THE TIE THAT BINDS

REPORT ON PHILANTHROPY 2014-2015
BLEST BE THE TIE THAT BINDS OUR HEARTS IN CHRISTIAN LOVE; THE FELLOWSHIP OF KINDRED MINDS IS LIKE TO THAT ABOVE.

“Blest Be the Tie That Binds”
John Fawcett
United Methodist Hymnal, No. 557
THE TIE THAT BINDS

CLAREMONT SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY
DEAR FRIENDS,

One of the great old hymns that can be found when thumbing through the United Methodist Hymnal is “Blest Be the Tie that Binds.” The “tie” celebrated in the hymn is anything that draws human beings together in the knowledge and love of Christ. That “fellowship of kindred minds” is then likened to heaven itself.

A finer stanza could not be written to describe the mission of a Christian seminary – an institution dedicated to nurturing hearts and minds that have been called into the service of God’s radical and redeeming love.

I am tremendously privileged to lead an institution so truly blessed in its purpose. If we take the hymn at its word, then our entire CST community of students, faculty, staff and alumni/ae has experienced heaven here on earth.

Unfortunately, not everything about the life of our School could be described as heavenly. We continue to struggle with significant financial challenges that threaten our long-term viability – a struggle that we share with our sister schools. And we face the challenge of an aging campus that has fallen out of step with the standards of 21st century higher education.

Thankfully, there is plenty of good news to share. In the pages of this report, you will learn about the ways that Claremont School of Theology has served as a Tie That Binds over the last year. And you will learn about our new Strategic Plan that has set a vision for how CST can move beyond our present challenges towards a more sustainable future.

I am especially proud to report that our fellowship of kindred minds has grown substantially, thanks to another strong class of 114 students who began their studies at CST in 2014. I am equally proud of the ways that CST is expanding its fellowship by deepening its ecumenical and interreligious commitments with kindred institutions around the world.

Wherever or however this report finds its way to you, know that you are bound to Claremont School of Theology in its mission to Create a Difference for the World We Live In. Thank you for being a part of our fellowship and supporting our efforts to train servants to bring about God’s kingdom on earth as it is in heaven.

Blessings,

KAH-JIN JEFFREY KUAN
PRESIDENT, CLAREMONT SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY
At its May 2015 meeting, the Board of Trustees approved a Strategic Plan designed to focus the School’s energies and resources over the next five years. In July, DCG Real Estate was contracted to study the current state of CST’s campus and infrastructure. The consulting firm is expected to deliver recommendations for the most efficient and sustainable use of CST’s physical plant by the end of December.

Both board actions were taken on the advice and consent of committees established by President Jeffrey Kuan shortly after his tenure began in July 2013 – the Strategic Planning Task Force and the Campus Master Plan Task Force.

“This is a precarious time for theological education,” President Kuan says. “Many graduate schools of theology in North America, both freestanding seminaries and embedded divinity schools, are struggling to determine just whether they will have a future. It was important to me that CST immediately address the fundamental issues that will most affect its ability to sustain itself as an institution – identifying a strategic vision that connects the School to the vital needs of our church and our world; and how to best use our 16 acre campus, our buildings and the technology we need to educate current and future generations of students.”

The two committees worked simultaneously, with the Strategic Planning Task Force chaired by Rev. Patricia Farris (who chairs the Board of Trustees) and Trustee Rev. Mark Bollwinkel chairing the Campus Master Plan Task Force. Both committees were comprised of faculty, students, staff and alumni/ae – a number of whom served on both committees to facilitate cross-communication.

“I am encouraged by the progress that has been made thus far,” says President Kuan. “By closely examining the state of our School, we have a clearer understanding of the core strengths that we can leverage to build a strong future; and a deeper appreciation for the rich legacy we intend to carry forward.”

The Strategic Plan identifies “Creating a Difference for the World We Live In” as CST’s primary institutional purpose.

“We came to believe that CST’s culture of creativity and innovation in the field of theological study is a priceless asset,” says committee chair Patricia Farris. “The goals we set in this Strategic Plan are designed to ensure that our core historical strengths remain connected to the practical needs of 21st century religious communities in our region, in our country and around the world.”

To read the Strategic Plan visit cst.edu/strategic-plan
Three primary goals are identified within the Strategic Plan: Promote Transformative Education; Engage Local and Global Communities; Achieve Long-Term Institutional Sustainability. Specific suggestions are offered for how CST can pursue these goals over the next 3-5 years.

Crucial to achieving all of these goals is the effective stewardship of CST’s physical campus and infrastructure. To guide the next phase of the Campus Master Planning, the Task Force is now chaired by Trustee Ali Sahabi and includes staff, faculty, students and board trustees. The Committee meets monthly and is responsible for seeing the process through to completion in December, culminating in the final plan. The Committee will produce project updates on a monthly basis that will be posted on the CST website.

At the recommendation of the Campus Master Plan Task Force, CST has contracted DCG Real Estate – a consulting firm specializing in advising schools, churches and other non-profit institutions on how to put real estate and infrastructure to best use.

Steffani Kizziar, President of Faith-Based Services for DCG, will be present on campus throughout the Fall 2015 semester to meet with staff, faculty, students, alumni/ae, and representatives from CST’s affiliates and Claremont city officials.

Beginning in September, open discussions will be held to ensure the final plan represents the voices and values of the CST community. Students, staff and faculty will be invited and encouraged to join in these important discussions.

President Kuan recognizes the significance of the investment that this intense planning process represents.

“I am profoundly grateful to our two task forces that invested so much time and energy to set our School on a right path towards a sustainable future,” he said. “I am especially grateful to students, faculty, alumni/ae and staff who participated in town halls and other opportunities to offer input and feedback along the way. It will take all of us working together to see that CST can Create a Difference for the World We Live In for generations to come. I look forward to the hard work that lies ahead.”
A DREAM REALIZED:
THE FIRST GRADUATES OF THE M.DIV. IN INTERFAITH CHAPLAINCY

It sounds like the beginning of a joke. “A Muslim, a Jew, and a Catholic walk into a classroom…”

Or, here at Claremont School of Theology, it sounds like the beginning of a dream—an Interfaith Chaplaincy program. This spring, our first graduating class of Interfaith Chaplaincy M.Div. students received their diplomas at Commencement. They were indeed, all joking aside, a Muslim, a Jew, and a Catholic. Here are their stories.
Mir Ali: Muslim

A military man. A Muslim. And now, a chaplain. Mir Ali had always been fascinated with learning about other faiths. While serving in the United States Air Force, he decided to become a military chaplain. When searching for M.Div. programs, he was attracted to CST’s Interfaith Chaplaincy M.Div.

In the Interfaith Chaplaincy program, Mir says, “I became a better listener, a better chaplain, and most importantly an ambassador of interfaith work comprehensively.” He balanced academics with real-world experience, completing his first unit of Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE), a requirement of the Interfaith Chaplaincy program, while he was also working in the military on active duty status.

The interfaith (as well as intra-faith) aspect of the program was important for Mir’s growth. He became a better spiritual caregiver—“one who would be a minister to some but a chaplain to all”—by learning how to teach about “respect for human dignity regardless of our religious differences.”

Now a graduate, Mir is serving as a military chaplain in the United States Air Force Reserves as well as doing a hospital chaplain residency. He plans to serve as a chaplain in the United States Armed Forces.

The Interfaith Chaplaincy M.Div., he says, is unique, “because it’s designed for not only chaplains, ministers, and pastors—but also for people who are interested in making social, national, and global changes.”

Abigail Barash: Jewish

Abbie Barash has had a long interest in interfaith activism. Even before she came to Claremont School of Theology, she studied religion and did interfaith work. She didn’t discover chaplaincy, however, until she came to Claremont.

Originally an M.A. student, Abbie found herself drawn to the Interfaith Chaplaincy program. “I liked that it was hands-on and practical,” she says. Her spiritual care professors, she explains, “helped me with being empathetic and self-reflective.” Meanwhile, CPE was educational and affirmed her calling to chaplaincy. “Journeying with people while they’re in those situations. Not covering up those emotions. Exploring
what it means to be alive and mortal—that’s what happens in those conversations,” she explains.

Abbie’s time at CST was also formative for her Jewish faith, allowing her to ask questions and engage with others of different faiths. Such questioning, Abbie says, allowed her to embrace her own Judaism—“a religion that’s about questioning and quarrelling and doubt.”

At CST, Abbie realized that “having room to question allows you to learn about your own self and your tradition.” She also learned that chaplaincy is something that transcends religious barriers. “All people suffer,” Abbie says. “We all experience similar suffering. And we can have human-to-human connection, regardless of doctrine or belief.”

Freshly graduated from CST, Abbie is continuing down the path of chaplaincy, completing a year-long hospital chaplain residency. She hopes to become a board-certified chaplain and to explore different chaplaincy contexts. Down the road, she’s interested in combining her passion for spiritual care with other passions—such as those for the outdoors and for yoga—to engage in chaplaincy in non-traditional realms.

When asked what her advice might be for others, Abbie says, “You won’t find anything else like this out there. The program speaks to so many different types of people, different paths, different traditions. It offers something different from a traditional M.Div. It’s beyond spiritual care or comparative religions; it’s all those and more.”

Jacqueline Trinkaus: Catholic

Jacqueline Trinkaus was raised, as she puts it, as “a cradle Catholic.” Before coming to Claremont School of Theology, she had worked as a physical therapist. However, she found herself craving something deeper. She started to consider chaplaincy, but she knew that she wanted a stronger interfaith understanding first.

That need for interfaith knowledge is what brought Jacqueline to CST’s Interfaith Chaplaincy M.Div., where she was immersed in different religious traditions and in interreligious community. “There was interaction, respect, and love between the students, in all our diversity,” she says. “It felt like one big family, where we supported and encouraged each other.”

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She learned a great deal about interfaith work from the program, saying, “It taught me that we don’t all have to come to agreement—that it’s okay to celebrate differences instead of downplaying or whitewashing them. I learned to find the beauty in each tradition, and to realize that even within traditions, there are different practices, beliefs, and theologies.”

Indeed, Jacqueline also deepened her own faith within her own tradition. “Seminary was like boot camp,” she laughs. “It almost strips you of your identity and beliefs, so that you can take them down and build them back up again.” Before coming to CST, she had never spent much time questioning her faith or understanding it intellectually. Yet as a student, she found herself doubting. Now, though, she says, “My faith is stronger. It had to be broken down in order to understand why and what I believe. I found joy again in my faith, and I have a deeper, richer spirituality than I started with.”

Now that she has graduated, Jacqueline wants to pursue hospice chaplaincy. Being a chaplain is an empowering role for her, she explains. “Since I’m a woman and Catholic, I can’t be ordained, but with chaplaincy, I can go out and minister. Chaplaincy is how I want to live my faith.”
Duane Bidwell and Monica Coleman Participate in Event on Multireligious Identity

In April 2015, CST Professors Duane Bidwell and Monica Coleman participated in “Exploring Religious Hybridity and Embracing Hospitality,” a four-day consultation at the United Church of Christ’s national offices, hosted in conjunction with the World Council of Churches. They were part of a group of thirty theologians and clergy from the United States and Canada there to participate in a discussion about multiple religious belonging.

Professors Bidwell and Coleman both spoke at the event, exploring the challenges and risks of living as a person with multiple religious belonging or identities—and how churches can respond to these realities. “Multiple religious belonging involves switching between languages, rituals, mores, expectations, and more,” Professor Coleman explained. Professor Bidwell said, “Engaging religiously multiple people is an act of care—for them, ourselves, and our communities.” Both of them emphasized how important it is for religious communities to accept and welcome people with hyphenated religious belonging.

CST Hosts Faculty Panel Exploring Feminist Theologies

On September 17, 2015, Claremont School of Theology hosted a panel conversation in Los Angeles entitled “Feminist Theology, Four Perspectives,” featuring Professors Rosemary Radford Ruether, Grace Kao, Najeeba Syeed, and Monica Coleman. The event was held in partnership with La Plaza United Methodist Church and the United Methodist Museum of Social Justice.

In the panel, which was moderated by CST alumna, and self-identified mujerista theologian, Thea Mateu Zayas (CST ’14), the four professors spoke about their particular perspectives on Feminist Theology.
Professor Rosemary Radford Ruether explained Ecofeminism, saying, “Ecofeminism is an ethic that transforms relationships between humans and in relation to nature. It calls for us to transform our relationship with God and with nature.”

Professor Grace Kao emphasized that the best current Feminism intersects with issues like race, class, and religion, stressing the importance of collaboration and support among feminist theologians. Professor Monica Coleman discussed the ways that she had been formed through Womanism and black women writers, leading to her current scholarship on “third wave womanism.” Professor Najeeba Syeed began with a spoken word original poem, then explored the interreligious and transnational aspects of Feminist Theology. The presentations were followed by a rich dialogue in the Q&A time.

Jackson Uses Sabbatical to Explore Global Methodism

E. Stanley Jones
Associate Professor
of Evangelism,
Mission and Global
Methodism, Jack
Jackson spent the
2014-15 academic year
on sabbatical following
his first three years of service as a CST faculty
member. This sabbatical period afforded Jackson the
time and space to refocus his research in the area of
Global Methodism as well as brush up on his Spanish
language skills. He began a new book project with
the working title, Offering Christ: Proclamation in John
Wesley’s Evangelistic Vision. Jackson hopes to submit a
manuscript to Kingswood Books, the academic arm of

In addition to the specific book project, Jackson began
a longer-term research project on evangelism in the
United Methodist Church from a global perspective.
That interest led to conversations with United
Methodist leaders in Paris, Zurich, Madrid
and Reutlingen, Germany.

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“Over the past decade I’ve come to realize that evangelism is much more varied, both in practice and in theological motivations, in the global United Methodist community than it is in the United States,” Jackson says. “Over the next five to ten years I hope to explore in much more depth global Wesleyan practices of evangelism and their theological foundations.”

Frank Rogers Releases Book on Practicing Compassion

In December 2014, Frank Rogers, Muriel Bernice Roberts Professor of Spiritual Formation and Narrative Pedagogy, released his newest book entitled *Practicing Compassion*. The book highlights practices and disciplines that can help to “restore the heartbeat of our own humanity.” These practices reflect Rogers’ recent research through the Center for Radical Compassion at Claremont School of Theology.

*Practicing Compassion* was featured in January by the website Patheos as part of its Book Club. Over the course of several weeks, Patheos staff writers responded to the ideas laid out in *Practicing Compassion*. They also conducted video interviews with Rogers and held a live web chat on the topic “Practicing Compassion in a Violent World.” That video chat placed Rogers in conversation with Leah Weiss, an instructor on mindfulness at the Stanford Graduate School of Business, and author and public theologian Brian McLaren, who recently completed a term on the CST Board of Trustees.

“This is not just a book to read,” says fellow faculty member Philip Clayton, “it’s a quest to undertake – slowly, page by page. Above all, the pilgrimage will teach you how to rekindle compassion for the Divine, for yourself, and for others.”

Faculty Retirements: Kathleen Greider and Dennis MacDonald

Following the end of the 2014-15 academic year, CST marked the retirement of two long-time faculty members – Professor Kathleen J. Greider and Professor Dennis R. MacDonald.
Dr. Kathleen J. Greider has been Edna and Lowell Professor of Practical Theology, Spiritual Care, and Counseling at CST for 24 years. Her teaching, research, and writing has focused on the areas of spiritual care, relationality, practical and pastoral theology, interculturality, the interplay of social and personal change, and depth psychology. She is the author of *Reckoning with Aggression: Theology, Violence, and Vitality* (1997) and *Much Madness Is Divinest Sense: Spiritual Wisdom in Memoirs of Soul Suffering* (2007). Her most recent research and teaching addresses issues of religious pluralism in spiritual care.

For 19 years, Dr. Dennis MacDonald has held the John Wesley Professorship of New Testament and Christian Origins. His areas of teaching and research include the relationship of the theorized ancient saying source “Q” to the Gospel of Mark, the books of Luke and Acts, Christian apocryphal writings, and the role of literary imitation in the composition of ancient religious narratives. He has been particularly interested in the intersections of Homer with canonical and extra-canonical literature. His most recent book *Mythologizing Jesus: From Jewish Teacher to Epic Hero* shows how the stories told in the Gospels parallel many in Greek and Roman epics with the aim of compelling their readers into life-changing decisions to follow Jesus.

Both professors’ retirements are effective as of the fall but will continue as Research Professors.

“We are grateful for the significant contributions that these two professors have made to the life and scholarship of our School, says Dean of the Faculty Sheryl Kujawa-Holbrook.” “In their respective areas of study, they have brought newfound humanity to texts and modes of caring that tend to be treated as static and monolithic. We wish them well in this next chapter in their lives and remain grateful that students will continue to benefit from their presence on campus.”
CAMPUS HIGHLIGHTS

CST Takes Part in President’s Interfaith Challenge

In September 2014, Claremont School of Theology participated in the President’s Interfaith Community Campus Challenge National Gathering in Washington, D.C., an annual event put on by the U.S. Department of Education Center for Faith-based and Neighborhood Partnerships, the White House, and the Corporation for National and Community Service. Over two days, students, staff, faculty, and community members of various colleges, universities, and other educational institutions were able to share best practices in interfaith community service and social engagement.

Recognized for its commitment to interreligious education, CST was invited to present a panel discussion on the first day of the gathering. The panel was comprised of Najeeba Syeed, Assistant Professor of Interreligious Education; Kendra Fredrickson-Laouini, a second year Ph.D. student in Interreligious Studies; and Abigail Barash, an M.Div. student in Interreligious Chaplaincy. They shared their thoughts on the promise and challenges of interreligious community-building. Lea Appleton, Associate Dean of Student and Community Life, served as moderator.

Professor Syeed, who was also featured in one of the gathering’s plenary sessions, said of participating in this national conversation on higher education and interfaith engagement that “CST was recognized for our commitment to interfaith education. We are on the very cutting edge of making this experiment work in actual programs. It was a step in the right direction to have administrators, faculty and students tell our stories as a team. The full picture of our work was shared with a nuanced approach that could be replicated at campuses around the country.”

New Agreement Reached with Bloy House

Claremont School of Theology and Bloy House, The Episcopal Theological School at Claremont, reached a partnership agreement in November 2014 which will allow Bloy House students to receive accredited
Master of Divinity degrees through Claremont School of Theology. Participating students would enroll at CST for one third of their theological coursework, which would include a local field education placement. The agreement also extends cross-registration privileges to CST students interested in pursuing Episcopal or Anglican studies. According to Bloy House Dean The Rev. Dr. Sylvia Sweeney, CST’s ongoing commitment to ecumenical and interreligious education is one of the primary benefits current and future students will experience through the agreement.

The agreement renews an institutional partnership that dates back to 1969. At that time, Bloy House was located on the campus of the Church of the Angels in Pasadena. “Our long-standing relationship with Bloy House reflects a commitment to ecumenical engagement that has been a cornerstone of CST’s mission from the drafting of its original charter,” states CST President Kah-Jin Jeffrey Kuan. “I look forward to seeing how this relationship will continue to grow and develop in the years to come.”

In March 2015, CST hosted an exhibition by world-renowned visual artist Dr. He Qi, CST’s first Artist-in-Residence. The exhibition, which opened on Palm Sunday, focused on the Christian liturgical season of Lent, followed by Palm Sunday, and Easter.

Dr. He Qi was a professor at the Nanjing Union Theological Seminary and a tutor for graduate students in the Philosophy Department of Nanjing University. He was also a member of the China Art Association and a former council member of the Asian Christian Art Association. He studied at Nanjing Normal University, Continued next page
CAMPUS HIGHLIGHTS (CONTINUED)

Nanjing Art Institute, and Hamburg Art Institute in Germany, where he received his doctorate in art history and religious art.

He is the recipient of the 20th Century Award for Achievement in recognition of outstanding work in the fields of religious art theory and Christian Art Creation by the International Biographical Centre in Cambridge, UK. His artworks have been exhibited internationally and featured by the BBC, Washington Post, and National Geographic. Before coming to CST, he was visiting professor and Artist-in-Residence in Yale Divinity School and Princeton Theological Seminary, among other institutions. His paintings creatively blend Chinese folk customs and traditional Chinese painting techniques with contemporary Western art, as well as the art of the Middle Ages.

Rev. Adam Hamilton Visits Campus

In March 2015, Adam Hamilton, noted pastor and author, delivered the Wallace Chappell Lectures at Claremont School of Theology. These lectures offered CST the opportunity to host one of the most dynamic voices within the United Methodist Church today. Adam Hamilton is the founding pastor of the United Methodist Church of the Resurrection in Leawood, Kansas. Since its founding in 1990, The Church of the Resurrection has grown to become the largest United Methodist Church in the United States with an average weekend attendance of 8,600 people.

That growth has coincided with a three-fold congregational focus under Hamilton’s leadership: Connecting with thinking people and inviting them to become followers of Jesus Christ, engaging in acts of justice and mercy in the community, and working to renew the United Methodist Church. In addition to his congregational ministry, Hamilton is an accomplished author with 21 books currently in publication. The list of titles includes When Christians Get it Wrong, Seeing Gray in a World of Black and White, The Way: Walking in the Footsteps of Jesus, Making Sense of the Bible, and Revival. Hamilton’s appearance at CST was made possible by The Foundation for Evangelism.

Watch Rev. Adam Hamilton deliver the Wallace Chappell Lectures.
Korean Methodist Bishop Pays Visit to Alma Mater

In December 2014, Bishop Yong-Jai Jun, President of the Council of Bishops for the Korean Methodist Church (KMC), spent a day on the CST campus. This special visit was a homecoming for Bishop Jun, who is a CST alumnus and graduated with his DMin. in 1984. His visit included spending time with current KMC students as well as one of his favorite faculty members, Dr. John Cobb. The day concluded with a festive reception in the Cooper Board Room celebrating CST’s continued close relationship with the KMC in the midst of the holiday season.

United Methodist Asian-American Women Conference

In October 2014, CST hosted the biennial conference of the Asian American and Pacific Islander United Methodist Clergywomen Association, entitled, “Called, Anointed, Empowered: Leading the Church and the World.” Many CST alumni/ae spoke at the conference, including Alena Uhamaka, Nicole Reilley, James J. Kang, and Monalisa Siofele-Lolohea. CST’s President Kuan was also a plenary speaker at the conference, which covered topics including immigration and human trafficking, as well as transformational leadership, generation gaps, and social media in ministry.

Watch Rev. Adam Hamilton deliver the Wallace Chappell Lectures.
I have the privilege of meeting CST Alumni/ae throughout the country and across generations. This year we held alumni/ae events in Los Angeles, San Diego, Portland, Phoenix and Claremont. We were present at the AME conference in Los Angeles, five of the UMC Western Jurisdictional conferences, the Southern California Nevada Conference of the UCC, the Episcopal General Convention, UUA General Assembly, UCC General Synod and Disciples of Christ General Assembly.

On campus, we enjoyed creating opportunities for alumni/ae and current students to interact, which included making tamales for the holidays and mingling during the Alumni/ae and Friends Day Student and Alumni/ae Mixer.

Whether it was connecting over coffee with alumni/ae I’d not met before or catching up at the various denominational conferences, this year was full of laughs, joys, happy tears and moments of pure joy.
In the Spring, students called over 600 alumni/ae during our Annual Phone-a-thon. That effort resulted in $4,850 in gifts and pledges for the Alumni/ae Scholarship Fund. And we’re happy to report that our Alumni/ae Giving increased to 16% – up 1% from last year.

On behalf of our staff, faculty and students, I want to express profound gratitude to all our alumni/ae for Creating a Difference for the World We Live In and for being such tireless advocates for CST. We will continue gathering around the nation and world as our CST Alumni/ae Family grows!

—Noemi Ortega, Director of Alumni/ae Relations
#WEARE CST

1. Alumni/ae & Friends Days
2. Faith and Freedom: Cross-Cultural Liberation Class Meeting
3. CST Community Choir Concert
4. Paul Knitter Virtual Visit with Buddhist-Christian Thought and Spiritual Care Class Meeting
5. Ash Wednesday Chapel Service
6. Commencement 2015
7. 2014 LA County Fair Parade
8. Rev. Dr. B. Hill preaches at the 37th Annual Martin Luther King, Jr. Celebration.
9. New Student Orientation
10. President Kuan and his wife Valentine Toh prepare food for incoming students at the President’s Residence.
Alumni/ae of CST’s PhD program are *Creating a Difference* at academic institutions across the country. Featured are several alumni/ae who are weaving what they learned as CST students into the academic communities they now serve.

Mark Hearn PhD ’11

Mark Hearn PhD ’11 is the Assistant Clinical Professor of Contextual Education and Ministry and the Director of Contextual Education at Seattle University’s School of Theology and Ministry. His academic research is driven by a passion to help pastors and lay church leaders “hold in balance personal holiness and social holiness,” which he believes is at the heart of the Wesleyan faith.

As a teacher and administrator, Mark appreciates the integrative approach to education that CST embodies. “I teach the way I do, because I experienced wonderful theological education in action,” he says. According to Mark, CST professors helped him to understand the importance of teachers “bringing their whole selves to the classroom.”

Mark recently signed a contract for his first book, analyzing the religious experiences of Korean Americans. The book is scheduled to be published in 2016.
Emily Click PhD ’05

Emily Click is Assistant Dean for Ministry Studies and Field Education and Lecturer on Ministry at Harvard Divinity School (HDS). Her academic research focuses on leadership formation through field education and experiential and integrative learning.

Among the courses Emily teaches at HDS are “Teaching with Courage and Passion,” “Leadership and Administration,” and “Theologies and Practices of Christianity.” In addition to directing a field education program, she sits on the Administrative Council at HDS.

Some of Emily’s fondest memories at CST are moments filled with laughter. “There was a spirit of gracious hospitality among the faculty, staff, and students,” she recalls. “The faculty at CST upheld the highest standards for faculty work inside and beyond the classroom. I have been proud to continue what they taught me during my time at HDS.”
Christine Hong PhD ’12

Christine Hong is the newly appointed Assistant Professor of Worship and Evangelism at Louisville Presbyterian Theological Seminary (LPTS).

At LPTS, Christine teaches courses in Practical Theology, Worship, Mission and Evangelism. She also participates in “Doors to Dialogue,” a program of the Luce Foundation that prepares seminarians for vocations in a multi-religious world. She attributes her ability to engage in interreligious conversations at the national level to the mentorship she received from CST faculty. “They taught me how to be thoughtful and open in my teaching,” she remarks.

Christine is also thankful for the career support she received from CST’s alumni/ae network over the years. “One thing that is lovely about CST is the collegiality between students,” Christine recalls. “CST Alums have helped me as I prepared for interviews. They have given me advice as I moved from one state to another; and have facilitated connections as I looked to network in unfamiliar places. I try to pay it forward when I can.”
In 2013, Trina Armstrong was appointed Assistant Professor of Practical Theology and Pastoral Care at United Theological Seminary of the Twin Cities (UTS). Shortly after the appointment, she completed a Ph.D. in Spiritual Care and Counseling from CST. Her scholarly work intersects with practical and womanist theology, post-trauma psychology, and sociology to inform healing practices that are appropriate for historically marginalized persons and communities.

Trina believes it was her extensive practical experience, in addition to her academic contributions, that made her an attractive candidate. “UTS wanted someone who could draw from practical experience in the classroom,” she says. “Training people to be both scholars and practitioners is what CST does. It prepares us for the academy and the field.”

She is appreciative of the opportunities her current position affords for her development as a scholar-practitioner. “As a result of my experience as a mental health practitioner and my education at CST, I was very comfortable with difference voices,” she explains. “I am grateful of this opportunity to hone my pedagogy.”
SAN DIEGO ALUMNI/AE GATHERING:

On Friday, November 21, 2014 CST Alumni/ae and Friends attending the American Academy of Religion (AAR) annual conference in San Diego gathered for a field trip to the U.S./Mexico Border. The trip was led by Rev. John Fanestil ’92 and Dr. Helene Slessarev-Jamir, Mildred M. Hutchinson Professor of Urban Ministries. During the trip attendees bore witness to the economic, human and environmental effects of living along the border.

See more photos from our trip to the US-Mexico Border.
In 1972, Dean F. Thomas Trotter invited Roy Sano to teach a course on Asian-American Theology at CST. This was not only the first time such a course was taught in the U.S., but it was also the start of Bishop Sano’s long-standing relationship with CST.

A decade later, in 1984, Roy Sano began his service as Bishop in the Rocky Mountain/Yellowstone Conference of The United Methodist Church. In 1992, he was appointed as the Bishop of the California-Pacific Conference, where he became actively engaged with CST serving as a member of the Board of Trustees and President of the Corporation.

Bishop Sano has not only supported CST with his leadership, but also with financial gifts. When asked why he gives to CST he says, “I support the school because its faculty have promoted justice and peace in the economic, political, and military rivalries across the Pacific. I also appreciate that the school has long supported substantive interreligious dialogue. John Cobb, in particular, practiced interreligious dialogue in substantive terms, vividly illustrated in his interactions with the Japanese Zen Buddhist, Masao Abe.”

Finally, Bishop Sano points out Korean and Korean-American graduates of CST are among the leaders in Asian theological education in North America.

President Jeffrey Kuan, and Bishop Sano, have long been friends and colleagues. When asked about the future of CST, Bishop Sano says, “What excites me most about CST’s future is how Jeffrey Kuan is taking the seminary to a new level of international engagement, especially with Asian countries and the Pacific Islands.”

Bishop Sano has strong opinions about alumni/ae, clergy and laity supporting their local seminary. He states, “Graduates of CST need to be pace setters who can contribute, even tithe, no matter their financial situation. We cannot wait until we are rich to give.”
For nearly four decades, the United Methodist Men (UMM) of Glendale First United Methodist Church have supported student scholarships at Claremont School of Theology. Only a handful of other individuals or institutions can claim such a lasting legacy at CST. The loyalty and generosity demonstrated by this group has had an impact on dozens of men and women who have pursued their call to ministry. Many of who have benefited from UMM scholarships have gone on to serve local churches in the California-Pacific Conference.

The UMM meet the first Saturday of every month and are served a delicious pancake breakfast by Senior Pastor Rev. Rich Garner. At each gathering, time is set aside for prayer, fellowship, announcements, and education. Lasting friendships have been forged through this group, and there have even been a few CST alumni/ae among its members.

It’s important to the UMM to develop a personal connection with the scholarship recipients. So each year, several members travel to CST for the annual Scholarship Donor Appreciation Luncheon. Their presence is a wonderful testament to the enduring support they provide to seminary students at CST.

When asked why the United Methodist Men have chosen to support CST Rev. Garner said,

“The men’s group’s support of student scholarship at Claremont School of Theology grew out of a recognition that seminarians needed to be undergirded by the local church both spiritually and financially as they prepared themselves for pastoral ministry—perhaps to serve at Glendale First United Methodist Church. Visiting with scholarship recipients has been a high point of the group’s activity. We are grateful to be so richly blessed as to be able to support students in this small way.”

Donor Profile:
UNITED METHODIST MEN OF GLENDALE
Ann Mathews earned her M.A. in Religion from CST in 2006. Her enthusiasm about her time at Claremont School of Theology is infectious. “All I had to do for two years was read, talk, think and go to class,” she says. “It was an amazing time.”

When asked why she contributes to CST, she had a long list of reasons.

Ann was very grateful to the faculty, in particular Dr. Greg Riley. She will never forget the first day of his class when he discussed the definitions of “true” and “truth.”

Ann was also grateful to the students she met from all walks of life. Like herself, many of the Korean students would take advantage of the early morning hours to work in the computer lab. While getting to know these students she was amazed and impressed by the long journey they took to pursue a seminary education in the U.S.

But what she found even more amazing were the students that came from very conservative theological backgrounds and how hard they had to work to reconcile their life-long faith understanding with those from more liberal backgrounds. She came to have a deep respect for all of her fellow students, no matter where they came from or what they believed.

When discussing CST as it is today, Ann talks about the pluralism on campus. She values the relationships that have developed with faith traditions beyond Christianity. She knows that ecumenical relationships have always been a part of CST, but the expansion into interfaith education excites her.

Ann describes her time at CST as, “the best years of my life…Of course I want to support an institution that gave me so much.”
Mark Bollwinkel, received his Doctor of Ministry from Claremont School of Theology in 1979. Following fifteen years of excellent pastoral ministry at Los Altos United Methodist Church (CA), Mark transitioned into a semi-retired role as a pastor in Carmel, CA where he serves as pastor at Church of the Wayfarer. He is dedicated supporter of CST and has served on the Board of Trustees since 2006.

Mark is a member of the Maclay Society, a distinguished group of benefactors who plan to leave a legacy with CST through their estate plan. When asked why Mark and his wife Bonnie are making a bequest to CST, he remarks that his years on campus helped to establish his academic and spiritual foundations.

He credits CST with helping to direct his personal and professional life as a parish minister. It was at CST that he developed a commitment to life-long learning. That commitment has made a significant difference in his life – a difference he wants others to be able to experience for generations to come.

“We need new ministers,” Mark says. “We are experiencing a period of tremendous transition in the life of the church. We need leaders who can think outside of the box. CST has a tradition of providing progressive excellence and creativity for Christian churches in general.”

Mark was attracted to Claremont by the presence of C. Dean Freudenberger, a member of the CST faculty during the 1970s, and his undergraduate coursework in International Development. Mark was drawn to Freudenberger’s vision for an international church. According to Mark, Freudenberger often spoke of “World Hunger,” “Climate Change,” “Global Warming,” and the importance of “Environmental Stewardship” at a time before those terms became part of the common parlance.

“It is my hope that current and future seminary students will be inspired to minister in creative ways and think globally,” he says.

Mark Bollwinkel remains passionate about The United Methodist Church and the seminary students who will guide its future. He is especially proud that his Los Altos congregation has established an endowed scholarship fund in his name upon his retirement.

“It’s the best tribute a minister can have!”
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