Message from the Y Board Chair

by Carolyn Ash, Y Board Chair

Summer wanes in to fall all. Back-to-school sales herald the change of seasons, and the academic year at Caltech is underway! The Y has planned an amazing array of interesting and dynamic programs to enrich the lives of our students this year. The newsletter details many of these wonderful activities.

The Caltech Y Board will be busy this year. We welcome Susan Murakami as Vice Chair, Connie Kofahl as Secretary, and we thank Peter Mason for continuing as Treasurer and Ilia Shadrin ’09, who began his term as President of the Student Executive Committee in May. Thanks to the following people for chairing committees this year: Peter Mason, Finance; Marjorie Gooding, Student Relations; Frank Dryden, Development; Ben Turk, Public Relations; Jim Workman, Friends; Bob Perpall, Nominations; and Susan Murakami, Personnel.

We extend our deepest sympathy to the family of Lynn Casani who passed away in June. Together with husband John, Lynn served the Y as a member of the board, and we will miss her.

I am pleased to introduce new Board members Deborah Dison Hall and David Levy, and returning members John and Barbara Gee, and Frank Dryden. We are delighted to have their enthusiastic and energetic participation!

And so the year begins! Happy New Year!

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Y Student Activities Coordinator transition

by Athena Castro, Y Executive

The Caltech Y welcomes Heather Bixby to the staff. Heather is the new Student Activities Coordinator, a position formerly filled by Molly Jones. A graduate student at Azusa Pacific University (APU), Heather will graduate next May and receive an M.Ed with emphasis in College Student Affairs. In fact, she also received a BA with emphasis in music from APU. She is well suited to the Y, with much experience in community service, other student programs, and as an undergraduate leader, having participated in various service projects and traveling to Ensenada and Kenya. This summer, she was an advisor for a high school summer residential program at Cornell. She enjoys working with students at all levels and is excited to work with the Y E xComm. A warm welcome to Heather!

Where is Molly?

Molly Jones moved to Princeton. Bill Jones, Molly’s husband, is now a faculty member in the Princeton Physics Department. (Congratulations Bill!) After spending some time in temporary housing, the Jones family has settled into their new place. While Molly is physically no longer at the Caltech Y, she is continuing to work with us as a consultant doing a special project in the area of development. We miss Molly, Bill, McKenzie (their baby), and Che (their dog), but are excited a bout the oppor tunities and experiences that await them!
**Announcements** (continued)

**Students receive 2008 Lucy Guernsey Award**

by Athena Castro, Y Executive Director

In June, Vamsi Chavakula and Karen Wawrousek were recognized as the 2008 Lucy Guernsey Award recipients. Established in 1991 by the Caltech Y ExComm, the award recognizes exceptional service to the Y and the community, involvement with on- and off-campus service projects, as well as leadership in community and volunteer service efforts. The award was established in recognition of Lucy Guernsey, the Caltech Y’s Executive Director from 1989-1991, and was designed to recognize the leadership, dedication, and diligence to furthering the Y’s commitment to volunteerism.

Vamsi C Havakula, who graduated in June 2008, provided outstanding leadership and work during the four years that he was a Y ExComm member. Vamsi not only participated in Make-A-Difference Day as a team leader, but also served as the co-ordinator of this important program. In addition, Vamsi coordinated the Y’s Orientation Service Project and was awarded a Strauss Scholarship that allowed him to work with children at the Boys and Girls Club. Vamsi is now a student at Harvard School of Medicine, and we are convinced that he will continue to make a difference in the world!

Karen Wawrousek is a graduate student in Chemistry. She had been quietly volunteering with the Special Olympics until she came to the Y’s attention early last year. Karen is planning a special banquet for the young people of the Pasadena Special Olympics. Held in Dabney Lounge, the event was a tremendous success and everyone had a wonderful evening. Karen was able to recruit and train Caltech volunteers, not only to help with the event, but also to mingle and interact with the participants. She has demonstrated outstanding leadership and is to be commended for her continued service with the Special Olympics and for her outstanding efforts to bring together the Caltech community and the Special Olympics athletes.

Both Vamsi and Karen received the special award at the Caltech Y’s Annual Board meeting in June. In addition, thanks to the generosity of Lucy Guernsey, both students received a cash prize of $400.

Like Lucy Guernsey, Karen and Vamsi exemplify the spirit of service, and they have indeed made a world of difference.

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**Recent Events** (Jun-Sep)

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**Health & Nutrition is popular subject in Life Skills Series**

by Emily Kim ’11

At the Caltech Y multipurpose room on May 30th, Caltech Health Educator, Wendy Lopata, conducted a Life Skills session on health and nutrition. Understanding that Caltech students and faculty have busy lives, she focused on suggesting easy and inexpensive ways to incorporate nutritious food without spending much time.

All forty seats were filled with Caltech undergraduate students, graduate students, and faculty, and everyone attended the session for free lunch.

Among several activities that increased audience participation, a true/false activity about some myths related to diet and nutrition raised much interest from the audience. The audience had many questions and seemed to consider this event an important opportunity to develop healthy patterns for themselves.

The presentation went over an hour and quite a few people stayed afterward to ask personal questions. This session reminded people about the importance of personal management while it is easy to neglect one’s health in this competitive and academic atmosphere at Caltech.

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**Huntington Tea a great success**

by Jonathan Tsai ’10, ExComm

On June 1st, the Caltech Y hosted a trip to the Huntington Gardens with an afternoon tea complete with assorted teacakes, scones, biscuits, finger sandwiches and fruit.

The trip was in tended to get the Caltech community together in a more refined setting.

The Huntington Tea Room was filled with a record number of undergraduate and graduate students as well as a host of faculty who a fterward enjoyed the Huntington Gardens, Art Collection and Library.

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Recent Events (continued)

Explore LA Series features “Body Worlds”

by Ilia Shadrin ’09, ExComm

On June 7, Dongkook Lim and I co-led a trip to the California Science Center to view the famous traveling exhibit “Body Worlds 3: The Story of the Heart”. Continuing the exciting Caltech Y series of Explore LA programs, this trip to a science museum enriched our understanding of the human body and the clever ways of preserving it for scientific purposes.

In our group of almost 30 students (2/3 undergraduate, 1/3 graduate), we walked around both floors of the exhibition, marveling at the detail of human organs and bone structures on display. We learned about the several steps involved in plastination, a method that enabled the preserved tissues to remain flexible until the last stage of the process where they hardened right after gas treatment. For many of us, one of the most memorable specimens displayed was a dense collection of blood vessels of the human head, carefully preserved in their original locations despite having no support from bone or other tissues. On the bus ride back, we were still talking about the plastinated ostrich and giraffe we saw at the end of the exhibit.

The trip was certainly a success, and it has only made the Explore LA series stronger for the future.

Reception held for graduating Y ExComm seniors

by Ilia Shadrin ’09, ExComm

Every year toward the end of 3rd term, all of us at the Y experience a rollercoaster of emotions. On the one hand we’re excited to see our seniors finish their undergraduate careers, but we are also very sad to see them leave our tight group of ExCommers.

On June 13th, we held a graduate reception for our six graduating seniors – June Wicks, Abdul Ahad, Vamsi Chavakula, Natalie Becerra, Kenny Oslund, Vickie Pon, and James Huang. Along with the refreshments and delicious catered food for everyone, we presented our graduates with parting gifts – tea set for June, check for “Free ExComm food” for Abdul, a “Y speedo” for Vamsi, a “Karate Grill Master” apron for James, SF opera tickets for Vickie, a camping headlamp for Natalie, and a gift card for Kenny.

The group pictures we took afterward helped set the tone for memories of one terrific year at the Y, and we are very pleased to have June and Abdul for a bit longer as they begin their graduate studies here at Caltech.

Annual Yosemite and Caltech Centennial Grove Trip

by Athena Castro, Y Executive Director

This year, 20 grad students, including a few spouses, joined the Caltech Y on the annual camping and hiking trip to Yosemite National Park and the Caltech Centennial Grove in the Sierra National Forest from June 18-20.

Mostly international students, the group varied from experienced campers to first-time campers, and all enjoyed Yosemite. The majority of the group hiked the Mist Trail up to Vernal Falls, and quite a few went all the way up to Nevada Falls. A few students also hiked up to Yosemite Falls. The views were spectacular!
On Friday, June 20th, a luminary Paul Graven (with boys in tow) met us at Nelder Grove at the Shadow of the Giants trailhead. Following a brief introduction and short history of Centennial Grove, we all set off to find the Caltech trees. Unfortunately, the named trees and markers eluded us this year. However, everyone was in good spirits and took a picture in front of one of the giant sequoias on the trail. We finished hiking the trail, stopping to admire the views and to take many pictures. We ended with a nice lunch at the trailhead, where another a luminary, Joe Cheng, said a few words about alumnus LeVal Lund. LeVal had faithfully joined the trip and led the group to Centennial Grove for many years until his death earlier this year. While we greatly missed LeVal, this trip was a wonderful way to honor his memory.

Many thanks to the Alummi As association for supporting the trip and to Gnomes Paul Graven and Joe Cheng for meeting the group and spending time with us. What a great way to begin the summer!

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**Trip Summary**

**by Athena Castro, Y Executive Director**

Exploring a new place, experiencing a new culture, serving a community, and having fun! This was what the Caltech Y International Service/Learning Trip was all about.

Building on the success of past service trips to Costa Rica, the Caltech Y led a trip to Guatemala this summer. This unique experience combined the implementation of basic technology projects, volunteer work, homestay living, language training and adventurous travel during the week of June 14th to develop a better understanding of the local culture and the needs of the community.

Participants were divided into various project groups that included the design, construction, and testing of the following:

- Drip irrigation system for community gardens
- Dry composting latrine and seat
- Pedal powered charger
- Improved stove
- Wheelchair
- Dried corn shelling tool

Market tests and interviews of locals were also conducted to identify projects for future E/ME 105 classes. Two promising export projects that emerged were the potential exporting of local honey and designing improved methods for farmers to transport locally grown vegetables to a processing plant for export.

During our time in the community, students lived with host families to further their Spanish skills and be immersed in the Mayan culture. At the end of the trip, the group traveled to the local market in Santa Clara. While enjoying the experience of being in an outdoor market, the students demonstrated and sold the newly remodeled corn shellers, while the latrine, pedal powered, and export groups conducted market studies and interviewed the locals. Once work in the community was wrapped up, the group traveled to the Mayan ruins of Tikal in northern Guatemala.

The International Service Learning Trip allowed students to experience the vision, cooperation, and patience crucial to “making a difference”. The goal for the trip was to advance global and cultural understanding by learning about people and cultures outside the students’ routine scope of experience. In the process, students learned other valuable skills such as teamwork, intercultural communication skills, and responsible citizenship. We worked
hard, explored Guatemala, met new people and made new friends! Most of all, we made a difference in the lives of the Pasajquim community; and more importantly, this trip made a difference in the lives of all of the participants.

Trip Chronicle
by Leon Liu ’10, ExComm

After meeting up with the Landivar students at the airport in Guatemala City on June 30th, the combined group traveled to the town of Antigua to stay overnight. The next day, the group visited Transitions, a local NGO wheelchair shop and “Technologia Para la Salud” (T.P.S.), an organization that develops technologies and products like the stove and latrines. After the visits, the Caltech and Landivar Group traveled to the small Mayan village of Pasajquim where they were joined by another group of Mayan students from San Juan Laguna. The students were assigned to live in the villagers’ houses, usually with a Caltech and a non-Caltech student paired up in each house.

For the next week, the group was divided into separate projects – irrigation, corn sheller, pedal charger and export business. The irrigation project demanded the most labor and was helped by many students from other projects in their free time. Everyday after work was completed, the students and faculty gathered for a daily review of all projects with their leaders. New problems were brought up, and new ideas and solutions were generated and proposed. Over the course of the week, almost every project had made significant progress.

The collaboration between the Caltech and the Guatemalan students not only reduced the language barrier for working with the locals but, more importantly, deepened the friendship between the students from different cultures. Moreover, living with the Mayan host families allowed students to experience first-hand their culture. A traditional Mayan musical performance was also hosted for the group on Independence Day and was greatly enjoyed by all.

On July 6th, the entire group traveled to Santa Clara’s regional market to sell and showcase their products. In the end, the corn shellers were sold out. The other groups also gained valuable insight from the local villagers about their products through their interactions. Many were also able to tour and survey the market that day to experience and learn about the market culture in the Mayan village.

The next day, the group traveled to the beautiful Lake Atitlan. They enjoyed their morning swimming in the lake, while in the afternoon they traveled to the lake side to tour the local shops and restaurants.

After a nother two days, a ll proje cts were completed. The irrigation systems were functioning in both the men’s and women’s gardens in Pasajquim, and a brief ceremony was held in the morning of July 8th to officially hand over the systems to the village. The leaders from Caltech and Pasajquim delivered speeches. It was an emotional moment.

After the ceremony, the group left Pasajquim for Antigua once again. In the next few days, the group toured a major Guatemalan food export company, Maya-Pac S.A., and visited the Universidad Rafael Landivar, where they attended a lecture by representatives from a crafts company. The Caltech group then flew to Tikal, a tourist attraction with ancient Mayan ruins in the thick and humid jungle. The students had a great time learning about the ancient Mayan civilization as well as hiking in the jungle, climbing the pyramids, or just having an enjoyable social time in the pool.

The group at the Mayan ruins of Tikal

Students Gabriela Aldana (Landivar) & Esther Wang (Caltech) work on irrigation system

Working hard in community garden

Adrianne Stroup demos pedal charger

After two days in Tikal, the students flew back to Guatemala City, where they enjoyed the sights of the city. They then flew back to LA the next day.

Overall, the service trip in Guatemala was a nice mix of work and play that gave the participants a sense of accomplishment in being able to help the local community through their actions and, at the same time, provided an opportunity to have fun out side of work touring and socializing with the local students. It was an enjoyable and memorable experience.
Prior to the start of the 2008-09 school year, the Caltech Y organized and participated in a number of activities in support of the orientation program for the new undergraduate and graduate students.

**Annual Y Hike**  
by Greg Fletcher, Y Student Activities & Community Services Director

On Saturday, September 13th, a group of 22 new and returning students gathered at the Caltech Y to pack up for one last adventure of the summer and a chance to kick off the new orientation to Caltech on the Annual Y-Hike by backing up to the Higher Sierra.

Participants were oriented on the basics of safe existence in the wilderness and everyone packed their clothes, food, a necessary equipment for the week in order to facilitate an early start on Sunday. There was some anxiety and much anticipation as participants, who ranged from novices to experienced and thusiasts, prepared for the trip.

This year's group headed to Sequoia National Park for a week in order to facilitate an early start on Sunday. There was some anxiety and much anticipation as participants, who ranged from novices to experienced and thusiasts, prepared for the trip.

The teams concluded their trip together in Lodgepole campground, where they enjoyed a closer-to-home cooked meal and a time of story telling around the campfire.

It was a fun adventure from start to finish!

**Frosh Camp**  
Michelle Jiang '11

As per tradition that originated with the Caltech Y, right before the start of the term on September 22nd, all freshmen were sent off to three days and two nights of fun mixed with informational sessions during their week of Orientation. This year, Frosh Camp took place at an opinion of the Marriott Beach Ventures - an opinion of the festivities (a nd a variety of social events) s oon made everyone aware of the local park and beach.

With many upperclass councilors on hand, interclass interaction was a bound, especially with Caltech Y members helping out with 'Challenges and Choices', and 'Study Habits and You' sessions. Everyone helped the freshmen learn about the Caltech ways.

"Challenges and Choices" represents several scenarios of what could happen academically, socially and emotionally and how the pre-frosh can find help if they were to ever be in a similar situation. At the same time, "Study Habits and You" features a scavenger hunt designed to emphasize the collaborative classroom policy here at Caltech.

Altogether, a lively atmosphere, coupled with a record-high ratio of 42% women, helped set this freshman class apart from the ones before it. With the aid of many upperclassmen, faculty, and a administrative volunteer, the annual Frosh Camp was certainly a fun experience for everyone involved.

**Boys and Girls Club Service Trip**  
by Jonathan Tsai ’10, ExComm

On September 26th, the Caltech Y took a group of about 20 undergraduate and graduate students to the Boys and Girls Club of the Pasedena Boy's and Girl's Club as part of a community service orientation trip for new freshmen and graduate students.

The group helped in gardening, maintenance, and landscaping the grounds. The trip was a great introduction for the new students to the Y, and many left expressing interest and wanting to get more involved with community service projects.
The Caltech Y: Projecting A Great Year!

by Greg Fletcher, Y Student Activities & Community Services Director

Projecting a winner in the upcoming elections may be too risky, even though we will be heading to the polls in less than a month; however, projecting a full and successful year of Y programs is virtually risk free as the ExComm, Social Activism Speaker Series (SASS) Committee, Community Service Coordinators, and Y-Outdoors Committee have been active in preparing for the fall term. Here are some highlights:

**SASS:**

**ELECTION PROGRAMING – 2008**

The Social Activism Speaker Series Committee is kicking off the year by coordinating a series of programs focused on the upcoming elections:

- **Debate Watching Gatherings** (Sep 26, Oct 2, 7, and 15, at the Y) – Just like four years ago, SASS is inviting the Caltech community to come together and discuss debates between presidential candidates and recent elections. Each debate will focus on different sets of issues, including: Foreign Affairs, Domestic Policy, and one will be in a Town Hall format.

- **The Supreme Court, The Election, and Your Future: Teach-In** (Oct 21, 5-6 pm at the Center for Student Services) – SASS has invited Dr. Morgan Kossen, C altech Professor, for an in-depth look at the Supreme Court of the past, present, and future: “How will the 2008 election shape the court and our future?” T his exploration will delve into some of the most important issues at stake as the face of the court is changed in the next four years.

- **California Proposition Information Lunch** (Oct 29, 12-1 pm at the Center for Student Services) – On Nov 4, we will cast our vote for the President, Vice President, and Student Services. A representative from the League of Women Voters will provide an overview for all of us to become more informed on these ballot measures.

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  In addition to these programs hosted by SASS, the election series they have put together will also include the following programs coordinated by other groups on campus with Y assistance:

  - **The 2008 Elections: What Does It Take For Women To Really Crack The Glass Ceiling?** (Hosted by Caltech Women’s Center) – Guest speaker J ean S chroedel, Ch air of th e Politics and Policy Department at the School of Public Policy and Economics, Claremont Graduate University, will speak about women’s participation in these elections, and more broadly address the meaning of leadership.

  - **Making A Difference: How Authentic Leaders Change Their Worlds – Coming Out Day** (Hosted by Prism) – Leadership is a personal act – it consists of setting a vision and enlisting others to help fulfill it. Leaders who are authentic develop greater trust and influence than leaders who are not. In this year’s debate against Proposition 8 to preserve equal legal rights for LGBT people under the California Constitution, we all must be authentic, honest leaders. Come learn what that means and how you can exercise your authentic leadership everyday.

- **Y-OUTDOORS**

  Following up on the annual Y-Hike backpacking a nature trail, Harbor Kayaking trips, and the Y-Outdoor Committee has invited the next big trip – the Los Angeles Hike. And the most exciting adventure of the year, the Full Moon Hike (Oct 14) – Continuing the tradition from last year, leaders from the Y-Outdoors Committee will be taking students off campus into the local San Gabriel mountains to hike under the light of the full moon once a month. Last year the trips were very popular, so we expect more interest than there was space.

- **Adventure 101: Great Hikes In The Greater LA Area** (Oct 16) – Another series set to continue into next year. The Y-Outdoors Committee will be coordinating one talk per month, including: The kic-off talk highlighting some of the great hiking venues in the area, the Caltech Y: Projecting A Great Year!!! by Greg Fletcher, Y Student Activities & Community Services Director

Y COMMUNITY SERVICE

The year in service also kicked off prior to classes with an orientation service trip to the Boys and Girls Club, and our perpetual service project at the Union Station Homeless Shelter continued through the summer and will go on into the year. Residents of the Greater LA Area will also be inspired to action by any of the causes in our community and paths to service opportunities in our area:

- **Y-Community Service Fair** (Oct 31) – Our annual tradition of inviting service agencies to campus was a success, with students and tutors for the upcoming year. We hope to have 20 to 30 different organizations, from on-campus and our local community, participate this year. As in the past, we will also invite organizations from on-campus and our local community, participate this year. As in the past, the tab fair, entertainment, and snacks will be present to entice students to attend Pasqua Mall, where they will have an opportunity to earn more about these organizations and their community contribution.

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**Coming Events (continued)**

**CULTURAL EVENTS**

The Cultural Programming Group, in which the Y participates, is also lining up some events for the first month of school:

- *Hispanic Heritage Month* (Sep/ Oct) – A series of posters and table tents have been prepared for distribution around campus, and the Caltech Bookstore has agreed to set up a display in order to make students more aware of the accomplishments and challenges of the Hispanic community.

Tom Valdez, a former JPL scientist, and once a student of Jaime Escalante of the movie, “Stand and Deliver”, will speak on his research and his experience as a Hispanic scientist.

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**CALENDAR OF UPCOMING EVENTS**

*Note: See Caltech Y website for additional information and schedule updates*

**October**

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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.

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Athena Castro - Executive Director
Greg Fletcher - Student Activities & Community Service Director
Christopher Kealey - Marketing & Development Director

Alycen Chan - RISE Coordinator
Heather Bixby - Student Activities Coordinator
Carmelita Hearn - Administrative Assistant

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)
Robin Abraham* Daniel Erickson Rolf Hastrup Leon Liu* Jane Pinkerton Boyuan Sun*
Richard Beatty Lee Fisher Eric Hochberg Peter Liu* Jean-Paul Revel Abdul-Ahad Tariq*
Abel Bourbois Samantha Foster Catherine Jurca Tom Mannion Candace Rypisi Leslie Tong*
Donald Brown Steve Frautschy Shankar Doreen Mason Sharyn Miller DJ Seo* Jonathan Tsai*
Pradeep Bugga* Barbara Gee Kalyanaraman* Shrayn Mason Fred Shair Benjamin Turk
Bill Burrows John Gee Harry Kawahara Robert Nathan Susan Shen* Howell Tyson
Marshall Cohen Dave Gillies Nancy Lan Carel Otte Betty Sirri Dorothy Tyson
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