Wenner, the CCS Provost at the time, and he said, "Sure, you can come here." And he had me transferred to UCSB. And the rest is history. I guess he kind of saved my life by inviting me to CCS.

What was your favorite aspect of CCS?

I was a student in biology, and I was really interested in the origin of life since about middle school, how you got from [...] small molecules to cells in humans. And there's not really a major for that, and so I was excited to be in the College of Creative Studies where I could do chemistry and biology and extra physics. I was also interested in studying geology, and I was really interested in getting to understand those ideas.

And the thing that I loved the most at CCS was I took graduate-level biochemistry. I was the first undergraduate to ever take the class. They said, "You can't take this class. You don't have any of the prerequisites." The professor called the provost and he said, "Yes, she can." I sat in the front row and taped the lectures. It was so hard, having not had undergraduate thermodynamics yet. It changed—it really changed—my life, because it was in that class that I fell in love with molecules. I really fell in love with large molecules, and thought this is what I really want to do. I

want to study molecules. And what the interfaces of those molecules look like, with maybe the rocks and formations, things that led to the beginning of life. I took the advantage of working in biology, physics, chemistry, and ecology labs here and during my fifth year my advisor said, "You know, there comes a time when every mommy bird has to kick a baby bird out of the nest, and your time has come." So they made me graduate. I even said, "Well, this is the best job I've ever had." And he said, "It's not a job you know—this is school!"

Where and what did you study as a graduate student? How did your CCS education help you excel as a graduate student?

Because I'd already taken so many graduate courses in biochemistry and molecular biology—mostly molecular biology—I decided to do something really different in graduate school. I applied to the Chemistry Department here at UCSB, and I decided to do inorganic chemistry, which I knew nothing about. When I came in you had

to take a placement exam to see how much you knew, and I scored the lowest score ever to be scored on the placement exam. I knew nothing. I even had someone say, "What makes you think you can be an inorganic chemist?" And I thought, "You know, how hard can being an inorganic chemist, be? You

just have to learn it." I was really lucky, because I worked between Galen Stucky in Chemistry and Dan Morse, who's now emeritus in MCD Biology.

My PhD work is my connection to the origin of life and the love of molecules. You have probably seen the red abalone that comes right from the coast. Its shell is mostly inorganic material. It's basically made out of calcium carbonate, but it's 2% by mass organic, 2% by mass protein, yet it's 3,000 times tougher than its geologic counterpart. The organisms make these beautiful nanomaterials that are encoded by their DNA, and they make these exquisite structures. I spent my PhD trying to understand how these structures were made. But wait—what does that have to do with the origin of life?

"The best career decision I ever made was Creative Studies."

CCS WRITING COMPETITIONS

Well, it was about 500 million years ago, during the Cambrian geologic time period, the explosion of life, that organisms started making hard materials. For billions of years before that, things were soft and squishy. Photosynthesis and other complex systems evolved, but organisms couldn't make calcium carbonate—something hard. Well, the reason they started learning to make calcium carbonate is the ocean changed. There's increased calcium, iron, and silicon in the environment, and organisms adapted to it. They took proteins they already had, and they started pushing them outwards and grabbing onto these toxic ions, like iron and silicon and calcium, and they started building structures. They repurposed these proteins, to build structures. And then, from there, we had teeth, and we had bones, and glassy silica-based structures. I wanted to figure out how to use proteins to make better, smarter products, like batteries and semiconductors.



▲ Belcher (left) on stage at CCS with Colin Kim (CCS Chemistry/Biochemistry), who hosted the talk

So that was my PhD, which was an absolute blast. I went from Creative Studies to biology to chemistry, and I said, "Oh, electrical engineering, I haven't been there." I went and did my postdoc in electrical engineering. I worked with a really great professor, Evelyn Hu, who is now at Harvard.

What advice would you give to current CCS students?

You can learn what you need to learn. Go learn it. I'd built the first virus-based battery, I went in to meet with a bunch of electrochemists, and I was the only woman, and I was in

this big boardroom, and I was surrounded by these electrochemists, and they were all yelling at me, and telling me you could not use biology to build a battery. And I was like, "Well, did you see my Science paper?" The biggest challenge is changing the way people think about something. And that's what I think, when I say that Creative Studies was one of the most valuable experiences I had, it's because we do not put limitations on what we think you can do. You want to take this class? Why not try taking this class? You think this class is important? Why not try it? And you may fail, but we're not going to penalize you for doing it. I mean, to me, that trained the way that I approached my science and the world. I can try it, and it's not going to be the end of the world if it doesn't work, and I'm going to learn something interesting along the way.

I was naïve, and I didn't expect pushback. That's one thing I'd like to tell students—that you're in a really special circumstance here [in CCS at UCSB]. Everyone is supportive, and it's not always going to be the case once you leave. Or even in another department. You may get a little more pushback outside of Creative Studies, or later on. But that doesn't mean that it changes the way that you look at the world... For example, the technology we built to image cancer cells deep inside the body was based on technology we built for solar cells, and we learned some interesting things about solar cells, and said, "Well, let's apply this to cancer imaging." And, to me, it's a normal step because I'm a materials scientist, so everything's a material—everything has a material solution. Cancer cells and solar cells don't look that different to me from the materials perspective. People gave me a really hard time at first, saying "You don't work on cancer." Again, I just say, "I know, but I can learn. You know, I know I can learn it." That's CCS.

Anything else you would like to say about CCS?

The thing that I take away most from my Creative Studies time is all the research experience that I had. I didn't specialize. I got as many different experiences that I could have. And the other thing that I take away that was very, very valuable, the most empowering thing was of someone saying that I was in charge of what I thought was most important about my education. Take advantage of that, and embrace that spirit!

CCS was excited to again host our annual Writing Competition. Open to the greater campus, students from all disciplines across UCSB are encouraged to submit their work each year. This gives students from UCSB's two other colleges a chance to engage with CCS. Not only did CCS receive the greatest number of submissions from other colleges this year, but the top two prizes—the Brancart Fiction and the Richardson Poetry Awards—went to Letters and Science majors Claire Lowinger-Iverson (English '17) for Mountain Town and Maya Theresa Garabedian (Global Studies '19) for her collection called Eastern Fruits, respectively.

The Brancart Fiction and Richardson Poetry prizes are given each year thanks to endowments created through the generosity of CCS alumni Christine Lehner (CCS Literature '73) and the late Jeffery Hewitt (CCS Literature '74). Established in memory of their respective grandmothers, Reine Brancart and Henrietta Wing Richardson, this competition fosters the CCS Writing & Literature program and encourages young writers to continue their passion for writing.

Please see below for excerpts from the above-mentioned pieces. The full list of winners and their works can be found at: ccs.ucsb.edu/create/writing-competitions

Grandmother from Syria

By Maya Theresa Garabedian

Soft, young woman, the sun that browns your body and dries your apricots and your laundry, has brought you to the window sill of a stuffy home, and filled your ears with the downstairs neighbor's screams, her brown face entangled in the branches of the man she had to marry.

You sit in the sun and turn the radio louder, even when you don't feel like music.

Soft, young woman, the sun that browns your body keeps you at the window sill, the echo of each slap, each dish breaking with the force of a falling tree, the man, the shop owner opposing the tenacious roots of the woman, noisy neighbor, doesn't bother you, you've learned you only get a good beating when you're bad.

My heart holds your stories, I see your strong body, hear your rich, coarse voice, bruised pomegranate, sweet and sure like your neighbor, the sun, the music, like your children and their children, like me.

Mountain Town (excerpt)

By Claire Lowinger-Iverson

Three weeks ago I'd said goodbye to him. It was early, you could just see the sky beginning to brighten through the warped glass of the window in the bedroom.

"Are you leaving now?" I whispered, not wanting to disturb the twins.

"Jeb said there's a herd near Flathead, but we'd better leave soon if we want to get there before those Rocky Mountain bastards. Won't be more'n a couple weeks." He said softly, his voice raspy with sleep.

"It'll take you that long just to get to Flathead!" "Jeb's got a horse, it'll cut the time in half." I stared at him blankly, disbelieving. The silence stretched until finally he spoke again. "Look, I don't want to go, Liz, but I don't know how else we're going to get through the winter."

I glanced over at the twins, bundled in furs even though it was still autumn, the nights already bitter with the promise of snow. The winters came up quickly here. "Well, I don't know how I'm going to get through winter without a husband."

"I'll be back before November, or else you can marry someone else." He smiled, grabbed my hand for a moment. "Goodbye, Elizabeth."

"Be safe, all right?"

Then he piled his things on his back and left.

The Create Fund

Supporting radical curiosity and passion



CCS IS PROUD TO ANNOUNCE THE LAUNCH OF THE CREATE FUND DURING ITS 50TH ANNIVERSARY

CCS is known for its signature undergraduate experience: an experiential learning model embedded within a tier one research university.

Project-based learning and undergraduate research are considered superlative pedagogy, and CCS has been putting it into practice for 50 years! Students enjoy one-on-one faculty mentoring that leads them to investigate questions, take risks, create new possibilities, and make significant contributions as junior colleagues and creators in their areas of expertise.

CCS students create at UCSB as a core learning experience.

With support from our dedicated philanthropic investors, over 540 students have received funding since 1985 to participate in the College's Summer Undergraduate Research Fellowship Program. We seek to build on this momentum and launched The Create Fund to:

- Make available summer fellowships to students in all 8 majors (traditionally available only to STEM majors);
- Expand fellowship opportunities to include creative works and entrepreneurship-focused endeavors in addition to research; and
- Build on the College's success in which CCS scholars and creators are guided by exceptional UCSB faculty.

The combined practice of education and experience results in alumni who go on to shape society and the future.

WHY CREATE?

Because radical curiosity and passion matter.

Imagine a society of citizens who radiate radical curiosity and passion. These people demonstrate the confidence, persistence, and risk-taking necessary to advance knowledge and produce profound research and creative works. **This is the inspiration behind CCS, and The Create Fund contributes to this vision.**

Join us in supporting radical curiosity and passion.

Visit ccs.ucsb.edu/give to make a tax-deductible gift to The Create Fund. For inquiries and other giving opportunities, contact Venilde Jeronimo: venilde@ucsb.edu 805.893.5504

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