KASP cohort receives guidance and resources in addition to funds.

Theodore (Ted) Kruttschnitt ’64 and wife Alexia (center) celebrate student recipients of the Theodore Kruttschnitt ’64 Foundation Scholarship. 

Executive Director

Spring 2018

Letter from the Executive Director

“It is a disturbing fact to me,” joked President John F. Kennedy in his 1962 Charter Day speech, “that the New Frontier owes as much to Berkeley as it does to Harvard University.”

Happy Birthday, Golden Bears! 2018 is an exciting year, marking the 150th anniversary of the founding of Berkeley—the shining star of public education.

How will we celebrate at the Cal Alumni Association (CAA)? By doing what we do best: keeping you connected to fellow alumni, students, and the university. We’ll step engaged through events like our famous tailgates and hoops parties. We’ll shine a light on the most important topics of the day through CALIFORNIA Live! and continue to highlight the best of Berkeley in CALIFORNIA magazine.

We’ll offer fantastic networking opportunities through The Berkeley Network and exciting travel and lifetime learning with Cal Discoveries Travel.

From its first graduating class of a mere 12 students—including “a future governor of California, a congressman, a judge, and a state assemblyman, a clergyman, a lawyer, and a doctor,” according to Kennedy—Cal “has recognized that the purpose of education is not merely to advance the economic self-interest of its graduates.”

No group represents this sentiment better than CAA members, hundreds of whom support our volunteer and advocacy programs that provide important opportunities to be a part of the Cal community and give back to this extraordinary university. Whether working to ensure thousands of deserving students receive scholarships, connecting with lawmakers to advocate for Berkeley, or writing a check to support vital programs and services, you make a difference.

You envision the future, and the future is golden.

I agree with President Kennedy. We are in pursuit of more than economic success. We are about building community, ensuring each new generation has an opportunity to thrive, and keeping the light shining. We continue to carry the torch and pass it on to the next wave of graduates, now numbering in the thousands, who will, like you, most assuredly change the world.

So, let’s celebrate! Find out more about how you can join the party. Check out our website at alumni.berkeley.edu.
Betty Yee ’79 made her first political act at age 13 a plea before city officials not to close the local school. The move would force her to bus to school, away from her responsibilities to her family business. Her act “was about giving a voice to people who didn’t speak English,” Betty says. “That’s what politics is. We make sure all voices are heard.” Now running for her second term as California State Controller, she continues her quest for equality and access for all Californians.

Although she grew up in a diverse San Francisco neighborhood, Betty says Cal opened her eyes to a bigger world. “I learned how to live life,” she recalls. “Meeting people from all over the world and having so many perspectives in one place was exciting. My life role is to see how to preserve this treasure.” Betty is one of six children, but her sister and several of her siblings are also Cal graduates and hold her role models. “Cal was the best decision I ever made,” she says. “My siblings would say the same.”

Betty’s commitment to Cal led her to serve on the CAA Board of Directors, which was an opportunity she calls a thrill of a lifetime. “When you are passionate about something, you make it happen. I am passionate about public education.” During her tenure, she worked with fellow directors and CAA staff to establish The Equity Scholarship, which provided an incentive for high-caliber African American, Chicano/Latino, and Native American students to choose UC Berkeley as their undergraduate institution. The scholarship has since been renamed The Kruttschnitt Aspiration Scholarship Program (KASP) and supports low income, underrepresented ethnic minority students who have been admitted to Cal as incoming freshmen or junior college transfers.

Calling public education “a great equalizer,” Betty encourages aspiring Cal students to “follow your dream, regardless of status or background.” She urges students to learn entrepreneurship. “Think about what the resources are that need to be pulled together to serve your needs, and what of these can be turned into an entrepreneurial opportunity. Your challenges and personal experiences are the most important ingredient to overcoming those challenges.”

Not one to distinguish between ‘Dreamers’ and other immigrants, Betty continues, “I am very proud of higher education for standing with Dreamers. Cal is doing this very well. My hat is off to Dreamers. They are the next generation of innovators, scientists, finders of solutions to diseases, and will do it smartly and differently.”

Betty believes success requires a feeling of belonging, a strong sense of community. “There is no replacement for the human connection,” she says. “That’s what CAA is for me. The Cal connection. It’s always about the connection.”

CAA and the Goldman School of Public Policy invited (from left) Robert Birgeneau, Chancellor Emeritus, UC Berkeley; Carol Liu ’83, C’88 ’92, former California state senator; Kim Baldonado ’87, news reporter; and the Goldman School of Public Policy invited (from left) Tilly Chang ’92, Executive Director, San Francisco County Transportation Authority; Betty Yee ’79, Controller, State of California; Erin Gore, Executive Vice President, Wells Fargo; Hewlett; and Sandra Bass M.A. ’91, Ph.D. ’90 Director, UC Berkeley Public Service Center spoke at an Alumnae Career Advancement event on government and public service.

Berkeley Mayor Jesse Arreguin ’07 (center), a former Leadership Award recipient, joins Alumni Scholars and CAA staff at the 33rd Leadership Award Recognition Luncheon.

Since 1934, The Leadership Award has recognized and supported Cal student leaders with notable headships. Leadership award scholars are acknowledged for their outstanding, innovative, and inspirational headships in their academic, work, and community environments. For more information, visit alumni.berkeley.edu/leadership.

Deegan Thomas ’19 (far left) met his circle of supporters (from left) Nodelyn ’83 and Doug ’82 Smith, Clowey ’76, J.D. ’79 and Everett Hewlett; Keith ’84, ’66 and Holly Azal; and Kimberly and Daniel ’70 Johnson at a Kruttschnitt Aspiration Scholarship Program reception.

Gary S. May M.S. ’88, Ph.D. ’91 (center), chancellor of UC Davis, met with Cal engineering students at a Diversity in Engineering event to encourage and support a focus on engineering as a profession and celebrate the contributions of minorities to the field.

Taking notes of her earliest phrase to her mother: “Nea do it!” she protested. Now a recipient of CAA’s Leadership Award, Linnea continues to drive her own success. Prior to entering Cal as a transfer student and major in environmental biology major, she studied veterinary science at Pierce College and served as an officer of the Pierce College Pre-Veterinary Club.

Linnea acknowledges Cal has had its challenges. “The time before my first midterms was hard,” she says. “But transfer students are smart. We’ve received plenty of attention from our previous professors and counselors and have learned study techniques.” Today she has more confidence in her abilities. “I can do this,” she says. “That’s easy to say now, but before it was ‘Oh, my God, what have I done? I miss my mom and my dog.’ My parents visited a lot in my first semester and helped me get through it.”

“Getting through it” has meant developing ways to decompress from academic rigor. Linnea’s friends link each other up and provide support, especially her roommates. “I got very lucky with my roommates.” Hiking the Clark Kerr trail, practicing meditation, and attending yoga and kickboxing classes at Cal Rec Sports also help her relax, as do the classical music jam sessions she enjoys with friends. “Little moments of community, connectedness, and friendship are important.”

Linnea now serves as a campus campaign coordinator for the California Public Interest Research Group and addresses hunger and homelessness among Cal students, work inspired by her food justice service projects at her church. “Food insecurity is a huge problem for Cal students due to high rent and tuition,” she notes. She helps the UC Berkeley Food Pantry with financing and visibility and has produced a resource file for students.

When asked about her best Cal experience, Linnea calls herself “a very sentimental person.” “My first class in the Valley Life Sciences Building, I walked up the stairs of this gorgeous and intimidating building, passing a big glass case filled with old microscope. It was crazy being reminded of the great scientific achievements at Berkeley! I felt like an excited little kid. Now I’m doing research, with my own desk in this incredible building where I first felt the thrill and awe at the privilege of being here, studying the things I love with all of these smart, world changing people.”