**Announcements & Reports**

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**In memory of Edith Roberts**

by Gunilla Hastrup, Y News Editor

We miss our spirited friend Edith Roberts, who passed away Sunday, February 28, 2010. Edith, always with a smile, and Jack, her husband of 68 years, have been so supportive of the students at Caltech and the Caltech Y. They both served on the Caltech Y Board and were very much involved with fundraising and many other aspects of the Y, as they understood the importance of the Caltech Y to the students.

Edith will be remembered as a warm and thoughtful friend by all of us at the Caltech Y.

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**Y Student Executive Committee elects new slate of officers –**

Congratulations to our [beautiful] new ExComm officers!

President: Christina Weng
Vice President: Michelle Jiang
Secretary: Jennifer Ma
Treasurer/ Historian: Debbie Tseng

It looks like it will be a great year!

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**RISE tutoring adds new Algebra Foundations course**

Alycen Chan, Y Outreach Program Director

The RISE program is happy to announce the Algebra Foundations course is underway. This is a new addition to the program in which tutors, who are interested in teaching or being leaders in the program, design a course and gain teaching experience. We have five dedicated instructors who have worked hard to design the 11-week course, which involves 10 weeks of lessons and one week of review. This class is intended to help students review and master the much-needed algebra concepts that will help them succeed in higher-level high school math and in college. There are currently 12 students enrolled in the course. The students come early once a week, before the regular tutoring schedule, to receive a lesson, review, and practice. The lessons are also shared with every student’s tutor in addition to the class time, so that there is consistency in supporting each student’s academic level and needs.

If the program is successful in helping students master their math skills, we hope to continue the course next year and that it will be a part of the RISE program for years to come.
**Recent Events (February)**

**PALAC examines the increasing problem of obesity**

By Catherine Xie ’13, Y ExComm

The PALAC talk I led on February 16 was on obesity, a serious issue in America.

Everyone read a few articles on this topic: one from an anthropological standpoint on the roots of the problem, another on the causes and impacts of obesity on American children, and the third was on issues that parents and society, including medical professionals, are facing with increasing childhood obesity. Moreover, I presented the components of First Lady Michelle Obama's "Let's Move" obesity campaign announced in February; the national goal of Obama's childhood obesity campaign is to implement widespread changes to solve the issue of childhood obesity within a generation by involving schools, parents, health professionals and partnerships of health care foundations, and by increasing access to healthy and affordable foods.

I especially enjoyed the discussion we had because many of the participants have various backgrounds and had different personal experiences and observations that affected their standpoints. However, everyone agreed that obesity is becoming an increasing problem and is directly relevant to everyday American lives. We discussed possible remedies and solutions to the problem and individual and national actions that could be taken.

Overall, the discussion was very dynamic and I had a very fun time leading it.

**Black History Month events**

by Greg Fletcher, Y Student Activities & Community Services Director

[Photos by Athena Castro]

This month the Caltech Y helped coordinate two large events as a part of Black History Month – along with the Caltech Center for Diversity and International Student Programs.

**Jazz Night** – On Feb 18, the lobby in the Center for Student Services was transformed into a club for our annual Jazz Night. Fifty-five students, faculty and staff enjoyed cobbler, appetizers, and the sweet sounds of Drew Simpson and Friends jazz ensemble. It was a wonderful evening of jazz and a relaxing way to spend an evening.

**Soul Food Cooking Demo** – On Feb 25, Chef Larkin Mackey, from Larkin’s restaurant in Eagle Rock, was invited to campus to do a cooking demonstration and provide lunch for our Soul Food Cooking Demonstration. A huge crowd of 115 students and staff came to learn about jambalaya, a traditional African American dish that combines meats, vegetables, rice and, of course, a lot of soul. In addition to the demonstration and lunch, Chef Larkin shared the importance of soul food and its meaning to many in the African American community.

**Y Life Skills Series covers first aid preparedness**

By Heidi Sheng ’13, Undergrad

On Feb 18, Mark Stapf from the Health Center gave a talk as a part of the Caltech Y Life Skills Series on first aid preparedness. Seventeen people joined us for lunch in the Frank Dryden Multipurpose Room at the Caltech Y to hear Mark focus on basic first aid and what to have in emergency first aid kits.

It was an informative talk for all who came.
By Jai Shanata - Graduate Student & current GSC Chair

Nearly nine months after last June's presidential elections, Iran's so-called 'green' opposition movement refuses to die. What are the country's realistic prospects for change? Given Iran's influence over issues as varied as Afghanistan, Iraq, Arab-Israeli peace, energy, terrorism, and nuclear proliferation, could political change in Iran be one of the most consequential events in international relations since the fall of the Soviet Union over 20 years ago?

On February 25th at 7:30 pm, Karim Sadjadpour, an associate at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, gave a powerful and wide ranging talk to an audience of 86 Caltech students, staff, faculty, JPL members, and others in the Beckman Institute Auditorium. Mr. Sadjadpour drew on his time in Tehran when he was an analyst at the International Crisis Group, which gave him insight into the daily lives of Iranians. These experiences caused him to challenge the claim that Iran is not yet ready for change. On the contrary, Mr. Sadjadpour believes that the importance of separating politics from religion is a grassroots realization taking hold across Iran. Moreover, the rapidly growing and changing Iranian demographics are producing a younger population that is largely unsatisfied with the status quo. Though the movement has endured many setbacks, it is using a breadth of communication and networking to spread its message and sustain its momentum. As news of actions – small and large – such as the Caltech Graduate Student Council's resolution on academic freedom and solidarity with Iranian students and weekly moment of silence on Fridays at noon reach Iranians, they are heartened and motivated to continue pursuing a more just and equitable society. Mr. Sadjadpour also expressed optimism that, while the Obama administration continues to be most concerned with the prospect of Iran gaining nuclear capability, the administration is increasingly aware of the green movement and internal political situation in Iran. However, several questions during the hour-long discussion section addressed the challenges that further evolutionary (rather than revolutionary) changes in Iran face – the largest being the possibility of a military conflict with the United States or Israel that could cause all sides to dig in and eliminate or even reverse progress.

Ultimately, Mr. Sadjadpour concluded that, while the short term will likely be difficult, he is optimistic that the green movement in Iran will be able to craft a specific set of goals that catalyzes long term change while respecting millennia of cultural heritage in the region. He highlighted the fact that these goals will likely be fundamentally in line with those of the United States: democracy and human rights.

Mr. Sadjadpour's talk was the 3rd and final in the Series on Iran: Struggle of a Nation, a forum aimed at bringing various perspectives in raising awareness of and encouraging dialogue on the recent events in Iran. This timely speaker series was made possible by the generous support from the Moore Hufstedler Fund and Coordinated by the Caltech Y Social Activism Speaker Series (SASS), and Graduate Student Council (GSC).
Meet the ExComm

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

Dongkook (DK) Lim ‘11

by Kevin Nguyen, Student Activities Coordinator

Dongkook Lim, also known as “DK,” is a junior, biology major from Manhattan, Kansas. He is the immediate past ExComm Treasurer/Historian. DK is quite involved in the Caltech community. Within his house, he serves as the Avery Chancellor. He is in the concert band council and plays the clarinet, and also enjoys participating in different types of sports. Needless to say, he has quite a busy schedule.

However, he is still adamant about the Caltech Y and the programs that the Y provides. He participates in the RISE tutoring program and takes pleasure in tutoring his student, Joaquin, in algebra. DK says that they have a great camaraderie and that Joaquin is very receptive during their sessions and has a strong willingness to understand math. DK also participated in last year’s Alternative Spring Break program where the Caltech Y sent some students to San Diego and they worked with environmental community organizations. San Diego is one of his most recent fonder memories of his Caltech Y activities, and he plans on joining the Alternative Spring Break trip to Yosemite this year.

DK is very community-oriented. He has benefited from a significant amount of joy and friendship in his three years with the Caltech Y. He was introduced to the Y by a previous ExComm member, and his first event was MAD Day. Now, his goal is to bring others to the Caltech Y and to recruit them to be involved with the ExComm, because the Y has been such an important part of his undergraduate experience.

Other future goals that he has are to become a dentist, become a “family man” one day and be a good father, and be financially successful enough to take care of his parents and explore the world.

March Madness

by Greg Fletcher, Y Student Activities & Community Services Director

As the term ends and Caltech heads into spring break, the Y-ExComm, Y-Outdoors, Community Service Coordinators, and Social Activism Speaker Series Committee are still working to wrap up the term and planning events to take advantage of the break. Hopefully, events like Decompression will help fend off the madness of finals... at least until we ramp up to Alternative Spring Break and eventually Make A Difference Day in April. Coming soon:

On March 5, applications for the Paul Studenski Memorial Award are due. The Studenski Award, endowed in the memory of former student, Paul Studenski, is an award of up to $4000 for a current undergraduate student who has found oneself at a crossroad in life, and who would benefit from a period away from the academic community in order to obtain a better understanding of self and to explore possible directions for his/her future. Our most recent recipient volunteered with an organization called Majority World Technologies in Guatemala. As the term draws to a close, the ExComm is preparing for Decompression, of course, with a theme focused on the Winter Olympics. As always, students will have the opportunity to relax and unwind with some BBQ, snacks, and entertainment before jumping into finals.

Alternative Spring Break, one of our largest community service efforts of the year, is also in full planning mode as leaders prepare to embark with their groups to Yosemite National Park, and the Wildlife Waystation in the Angeles National Forest. The Team in Yosemite will be working outside helping to maintain trails, campgrounds and campsites in one of the most visited parks in the nation. At the Wildlife Waystation, students will have an opportunity to clean and do repairs in support of their efforts to provide a shelter for at-risk wild animals from our area as well as exotic animals form around the world. Both trips should provide a powerful learning opportunity as well as the chance to see and experience some of nature’s most spectacular sites of the natural world.
In the movie *Shawshank Redemption*, there is a wonderful phrase Morgan Freeman uses to describe what it must feel for a lifelong convict who must suddenly come to terms with the real world upon being freed on parole – “Institutionalized.” While the connotation of having lived all your life within the rigid confines of prison cells can be negative, it is my suspicion that the word is endearingly used to denote how even the most Spartan of habitats can confer a certain comfort and meaning to one’s life by virtue of the people you live and work with.

I think of my time at Caltech as possibly the best years of my life, in that very sense. And perhaps, outside of my richly satisfying research work, it was my association with the Caltech Y that gave me that meaning and perspective. It could be said that my association and love affair with the Y began even before I started, technically, as a graduate student at Caltech, when I signed up for the Y-Hike in 2003. It was not just that I forged new and lasting friendships, but, in taking up what was my first outdoor adventure involving close to 40 miles of backpacking, I gained enormous mental strength and a gung-ho conviction that I could perform wonders in anything I tried. The former has served me in good stead, and as for the latter, I get my comeuppance daily when I strum a few strings on the guitar.

Once again, to paraphrase Morgan Freeman from the *Redemption*, it would be fair to say that I liked the Y from the start. I became heavily involved with the Outdoor Committee, first as a participant on day-hikes, then as a co-leader on camping trips, and eventually as a co-chair of the Outdoor Committee. Through the Y’s community service programs, such as the *Alternative Spring Break* trips and Make-A-Difference Day events, as well as the SASS talks, I realized how big a profile the Y had in truly enriching student life on campus. As far as I was concerned, the Y offered a necessary corrective balance to other student organizations on campus, whose reasons d’être were seemingly just to have a lot of beer (legally, or furtively).

When I went on the Costa Rica summer service trip, my own reasons initially were selfish; after all, for $500 I got to spend two weeks in a beautiful country I had never been to before. It was upon arriving at the Buena Vista village that brought home the motive of the trip. Here was an entire community herded together in a large hall adjoining the village school. Most of the men-folk were busy at work, so it was only the children and their mothers present waiting anxiously for us. I saw in front of me so many beautiful faces, such charming coyness and barely suppressed fascination at seeing such an ethnically diverse bunch of students (three Indians, one South Korean, more women than men; as many Spanish-speaking as those that only knew how to ask where the rest-room was) coming to spend a week in their village, living with their families, eating their food, toiling away to mix cement and place slabs to build a bathroom for their high-school (this last bit was only a symbolic gesture, of course; I concluded long ago that they were just happy to have us in their midst). So, this was cultural immersion. If there were any doubts in my mind as to what the Y meant to me as a student at Caltech, they were all quietly swept away in the course of that trip.

Following the Costa Rica experience, I participated actively at the ExComm meetings, and soon joined up. It was not only the thrill of discussing and planning activities like trips to LA Philharmonic, Huntington, and theater houses, but also the very real experience of democracy, and decree-by-committee, that made the meetings so much looked-forward to. Adding to this was the pleasure of meeting with members of the Board at meetings, and Friends dinners. Their enthusiasm and support had always been very heart-warming and motivated us in the ExComm to be creative and enterprising in the scope of the Y programs.

In the past year since graduating from Caltech, I have already keenly felt that absence of the weekly meet-ups with a bunch of bubbly (mostly the girls and Athena), jaded (mostly the guys and Greg) ExCommers. But beyond those friendly faces, what I miss now is that spirit of purpose and service that filled every opportunity the Y offered the Tech community. I cherish the memories, and wish I could have partaken of more of them. And, as I look to transition to a career in development and public policy myself, I can honestly say the Y has indeed had a transformational effect in shaping aspirations and enriching the lives of Techers.
## CALENDAR OF UPCOMING EVENTS

Note: See [Caltech Y website](http://www.caltech.edu) for Jan 2010, additional information and schedule updates

### March 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) 395-8890  
Email: caltechy@caltech.edu  
Website: [http://www.caltechy.org](http://www.caltechy.org)

Location: Caltech  
MC 5-62  
Pasadena, CA 91125  
West of tennis courts at SW corner Hill & San Pasqual

#### Y Staff

Athena Castro - Executive Director  
Greg Fletcher - Student Activities & Community Service Director  
Christopher Kealey - Marketing & Development Director  
Kevin Nguyen - Student Activities Coordinator  
Carmelita Hearn - Administrative Assistant

#### Board of Directors

**Executive Committee**  
Susan Murakami - Chair  
Frank Dryden - Vice Chair  
Peter Mason - Treasurer  
Connie Kofahl - Secretary  
Leon Liu - Student ExComm President

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

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