The Y’s Continuing Commitment
A message from the Y Executive Director

Our endowment is down and as hard times hit all of us personally, we also face a shrinking donor pool.
As I reported in the December newsletter, we have decreased our budget and look for other cost cutting measures. However, parallel to cutting costs, we still need to raise additional funds in order to stave off even more cuts to programs or staff. We are seeking additional grants from corporations and foundations, but realize too that we need to raise individual support. For this, we rely on you and our community for support. Times are tough for all of us and yet, we need your support. Please consider giving to the Y as you are able.
We will monitor our budget very carefully and continue to pare down if needed. While I am not confident in our economy, I am confident in the Y board and our ability to pull through. Regardless of the budget cuts and while the number of programs is less, rest assured that the Y’s impact and capacity are not diminished. We continue to be student-centered and our commitment to our mission is stronger than ever.
I want to thank all of you who responded to our year-end appeal. We would not be in as strong a position were it not for our donors and the many friends who support the Y, not just in monetary terms, but in many other ways. To all of you, our friends and supporters, you inspire us and you make a tremendous difference to the Caltech Y!

by Athena Castro, Y Executive Director

Happy New Year! The end of 2008 was indeed a busy time for the Y. In the midst of a plummeting economy, we paused from business as usual and took stock of our financial situation.

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RISE Report
by Alycen Chan, RISE Coordinator

The RISE Program has grown this year from about 35 to nearly 50 Caltech tutors. As a result, the program has been able to increase its service from 60 up to 100 student participants from the Pasadena Unified School District.
We have also implemented monthly college preparation workshops conducted by the various Directors from Caltech Student Affairs, including Eva Graham, Director of Minority Student Education, and Jerry Houser, Director of the Career Development Center.
It has really been an exciting time of growth for the RISE Program.

Tickets, please!
by Susan Murakami, Y Board

To all Friends of the Caltech Y: If you have extra tickets, or tickets that will go unused, to events and attractions around Southern California (perhaps an event from season tickets to a theater or symphony, tickets to the Huntington Garden, etc), please think about donating them to Caltech students.
The Caltech Y office has agreed to act as a drop off point for such tickets, and the students would really appreciate it!
The Y will inform ASCIT that tickets are available, and the student body will then be responsible for distribution, transportation, etc.
Thank you very much for your gifts.
Announcements (continued)

It's a Girl!
by Greg and Patricia Fletcher

The newest member of the Y team, Kyra Grace Suen Chi Fletcher, was born to Caltech Y Staff member - Greg Fletcher and his wife Patricia on January 20th, 2009. Mommy, Daddy and Kyra are all doing fine. She already has her first nick names (The Prez and O-Baby) courtesy of her notable birth date - Inauguration Tuesday. In this picture she gets her first introduction to the Y through one of Daddy's many Y shirts - this one from Make A Difference Day displays the motto of the Caltech Y. We think she will make a difference in the world... she already has in ours.

Recent Events (Dec-Jan)

Reading to Kids
A rewarding experience for both reader & kids

by Alycen Chan, Y Staff
and Alex Krikorian '09 Student

An average of 8 volunteers each month has been participating in the Reading to Kids program at Hoover Elementary in the Koreatown neighborhood of Los Angeles. At the monthly reading clubs, the volunteers read aloud to small groups of children and give each child a free donated book through the program.

Alex Krikorian, a Caltech senior who has volunteered wrote about her experience: I participated in Reading to Kids in November, and my experience was incredibly rewarding. We read a book about a cat who was very nervous about going to school and, while reading, I was able to ask the children if that was something they were nervous about as well.

A big part of my afternoon was talking to the kids about themselves and about what they like to do – I had forgotten how much fun reading to kids could be! They love stories and laughing, and make reading a very fun activity for both themselves and the reader.

When we had a drawing session afterward, Marco (one of the first-graders) drew me a picture of the cat from the story and said, "I made this for you. Don't be nervous for school." I laughed with them and had a great time. I felt like it was as much of a treat for them to attend this event as it was for me!

Decompression a welcome break

by Jonathon Tsai '10, ExComm

The 2008 Fall Decompression, Dec 6, was themed around the popular television series, "How I Met Your Mother." In addition to making shirts with quotes and images from the show, the Caltech Y screened their favorite episodes and invited the “Out of Context” a cappella group to perform. As always, students enjoyed the wide variety of fruit, cookies, bagels, burgers and hotdogs, and were able to unwind right before finals.

Overall, the Decompression was a success: more than a hundred students attended, and all were well fed and ready for their last week of school and finals.
**E/ME 105 Project final presentations**

**Fruits of the Y Summer Service Trip to Guatemala**

*by Leon Liu ’10, ExComm*

In the afternoon of Monday, December 8, the students of the E/ME 105 class, *Product Design for the Developing World*, delivered final presentations on their projects at the Beckman Institute Auditorium followed by a poster session outside.

The presentations were the culmination of collaborative work between Caltech and Guatemalan students, which started with the Caltech Y Summer Service Trip in Guatemala last summer, to design and apply inexpensive and useful income-generating products for the poor rural Guatemalans.

The projects presented included a wood-burning stove improvement, a water filter, wheelchairs transformed from bikes, an ergonomic produce carrier, a non-electric fridge, a fruit drier, and a honey extraction centrifuge. Caltech Y ExComm member Leon Liu was a member of the wood-burning stove improvement team. Many aspects of each project were presented, including the primary research in Guatemala leading to the identification of a problem, the ideation, design, and testing that give rise to a product for solving that problem, and business goals for accomplishing that goal on a significant enough scale.

The poster session that followed allowed the presenters to address specific questions from the audience and even allowed them to try out some of their prototypes. The audience, which included many Caltech students, staff and even alumni, learned much about the problems in other parts of the world and how some Caltech students are trying to solve it through this experience.

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**Explore LA Series features “The Nutcracker”**

*By Leslie Lamberson, Grad Student*

This past December 13, the Caltech Y *Explore LA Series* showed their love of the arts by helping over twenty students attend Pasadena Dance Theatre's production of “The Nutcracker.”

Presented at San Gabriel's Mission Playhouse, “The Nutcracker” is a timeless holiday ballet that features Tchaikovsky's classic score and a cast of over seventy dancers. Forty of those cast members are San Gabriel area children studying dance, and one of those not-so-small dancers just happens to be a third year graduate student in aeronautics and author of this blurb.

The generosity of the Caltech Y is often understated, but for this dancing engineer, it is gratefully acknowledged. I know, for some of the Caltech group in attendance, it was their first ballet, but I hope, for all of them, it won't be their last!

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**ExComm holds their Annual Retreat**

*by Heather Bixby, Student Activities Coordinator*

On December 12-13, the ExComm Board participated in their annual retreat. Instead of traveling to Lake Arrowhead this year, the ExComm had a blast hanging out at the Y facilities on campus.

On Friday, we opened up the meeting with dinner and a human knot ice-breaker. After we all got settled, Athena introduced and explained the 2008-09 Action Plan that the Board Members collectively composed and, then, Greg reviewed the details of our final expense report. These talks were followed by a group brainstorming session, which included identifying the best funding opportunities, programs that could provide donors with opportunities to see the Y at work, and opportunities for Board members to get to know the students. To end the night, the Caltech Y staff hosted a jeopardy game to quiz the ExComm members on their Y knowledge.

On Saturday morning, we reconvened to decide on and confirm the dates for our upcoming programs, such as *Make a Difference Day, Alternative Spring Break*, and *Explore LA*. The ExComm board came up with potential ideas for *Explore LA*, which included the following: “Phantom of the Opera”, “Rent”, Getty Museum, WNBA, Griffith Observatory, and Chinatown/Little Tokyo/Korea Town. They also decided on who would lead each of these events.

Our retreat concluded with a nice lunch at California Pizza Kitchen!
**Recent Events (continued)**

**Third Annual DC Policy Trip**

*A great experience at the nation's capital*

**Summary**

*By Michelle Jiang ’11, Student*

Since its inception, the annual DC Policy Trip has allowed both undergraduate and graduate students to delve into the realm that mingles science with government policy-making.

During this past winter break, the Ex-Comm led a group of 23 Caltech students on a 4-day trip (Dec 15-18), which included meetings with Caltech alumni, who are now involved with the National Academy of Science, the American Association for the Advancement of Science, and in other areas around Washington, DC.

The students were able to get an in-depth view on how the alumni made the decision to go into policy rather than research on the topic of science-related issues, and how they were able to take advantage of the opportunities presented to them. At the same time, it was a refreshing experience to hear several points of view from different alumni in different fields, and valuable recommendations and suggestions were made to the group during the lunch and dinner meetings that could guide their steps towards Capitol Hill.

Of course, there was plenty of sightseeing on the trip as well: many students were delighted by various branches of the Smithsonian, a nighttime view of the Mall, as well as the annual Christmas Tree display near the White House. Topped with dinner at an Ethiopian restaurant, the experience proved to be a wonderful introduction to Washington, DC, through a view that is highly relevant to Caltech’s goals on education and research.

Thanks to all of the alumni and other speakers who graciously took the time to meet with our group.

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**DC Itinerary**

**Monday, 12/15, Evening** – Dinner with Caltech Alumni at William Penn House:

- Ted Jou
- Lusine Danakian
- Ben Aronin
- Steven Horikoshi
- Aaron Hicks
- Michael Inadomi
- Kohl Gill
- Tom Coolbaugh
- Peter Haderlein
- David Hockaday
- Ayeh Bandeh-Ahmadi

**Tuesday, 12/16, Morning** – Dialogue at the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS):

- Dr. Daniel Poux, Assoc Dir, Outreach, Ops & Leadership Development, AAAS
- Dr. Kohl Gill (Caltech Alum), Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labor Affairs, State Department
- Dr. Jessica Palmer (AAAS Fellow), National Institute on Drug Abuse
- Dr. Amanda Richardson, (AAAS Fellow), Dept of Health and Human Services
- Dr. Marcus Sarofim (Caltech Alum, AAAS Fellow), EPA
- Dr. Matthew Metz (Caltech Alum), CUBRC Center for International Science and Technology Advancement

**Tuesday, 12/16, Evening** – Dialogue at National Academy of Sciences

- Dr. Bill Colglazier, Exec Officer, NAS
- Dr. Mike Nelson, Former Science Policy Advisor to Al Gore
- Dr. John Andelic, Former Congressional Advisor, Office of Tech Assessment

**Wednesday, 12/17, Morning** – Dialogue at National Institutes of Health, Stem Cell Task Force, National Institute of Deafness and other Communication Disorders

- Dr. Baldwin Wong, Executive Secretary
- Dr. Laura Cole, Science Policy Analyst

**Wednesday, 12/17, Afternoon** – Dialogues at AAAS

- Dr. Shirley Malcolm (Caltech Trustee), Director of Education and Human Resource Programs, AAAS
- Hon. John Stenbit, Former Assistant Secretary of Defense

**Thursday, 12/18, Morning** – Dialogue at William Penn House

- Michael Ledford (Principle Lobbyist for Caltech), Vice President for Client Management, Lewis-Burke Associates
Social Activism Speaker Series (SASS) event
"Raising the Floor: Ensuring Technology Fully Serves All of Humanity!"

by Gunilla Hastrup, Y Board

On Thursday, January 15th, at Noyes, Jim Fruchterman ’80, CEO of Benetech and a Caltech Alum, gave a most stimulating and provocative lecture on: Raising the Floor: Ensuring Technology Fully Serves All of Humanity! He also told me that, when at Caltech, he was active in the Caltech Y and still contributes to the Y’s cause of supporting student activities and life on campus.

Jim Fruchterman shared how his nonprofit tech company, Benetech, manages to lead in providing technology that serves the needs of the disability, human rights and environmental movement. He described how the tech community can help raise the floor for people around the globe, ensuring that everybody on the planet has access to technology and the information they need for education, employment, health and social inclusion. Social entrepreneurship can bridge the gap between what's possible and what's highly profitable.

Jim Fruchterman is a technology entrepreneur and engineer and has been a rocket scientist, founded two of the foremost optical character recognition companies, and developed a successful line of reading machines for the blind. He is now a leading social entrepreneur through his deliberately nonprofit technology company.

Benetech concentrates on applying technology to challenging problems facing our society, including literacy for people with disabilities, and human rights monitoring and analysis. Jim Fruchterman has won numerous awards for his work, which has included attending and speaking five times at the World Economic Forums in Davos, Switzerland, and he believes that technology is the ultimate leveler, allowing disadvantaged people to achieve more equality in society.

MLK Service Day
Helping out at the Boys and Girls Club

By Leon Liu ’10, ExComm

On January 24, the Caltech Y wrapped up Martin Luther King Week with MLK Service Day.

A group of six Caltech undergraduates and Heather Bixby went to the Boys and Girls Club of Pasadena to volunteer. There the volunteers participated in a thorough cleaning of the outside environment, the kitchen and various small items. During the break time, the participants enjoyed watching kids’ basketball games and engaged in conversation with the staff of the Boys and Girls Club about their and our own work.

Despite the light rain, it was an enjoyable experience for all.

A Y Outdoor Program event
Day Hike in the Santa Monica Mountains

By Athena Castro, Y Executive Director

Six students joined student leaders Michelle Selvans and Arthur Chan on Saturday, January 24, for a hike to Rustic Canyon in the Santa Monica Mountains. Due to rain the previous day, the trail was wet, but there was very little rain, so it was perfect. The group found the trail hard to follow at times, and there was a lot of exploring and turning back. However, the group had a wonderful time and enjoyed the beautiful views.
Meet the ExComm

Each month the Caltech Y News interviews a member of the Student Executive Committee (ExComm)

by Heather Bixby, Student Activities Coordinator

Meet the ExComm Graduate Vice President, Boyuan Sun. Boyuan Sun is a graduate student studying Electrical Engineering from Beijing, China.

Boyuan decided to join the ExComm Board early last year to build on the leadership programs, assist in the planning and implementation of Y activities, and be more proactive in encouraging graduate students to become more involved in extracurricular opportunities.

Along with volunteering at the Y, Boyuan enjoys sports, hip-hop, and singing. She is also the Entertainment Director of the Caltech C (Chinese Assoc), VP of the Caltech Consulting Club, a Social Committee member of Graduate Student Council, and a member of the USC-UCLA-Caltech Net Impact Consulting Partnership.

Over the summer, Boyuan interned at Apple Headquarters in Cupertino, CA. She will be graduating in just a few weeks to accept a Software Developer position at Oracle, the largest software company whose primary business is database products.

When asked what she likes most about the Y, Boyuan explained, “I really enjoy organizing Caltech Y activities with the most passionate and energetic students at Caltech – my fellow Ex-Comm members!”

Greetings from an Ex ExComm

Rosemary Macedo ‘87

What did the Caltech Y mean to me as a student?

The Caltech Y provided a venue and support for exploration of ideas and passions outside the classroom, whether science policy, environmentalism, hiking in the local mountains, noon concerts, arms control or meeting one’s favorite science fiction author.

Favorite band? As afternoon concert czar, I could get on their guest list at a show, then negotiate to bring them to campus. If any of us was interested in something or someone, we were encouraged to give them a call ourselves and ask them to come to campus, and we soon learned we really could just call and ask, and they would come.

Amazing! From takeover king T. Boone Pickens to photographer Galen Rowell, the common denominator among those who came was passion for what they were doing. Collectively, they reinforced the Y’s central message: engage fully in the world around you.

It was also a place of encouragement, particularly where social skills and confidence were concerned. At the Caltech Y, not only did undergraduates from all the houses socialize together, undergraduates got to socialize with graduate students, and with the wonderful, diverse alumni, faculty, and JPL staffers serving on the Y Board (Ned Munger, Manny Delbruck, Al Hibbs and Ted Combs to name just a few).

What’s more, the ExComm, not the staff, not the Board, were responsible for the Y’s programming, figuring out what to do, how to do it, and then actually making it happen. As a result, every ExComm member’s social skills and confidence grew by leaps and bounds, whether they started out weak or strong or somewhere in between.

Today, the Y continues to develop students’ skills, awareness and engagement in the community, thanks to the support of the Board and of the Friends of the Caltech Y.

The 1987 Y ExComm – Rosy is 2nd from right in back row
Coming Events (Feb)

Two Programs with Francis Collins
Feb 5th – Afternoon Discussion and Evening Lecture

by Sunny Chun ’10, ExComm
Francis S. Collins, M.D., Ph.D., is a physician-geneticist. He was Director of the National Human Genome Research Institute (NHGRI) at the National Institutes of Health until Aug, 2008, where he oversaw the International Human Genome Sequencing Consortium and its landmark effort to sequence the entire human DNA code.

• Afternoon Discussion: Francis Collins will discuss with David Baltimore the subject:

“Genomics and the Future of Medicine”
David Baltimore is the Robert A. Milikan Professor of Biology at Caltech. He won the Nobel Prize in Medicine for discovering Reverse Transcriptase. He was Caltech President from 1998-2005 and is now studying signal transduction, transcriptional regulation and cell cycle controls with the goal of developing therapies for cancer and HIV.

Presented by The Biology the Undergraduate Student Advisory Committee (BUSAC) and The Veritas Forum, and co-sponsored by The Caltech Y
Time: Thursday, Feb 5, 2-3 PM
Location: Baxter Lecture Hall
Limited to Caltech Community only

• Evening Lecture: Francis Collins will present his view about the compatibility of faith and science based on his recent book:

“The Language of God: A Scientist Presents Evidence for Belief”
Presented by The Veritas Forum at Caltech and co-sponsored by The Caltech Y
Time: Thursday Feb 5, 8 - 9:30 PM
Location: Beckman Auditorium
Open to the public.
Free Admission: No tickets or reservations required.

Winter Friends Dinner with Kelly Perkins
Feb 19 at the Caltech Athenaeum

by Chris Kealey, Marketing and Development Director
The winter Friends Dinner features Kelly Perkins, a mountaineer and heart transplant recipient.

At age 30, Kelly Perkins, was diagnosed with viral cardiomyopathy, a condition that slowly destroyed her heart muscle. For more than 3 years, she lived in and out of the hospital, so frail that her husband Craig had to carry her up the stairs. In 1995, she received a heart transplant and began reclaiming her life, one mountain top at a time.

The transplant did not just give Kelly a second chance at life; it also gave her a new perspective on the plight facing the millions of people worldwide that are in need of organ donors. Kelly’s story is one of personal triumph that she hopes will be replicated by transplant recipients worldwide as she now fights to honor those donors and recipients that have gone on to have successful lives.

Kelly tells her amazing journey from the brink of death and despair to the thrill of scaling renowned and symbolic mountaintops in her inspirational tale of survival and triumph.

Join us as we welcome Kelly and Craig Perkins the evening of Feb 19.
6:00 No Host Bar
7:00 Dinner
8:00 Speaker
Location: The Athenaeum, Caltech
Please RSVP by February 12

Other events

• Explore LA (Feb 17 & 18) – Due to the popularity of The Explore LA Series, two trips to see the Phantom of the Opera at the Pantages theater are planned on Feb. 17 and 18. Due to last year’s high interest in Wicked, the ExComm is doing a lottery for the tickets.

• PALAC (Feb 24) – The Winter quarter PALAC-Caltech Connection event will be held in the evening of Feb 24 on the subject of "Neuroeconomics." The discussion will be led by Caltech ExComm members Abdul Ahad and Jonathan Tsai. For further information, contact Norri Sirri at 626 844-6411.
## CALENDAR OF UPCOMING EVENTS

Note: See [Caltech Y website](#) for additional information and schedule updates

### February 2009

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### The Caltech Y

The Caltech Y is an independent 501c3 organization formally affiliated with the California Institute of Technology. The Y mission is to enrich student life and challenge students to grow into responsible citizens of the world.

#### Contact Information

Phone: (626) 395-6163  
Fax: (626) 395-8990  
Email: caltechy@caltech.edu  
Website: [http://www.caltechy.org](http://www.caltechy.org)

#### Location:

1350 San Pasqual St  
(West of tennis courts at Caltech)

#### Postal Address:

Pasadena, CA 91125

#### Board of Directors

**Executive Committee**  
Carolyn Ash - Chair  
Susan Murakami - Vice Chair  
Peter Mason - Treasurer  
Connie Kofahl - Secretary  
Ilia Shadrin - Student ExComm President  

**Members** (* indicates Student Executive Committee)

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### The Caltech Y News

**Editor:** Gunilla Hastrup  
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