

OCCIDENTAL

WINTER 2012



“O” TEAM

Diagnosed with multiple myeloma at 69, chemistry professor **Tetsuo Otsuki** turned to the medical experts at City of Hope—including former student **Len Farol '94**

OCCIDENTAL

OCCIDENTAL COLLEGE MAGAZINE
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DEPARTMENTS

2 CORRESPONDENCE

As President Veitch sees it, Occidental's relationship with Los Angeles is an asset that few liberal arts colleges can match. Also: more Swan stories, education department questions, and magazine *mea culpas*.



4 FROM THE QUAD

Eric Kleinsasser '12 had a season for the record books as an Oxy senior, but the cross country standout recalls the minutiae of teamwork first and foremost. Also: filmmaker Eva Sweeney '08 gives voice to the disabled, "NCIS" returns to the scene of the crime, and Ernesto Galarza '27's memoir *Barrio Boy* revisits the Oxy bookshelf.

30 TIGERWIRE

Class notes for odd years, and farewells to trustee emeritus Chuck Miller and Honor System champion Bob Leisy '49.



56 APPRECIATION

Following a 38-year career with the United Nations, George Sherry became the primary liaison between Oxy students and the world.



FEATURES

8 WHAT CAN YOU DO ...

... with a liberal arts degree? Just about anything you can imagine—from opening a Malaysian eatery to scoring a pair of World Series rings.

20 SECOND OPINION

Diagnosed with cancer of the blood cells, chemistry professor Tetsuo Otsuki prepared to die. Then Dr. Len Farol '94 made it his mission to save his mentor.

26 THE OCCIDENTAL MODEL

Can the liberal arts flourish at Taiwan's vocation-minded National Chengchi University? Oxy professor of politics Tsung Chi—a Chengchi alumnus—gives it the old college try.

From Jonathan Veitch

To Know Occidental Is to Understand Los Angeles

FOR ALMOST 125 YEARS, OCCIDENTAL has been an integral part of the fabric of Los Angeles. In 1887, when “The Occidental University of Los Angeles, California” was incorporated (the term “university” was quietly dropped five years later), Los Angeles had a population of roughly 50,000 in a world where most people lived in the country. Today, the majority of people live in urban areas, including the more than 330 cities—Los Angeles among them—that have more than 1 million residents. As cities become central to modern life, Occidental’s relationship with Los Angeles becomes an asset that few other liberal arts colleges can match. That’s why our recent efforts to highlight that relationship are so important, and why we plan to deepen and diversify this area of historic strength.

From the beginning, Los Angeles has helped shape Occidental, and vice versa. As early as 1903, students were exploring the city under the auspices of the Los Angeles Institute of Social Study. In 1938, when land use planning in Southern California was in its adolescence, President Remsen Bird was appointed a member of the city’s Planning Commission. Shortly thereafter, future President Arthur G. Coons ’20—then head of the newly formed Pacific Southwest Academy—appointed an academy committee that produced a visionary call for bold new brand of regional planning, *Los Angeles: Preface to a Master Plan*. (Other contributors to this now-classic 1941 volume included Dr. Coons and Oxy economist John Parke Young ’17.)

It was the same kind of vision that Coons Professor of the History of Ideas Emeritus Robert Winter brought to the study of Los Angeles architecture, as evidenced in the seminal 1965 work he wrote with David

Gebhard, *A Guide to Architecture in Southern California* (now in its fifth edition).

This is a tradition of engagement that continues today with the service of politics professor Regina Freer, who in 2006 was appointed by Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa to the City Planning Commission. A scholar of race and politics, demographic change, and urban politics, Regina—currently the commission’s vice chair—has quietly rendered distinguished service to the city. The work of Bob Gottlieb and his colleagues at the Urban & Environmental Policy Institute has been enormously influential in helping the city redefine the Los Angeles River and to rethink food and transportation policy, among other issues. More than a reflection of Occidental’s deeply rooted commitment to the public good, this kind of involvement with the city and region offers our students unique access to one of the world’s great urban laboratories. Los Angeles is a place where national and international trends are born. UEPi’s farm-to-school program, which today is a national phenomenon, is an outstanding example of this kind of local trendsetting.

Oxy’s engagement with the city is not limited to politics and environmental policy. As one of the world’s great cultural engines, Los Angeles offers one-of-a-kind opportunities for courses in art, literature, and film that take advantage of the city’s rich inventory of museums, galleries, and libraries. Occidental shares the Billington Professor of U.S. History with the Huntington Library, has forged academic partnerships with the Autry National Center, and recruited *Los Angeles Times* architecture critic Christopher Hawthorne and Los Angeles Unified school board member Steve Zimmer to teach. This can lead to serendipitous discoveries, as students in



Photo by Marc Campos

Amy Lyford’s course, *Art in Los Angeles, 1945-80*, learned this fall.

They found that artist Anne Gauldlin ’73 had two installations in the exhibit on feminist art at the Otis College of Arts and Design—part of *Pacific Standard Time*, the series of collaborative exhibitions chronicling the post-WWII art movement in Los Angeles. We also intend to be an active leader in the cultural life of the city. On January 24, for example, Occidental and Zócalo will present a panel discussion titled “Is This the Golden Age of Television?” at the Museum of Contemporary Art. A panel that includes TV producer James Andrew Miller ’79 and adjunct history and American studies assistant professor Thad Russell will explore why so many people complain about the state of TV today, while at the same time praising such critically acclaimed shows as “*Mad Men*.”

Even as its influence is felt globally, Los Angeles is not an easy city to know or understand. What more attractive prospect could a college want? Our task is to foster a program of robust civic engagement and multiple opportunities for students and faculty to learn in, and from, the city. I firmly believe, as did Dr. Coons, that without this kind of involvement, Oxy cannot be its true self.

Jonathan Veitch, President

Letters

Secrets of Swan

I enjoyed reading “Evolution of Swan” (Summer 2011), and I now regret that I didn’t follow up and send in my memories about Swan Hall when you asked for them.

As a freshman in 1964, I was chosen to be in the College Honors program. One of the perks was to get a key to a room in the center of Swan that was only available to the 20 or so people in the program. To my knowledge, I was the only person who ever went in there. There were some bookshelves holding outdated encyclopedias or something, some chairs and tables, and I recall a red carpet. It was cool and kind of elegant. I spent a lot of time up there looking out the windows as college life passed me by below. I lived at home with my family, so the room in Swan became my headquarters for studying and daydreaming on campus. I wish I’d had the courage to try living in there. I don’t think anyone would have caught me.

At that time, the Alumni Office was located on the top floor of Swan. I worked one hour a day in the Alumni Office for all four years of my college career, under Mrs. McMenamin, Mrs. Rice, and Mrs. Love—all mothers of boys I had gone to high school with, two of whom also attended Oxy. That job and another in the library gave me the only spending money I ever had at that time, a magnificent \$20 a week, I think, and with that I managed to buy a bowl of soup in the Cooler for 25 cents a day and pay for my books. I remember the pigeons cooing and rustling in the attic. I used to skip up and down the stairs past Dr. Winter’s office to the only place on campus that welcomed me.

The Alumni Office moved to the new administration building under the president’s office when I was a senior, and it was never as nice as it had been up in Swan.

MARTHA CARRIGER GIFFEN ’68
Altadena

A Failing Grade

Regarding “Back to School” (Fall 2011): I have read the accreditation report and found it to be very disturbing. The article mentions that a number of findings are being contested. Having been in education for more than 40 years and experienced many accreditations, I know these evaluations do not come

as a surprise, and the education department had plenty of time to prepare a strong report and provide the visiting committee with a very positive experience. A continuing theme in the evaluation is the lack of communication and collaboration within the department. The department is small, and communication would seem to be easy—if the department members wished that to be the case.

The cost of a year at Occidental is in excess of \$50,000; the students in the education department and the credentialing program have a right to expect their teachers to do better than the accreditation report shows. The Occidental program was evaluated in nine separate areas; Oxy did not meet six of those criteria, met with reservations one, and fully passed only two.

At one time Occidental had an outstanding education department. What happened? Maybe Oxy should do as is done in many athletic programs: If the program is not being successful, remove the coaches (in this case, the education department staff) and start anew, or simply drop the program. As a high school teacher and counselor, I did not hesitate to recommend Occidental to my best students. Were I still working at this time, I would have to think twice to make that recommendation, particularly if the student was looking to pursue teaching as a career.

A side note: I lived in Swan Hall for two years—an experience that provided a lifetime of memories. Today’s students have no idea of what they are missing.

GENE BADSTUBNER ’61
Ventura

Department of Corrections

In “Tigers Under the Tree” (Fall 2011), the first name of Vapur Anti-Bottle co-creator **Brent Reinke ’84** was misspelled.

In “Evolution of Swan” (Summer 2011), ASOC’s first female president was misidentified. **Eileen Baughman ’45** lived in historically all-male Swan during spring 1945.

And in the November 2011 newsletter *Oxy125: A Tradition of Giving*, the maiden name of **Ann (Hoffmann) Hinchliffe ’57** was misspelled.

The *Occidental Magazine* staff regrets the errors. We welcome your feedback and corrections—and we pledge, on the memory of **Laurence De Rycke**, to do better in 2012.

—DICK ANDERSON (oxymag@oxy.edu)

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Little Feats

Eric Kleinsasser '12 had a season for the record books as an Oxy senior, but the cross country standout relishes the teamwork and training that got him there

BY MICHAEL WELLS PHOTO BY MIKE ROEMER

He'll have one of the most exceptional careers of any Occidental athlete to look back on someday, but that won't be what men's cross country star Eric Kleinsasser '12 remembers most about his record-setting collegiate running career and his final season.

"I'll always look to the big competitions, because those are memorable by nature," says Kleinsasser, who—in leading the Tigers to their first NCAA West Regional crown since 1992—became the only man to win four consecutive SCIAC individual championships in the conference's 96-year history. "But what I'm going to remember more are all of the little runs, workouts, and moments with the team that really stick out in my mind."

Under fourth-year head coach Rob Bartlett, the Oxy men's squad made the trip to the NCAA national meet in Oshkosh, Wis., placing 27th in the nation for Division III. The Tigers won their first SCIAC title since 2007, and Kleinsasser won three of the seven races he competed in this season—the UC Riverside Invitational at the UC Riverside Farm Course on September 17, the SCIAC

Multi Dual at Prado Park on October 15, and the SCIAC Championship at Pomona-Pitzer on October 29.

For Kleinsasser, a geology major from Glendale, the little moments filled in the gaps on a great season—"so many that I couldn't begin to name them all," he says.

It won't be easy to replace Kleinsasser in the Tigers lineup, but Bartlett (named West Region coach of the year by the U.S. Track & Field and Cross Country Coaches Association) has three freshmen who appear up to the challenge after their own exceptional seasons. Cole Williams was the fifth freshman in the nation to cross the line at the national race, and Williams, Colin Smith, and Louis Jochems all earned All-Region honors at Pomona-Pitzer for finishing in the top 35.

"Colin and Cole have an interesting dynamic right now, and we'll see how it develops over the next three years," Kleinsasser says. "They could be a powerful force as the two front-runners."

It will be one that Kleinsasser will have to watch from the real world, though, as his focus shifts to life after Oxy. "Right now I'm coming up with plans that I want to come to

fruition for grad school," Kleinsasser says—although he's not certain what those plans are just yet. "I don't want to make specific goals and not have them attained."

Inside the classroom, he's working on a geochemistry research project that he hopes will change the chemical weathering process by which minerals leak chemicals into the ocean, positively impacting the climate. After Kleinsasser receives his diploma in May, he plans to go to graduate school and eventually earn a Ph.D in geochemistry. "If I can apply my technique effectively, I'll keep expanding my studies," he says. "Research is something I'll continue doing, and teaching is something that I've always enjoyed."

As for running, he'll start out slow with marathons, eventually working his way up to ultra-marathons. "I have a tentative life plan, and I'm sure it will change. Once I get up over 40, if I haven't fallen apart, I'll give ultra-marathons [which commonly range from 31 miles to 100 miles] a shot," Kleinsasser says.

And if he's as successful as he's always been, he'll do just fine. "The trend has been since I started running, the longer the distance, the more I excel." ■

"It isn't anywhere near the same having an individual award without getting the team victory as well," says Kleinsasser. He found able support this year from an Oxy cross country squad that boasted three freshman standouts: Colin Smith of Las Vegas; Cole Williams of San Francisco; and Louis Jochems of Albuquerque, N.M. (For full sports coverage, visit www.oxyathletics.com.)



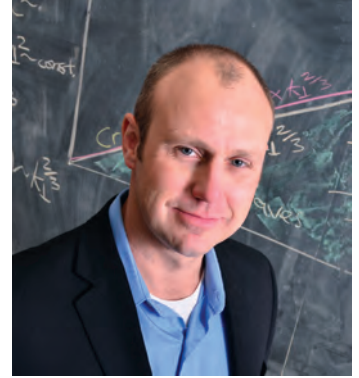
Newsmakers

■ **President Jonathan Veitch** and Chancellor Yingxing Hong of Nanjing University signed an agreement December 8 to promote the exchange of students and faculty, as well as teaching and research materials. A delegation led by Jorge Gonzalez, dean of the College and vice president for academic affairs, flew to Nanjing the following week to explore a possible collaboration on environmental issues with the support of the Henry Luce Foundation. Nanjing is one of three Chinese cities where Oxy students currently study overseas. <http://www.oxy.edu/x12004.xml>

■ **Construction has begun** on a \$6.8-million, 1-megawatt ground-mounted solar array, a project whose innovative design takes a distinctively liberal arts approach to green power with its blending of technology and art. When completed this spring, it will be one of the largest ground-mounted arrays in Los Angeles, generating about 11 percent of the College's annual electrical usage and an estimated savings of \$200,000 a year. <http://www.oxy.edu/x12108.xml>



■ **Mark Harmon** and his "NCIS" crew have become a fixture on campus. TV's No. 1 drama has filmed at Oxy three times now, with various landmarks standing in for the U.S. Naval Academy; a science museum in Washington, D.C.; and the U.S. Embassy in Belgravia. "9021" ... who?



■ **Greg Howes '93** was one of only 94 recipients nationwide of the Presidential Early Career Awards for Scientists and Engineers, the U.S. government's highest honor bestowed to scientists and engineers in the early stages of their research careers. Howes, an assistant professor of physics and astronomy at the University of Iowa, researches kinetic astrophysical plasma turbulence. <http://www.oxy.edu/x11821.xml>

Getting to Know Eva Sweeney '08

All She's Asking For Is a Little Respect

EVA SWEENEY '08 WAS BORN WITH CEREBRAL PALSY, A condition that bars her from speaking, walking, or using her muscles in conventional ways. Growing up, she got used to people telling her that she couldn't do much.

Luckily, she ignored them, graduating from Oxy with a B.A. in women's studies/gender studies and working today as a freelance writer, disability rights activist, and now documentary filmmaker. *Respect: The Joy of Aides*, which explores the relationships between people with disabilities and their aides, will premiere January 7 at the Downtown Independent Theater in Los Angeles. (Visit www.joyofaides.com for more information.)

Sweeney made the film to help counteract media portrayals of home-healthcare aides as abusive. "I got fed up with the lack of good portrayals of people with disabilities and their aides," she explains. "There needs to be more balance."

The Los Angeles native, who gets around via electric wheelchair and talks by spelling out sentences on a letter board, says she chose Oxy because the College was enthusiastic and excited to have her as a student. She returned to campus October 5 to give a funny and frank presentation as part of the College's inaugural (Dis)Ability Awareness Week.



Sweeney spoke at Oxy on October 5 as part of (Dis)Ability Awareness Week.

Sweeney, who is a lesbian, gave advice on finding a gay-friendly home-healthcare aide and how to date and express sexuality as a disabled person, as well as general tips on interacting with disabled people. They include: "Do ask before you 'help' someone" and "Don't speak unnecessarily loudly or use a patronizing tone of voice."

"Eva discussed not only the challenges of dating and being sexually active as a person with disabilities, but more importantly, she offered practical suggestions on how to navigate these challenges," says Kristi Upson-Saia, assistant professor of religious studies and organizer of (Dis)Ability Awareness Week. "I was impressed by her mixture of intelligence, warmth, and sense of humor."—RHEA R. BORJA

"NCIS," Sweeney, and all page 7 photos by Marc Campos; Howes by Dan Kempf, Impact Photo/Joe Photo

■ **Michael Spieckerman '15** examines a tree split in two by the powerful Santa Ana winds on December 1, just missing this car parked outside Braun Hall. While Oxy lost power for 24 hours and canceled classes for a day, the campus avoided major damage. A downed power line sparked a small grass fire that led to the early-morning evacuation of several residence halls, but quick action by firefighters doused the flames.



Notable/Quotable



“Be fearless and go for everything. Try everything.” —Vance Mueller '86

former running back for the Los Angeles Raiders and football and track and field standout at Oxy, telling a student audience that aggressiveness and a bold sense of hard work could help them find the right career path. Mueller participated on an all-star panel October 4 co-sponsored by the nascent Occidental Sports Business and Law Network and the athletic department.
<http://www.oxy.edu/x11816.xml>

“The pride I feel is tempered by a bittersweet feeling about the people who have been left behind.” —Eric Schlosser

reporter for The Atlantic, expressing his amazement that Fast Food Nation, his 2001 exposé of the fast-food industry, is still part of the national debate. Delivering the annual Dungan Lecture in Thorne Hall on November 17, he added that Americans must create a sustainable national food system for even low-income communities. <http://www.oxy.edu/x11985.xml>



Video Extra: A Day at the Green Bean, Oxy's No. 1 Hot Spot



Since October 2009, when five entrepreneurial students transformed the old Green Room in Johnson Student Center into a viable campus space, the Green Bean Coffee Lounge has become a hub of the Oxy community. To watch a day in the life of the Green Bean—16 hours and 15 minutes of activity distilled into an overcaffeinated 1 minute and 45 seconds—point your browser to <http://vimeo.com/occidental/greenbean> and savor the flavor!

Bookshelf

■ **Barrio Boy (40th Anniversary Edition)**, by Ernesto Galarza '27 (*University of Notre Dame Press*; \$18). In tracing his journey from a small Mexican village to the thriving barrio of Sacramento in the early 20th century, Galarza recounts the early experiences of his extraordinary life—from revolution in Mexico to segregation in America—that led to his work as a labor organizer, historian, professor, and community activist. He was nominated for the Nobel Prize in Literature in 1979 and died in 1984.

■ **Performing Sex**, by Breanne Fahs '01 (*SUNY Press*; \$29.95). Conventional wisdom holds that American women today are more sexually liberated than ever before, but a number of startling statistics call this perceived victory into question. Interviewing 40 women in *Performing Sex*, Fahs demonstrates that women's sexual subjectivities—and the ways they continually grapple with shifting definitions of liberation—represent provocative spaces for critical inquiry and personal discovery, ultimately generating novel ways of imagining and reimagining power, pleasure, and resistance. Fahs is assistant professor of women and gender studies at Arizona State University.

■ **Paths of the Atlantic Slave Trade: Interactions, Identities, and Images**, edited by Ana Lucia Araujo (*Cambria Press*; \$25), includes a chapter by associate professor of history Sharla Fett titled “The Ship of Slavery: Atlantic Slave Trade Suppression, Liberated Africans, and Black Abolition Politics in Antebellum New York.”

■ **Times of Plums**, by Darren Angelo (*createspace.com*; \$14.45). Returning to campus in 1971 following a one-year suspension for leading the takeover of the administration building, college senior Carlo “Yago” Cappogia finds that idealism has been replaced by pragmatism leading up to a climatic anti-war march in San Francisco. Angelo is a pseudonym for the author, who finished the first draft of this novel in 1971 as an undergrad at Oxy.

After four years of critical thinking,
interdisciplinary study, and teamwork,
Occidental graduates leave Eagle Rock
ready to take on the world.
But what in the world awaits them?



What can you do with a

Liberal
Arts
Degree?

Just about
anything
you can
imagine.

While preachers and teachers—and, for that matter, doctors and lawyers and even saloon-keepers—were popular vocations in 1887, much of what passes for work in the 21st century simply didn't exist when Occidental was founded. While the St. Louis Brown Stockings (charter members of the American League and predecessors to the Cardinals) had been around since 1876, the first comic book was more than 40 years from going to press; farms, not Farm-Ville, dotted the landscape; and Malaysian food was a dish best served hot in Malaysia.

For the first two decades of Oxy's existence, students selected from three courses of study: classical, literary, and scientific. Today, with 31 majors (and a 32nd on the way), there are practically no boundaries to vocational satisfaction. So that a girl who grows up reading comic books can become an editor in the four-color medium. And a boy who injured both his knees in high school can follow his big-league dreams to St. Louis. And a couple of guys can translate their study-abroad street cuisine into a thriving Seattle eatery. And if you still want to become a preacher, Oxy can set you on the path to the pulpit. That's the beauty of a liberal arts education.



PATRICK MCCREDIE '09
HISTORY, POLITICS
 "It's been a lot of work, a lot of learning, and a long journey," but Satay celebrated its one-year anniversary in December.

PETER RINGOLD '09
DIPLOMACY AND WORLD AFFAIRS
 "Had I not studied abroad, I most likely would not have gone to Malaysia and been inspired to open the restaurant."

Photo by Joel Levin

See the world, eat Malaysian food, open a restaurant.

A background in history, politics, and diplomacy is not generally considered a prerequisite to running a successful restaurant. But, two years after graduation, college buddies **Patrick McCredie '09** (history, politics) and **Peter Ringold '09** (DWA) find themselves business partners in a Malaysian street food counter-service restaurant called Satay in Seattle's Wallingford neighborhood.

Ringold says he has always been interested in travel and other cultures, so diplomacy and world affairs seemed a natural major for him. The restaurant business venture largely evolved out of Ringold's Oxy study-abroad trip to Thailand during his junior year. McCredie met up with Ringold at the end of his program, and the two traveled from Thailand to Malaysia to India over five weeks. "During our travels we fell in love with the street food and began to muse over whether we could develop a business around an authentic street-food concept," recalls McCredie, who came to Occidental from Hemet.

Following graduation, McCredie moved to Seattle, where Ringold lived, and they

developed a business plan. (Ringold's Aunt Maimum, a native Malay and "an amazing cook," helped standardize the recipes.) "If we could do this in one year's time, then we would open up," McCredie recalls. "If we couldn't, I would move back to California."

Since Satay opened in December 2010, it has been featured in *Seattle Met* magazine's annual "Best Asian Restaurants" writeup, as well as on the Food Network series "Meat & Potatoes." Restaurant critic Bethany Jean Clement, writing in *The Stranger* (Seattle's alternate weekly), declared Satay's peanut sauce "hands down the best in town, dark and rich and chunky. ... you're not going to cook this food yourself, and the charming, shambolic Peter and Patrick are happy to make it for you."

Both say it was what they learned at Oxy outside of their coursework that has been most helpful in their restaurant business. "Had I not studied abroad in Thailand, I most likely would not have gone to Malaysia and been inspired to open the restaurant," Ringold says. "My time in ASOC Senate gave me many of the tools I now use when running

the restaurant," McCredie says. "Working in student government improved my organizational abilities, taught me how to delegate, and most importantly, enabled me to work constructively with different personalities."

However, they both credit their liberal arts education specifically with giving them the open-mindedness and flexibility of thought to pursue their restaurant dream. "This is not an education that endows one with expert knowledge in any given field. Rather, what is gained through the liberal arts experience is openness to foreign concepts and ideas, versatility of thought, and ultimately a quality of mind that can't be had elsewhere," McCredie says.

"To say Occidental prepared us for the trials of opening a restaurant would be absurd—no liberal arts education can achieve such a thing," he adds. "What Oxy did do was far more valuable. This education taught us the value of critical thought and the willingness to pursue what some may deem to be 'improbable dreams.' We can now say from experience that those lessons will last us a lifetime." —SAMANTHA B. BONAR '90

Shape the future of secondary education in your native L.A.

You could say that **David Estrada '05** was born into education. From 1981 to 1989, Estrada's father, William D. Estrada, was assistant dean of students at Oxy, and he kept a crib for his infant son in his office, where the junior Estrada "sat in" on many of his father's meetings.

Estrada chose Occidental independently of his parents who were, in fact, surprised when he told them he was serious about going there. Estrada didn't want to go to a big university; he was looking for "a homey, small community" and found it at Oxy. And while Estrada isn't working in a classroom or on a campus, he has combined his pas-

sions for education and policy and put them to work for the Los Angeles Unified School District. The ability to explore varying interests is part of the liberal arts mantra, and Estrada found that Oxy allowed him to build his niche. He fondly remembers his independent study with American studies professor Xiao-huang Yin as well as classes with professors Regina Freer, Arthé Anthony, and Doug Smith.

"Oxy was a place where I could dabble a lot and create my own emphasis and explore my interests," Estrada notes. "American studies was an umbrella major—a nice hybrid that allowed me to experience the

whole liberal arts concept. If I had chosen a larger school, I wouldn't have been able to go in and out of my major the way I was able to at Occidental."

Estrada is currently a senior policy adviser for LAUSD school board member Bennett Kayser, whose District 5 includes many of the city's northeast neighborhoods, from Silver Lake to Highland Park. It's Estrada's second tour of duty, having worked from 2005 to 2007 as a policy analyst for former board member David Tokofsky before attending USC for his master's in public policy. Estrada met Kayser in 2006 and quickly came to respect his activism and admire his background as a teacher in the trenches. As a child of educators (his mother is a teacher in the Alhambra Unified School District) and someone whose greatest satisfaction is "to be part of an organization that improves the lives of people," Estrada eagerly accepted when Kayser offered him a position after a successful campaign for the District 5 seat. "David is clever, caring, and a talented policy analyst and developer," Kayser says.

LAUSD—the country's second-largest public school system—has wrestled with its reputation, declining enrollment, and budget shortfalls, but Estrada exudes confidence about the district and its future. He says, without a shred of doubt in his voice, that his future children will absolutely attend LAUSD schools. He calls the district "a leader" in terms of looking at cutting-edge models for new schools and adds, "We're never trying to stop innovation or potential avenues for success. We face many of the same issues as other large districts, like how best to facilitate student achievement and how procedures, policies, and resources can be maximized. We're aggressive in making sure that we're accountable so that there isn't waste and that resources are distributed equitably."

As a liaison with the communities he serves, Estrada's greatest satisfaction is seeing resources at work for the benefit of students. He loves visiting schools where he attended groundbreakings years ago that are now bustling educational communities. "Seeing these edifices of education vibrant and active is very rewarding."

—COLLEEN SHARKEY

Photo by Marc Campos



DAVID ESTRADA '05
AMERICAN STUDIES

"At my job, I have to be able to adapt quickly. It's something that Oxy prepared me well for—to think on my feet."



Photo by Marc Campos

Give voice to the children on the playgrounds of Inglewood.

In “Looney Tunes” cartoons, it’s cute when Tweety Bird utters his signature line, “I tawt I taw a puddy tat!” But when a 5-year old says it? Not so much. By the time a child is 5, he should be able to speak clearly in sentences of up to eight words, ask and answer questions, and have a vocabulary of up to 2,000 words. If he has problems with that, that’s when **Ana Garay ‘05** steps in.

A speech-language pathologist for Inglewood Preschools in Los Angeles, she helps children who stutter or lisp or who have other speech-development problems better communicate. She especially likes working with pre-schoolers learning English and Spanish at the same time, so that she can not only help improve what a child says (“expressive” language), but also what a child understands (“receptive” language).

Garay says speech language pathology is a perfect fit for her: The field covers a broad range of knowledge and skills, from

audiology, anatomy, physiology to the psychological aspects of communication, and she enjoys her ability to customize her expertise according to each child’s needs. She received her M.A. in communicative disorders from Cal State Long Beach last May.

“You learn about everything, from how a child develops language to how the brain works,” Garay says about her field. “And I love the service component—you have a direct impact on someone’s life.”

Her ability to assess, analyze, and adapt was forged at Occidental, where she double-majored in Spanish literature and religious studies. “I wanted to expose myself to different ways of thinking,” Garay says of her religious studies courses. “It was a great experience.”

Another seminal experience was traveling to Brazil on a summer research abroad grant to research the Afro-Catholic religious group *Irmandade de Nossa Senhora da Boa Morte e Gloria* (“The Sisterhood of Our Lady

of Good Death and Glory”). It was Garay’s first time out of the United States, and she learned not only how to conduct interviews, create surveys, and perform other research, but how to adapt to a different culture and language. “Brazil helped me become more of an independent thinker and doer,” she says.

Born in Los Angeles’s Echo Park neighborhood, Garay grew up in Hollywood and attended junior high and high school in Watts. She learned about the College through word of mouth, and she tagged along with a high-school friend on a campus visit.

“I fell in love with the aesthetics of the campus,” Garay says. “Everyone I talked to had all these great things to say about Oxy, and it became my first choice.”

“This sounds clichéd, but Oxy helps you find yourself and learn your philosophy of life,” adds Garay, who spoke about her career on campus November 8. “That was invaluable.” —RHEA R. BORJA



Photo by Marc Campos

Add swagger to Stags football—even if you're a Tiger at heart.

"I've always had a tendency to think about plays and think about coaching," says **Kyle Sweeney '00**, who led Claremont-Mudd-Scripps to a 4-5 mark in his first season as the Stags' head football coach this fall. "Even back when I was a kid I remember getting the John Madden playbook that came with the video game, and I would mark plays. That's not exactly typical for an 8-year-old."

An economics major at Oxy, Sweeney may have shown signs of coaching genes at a young age, but it was his experience as a student-athlete that cultivated his lifelong interest and nudged him into his current career—one that finds him back at his old SCIAC stomping grounds, although wearing a different uniform this time.

"During my senior year at Oxy, I had some opportunities when some of the business recruiters were coming in and I went to a couple of those meetings and lunches," Sweeney recalls. "I looked around and said, 'I have an econ degree, and certainly I can use that at some point.' But coaching—and staying in football—really appealed to me."

So he went the typical route of someone trying to coach at the collegiate level, getting his first coaching job as a graduate assistant with Illinois Wesleyan College. "At worst, two years later I was going to have a master's degree, and I coached football while I did it with my econ degree to fall back on if I needed it," Sweeney says. "At best, I'd fall into something I loved. I did, and stayed with it."

From Illinois Wesleyan, he went to Endicott College, just outside Boston, where he spent five years as an assistant, eventually working his way into the defensive coordinator role. Then he landed his first head coaching job at MacMurray College in Jacksonville, Ill., in 2005, where he became the youngest NCAA Division III coach in the nation at the time at age 27. Later, he spent two years as the University of Chicago's defensive coordinator before scoring the CMS job last summer.

His time at Oxy prepared him to be successful in the evolving and challenging field of economics while giving him dynamic skills to use in his true passion and expertise

of coaching football. "I've been able to apply my economics degree. I certainly have to manage a budget and use a lot of the planning and organization that comes with an econ for business degree," Sweeney says. "Whether it's the sales part that goes into recruiting or the day-to-day operations, I think all of that applies. It's just a different product. I'm representing a college as opposed to a major accounting firm."

Sweeney started all four years as a safety for the Tigers, lettered four years on the Oxy baseball team, and worked as an RA, all while upholding a high grade point average and serving as a leader to the campus community.

Ironically, Sweeney's route led him to a place very similar to the one he left in Eagle Rock when his professional life started a little more than 10 years ago. "It's funny, because it's a rival. On one hand I know so much about it and I can tell you the good and the bad," Sweeney says. "But at the end of the day when I'm talking to a recruit, it's hard to say anything bad about Oxy because I had such a good experience."—MICHAEL WELLS

Parlay your penchant for metrics into a full-time job tending to ZyngaVille.

Like many people, **Bradley Ross '09** messes around with FarmVille and Mafia Wars at work. But unlike most, it's his job to do so. "I never really expected to get a job where I would directly be using some of the more advanced, abstract math I learned, but I thought that the methodology and approach one learns when studying math would provide more opportunities for me once I finished school," says Ross, a product manager at San Francisco-based Zynga, maker of the popular Facebook games.

Always an enthusiastic gamer, Ross garnered an internship at El Segundo-based Electronic Arts the summer before his senior year, working on its mobile/interactive team as a marketing manager and producer on Scrabble for Facebook. "It was a pretty awesome experience, since the Facebook gaming platform was relatively new and the user base was growing very rapidly, and the online websites and gaming space are both very metrics-driven," he says. He continued to work with EA as a senior, going full time in a more products-oriented role after he graduated. In early 2010, Ross took his current

job with Zynga, which "has always had the reputation for being a very successful metrics-driven social-gaming company."

A native of Greenwood Village, Colo., Ross pledged Phi Psi fraternity, played Ultimate Frisbee, and served as an RA in Norris and Stewie halls. He also took advantage of the College's offerings in sociology, Spanish, and physics and studied abroad in Spain. "Oxy really gave me the opportunity to explore who I was and what I wanted to be doing," he says. "Being able to try out things both in class and out that I wouldn't have otherwise tried made my Oxy experience."

Even in a world populated by CityVille, FrontierVille, and CastleVille (Zynga's newest online metropolis), the liberal arts remain close to Ross' heart. "The thought process and skill set I learned has definitely helped me in the problems and projects I work on now. My math background has helped a lot with opening up opportunities for me, but the other disciplines I've studied round me out and prevent me from being bucketed into being just a numbers guy."

—SAMANTHA BONAR

Photo by Jim Block



BRADLEY ROSS '09
MATHEMATICS
 "Oxy gave me a great opportunity to explore several different areas of study and find what clicked with me."



LESANDRE BARLEY '04
RELIGIOUS STUDIES
 "Oxy is eclectic, and I knew I needed to broaden my horizons. It was also close to home, my mother, and her business, Vinyl Ladies—which is now my business."

Photo by Marc Campos

Bring new ideas and renewed luster to the family business.

Lesandre Barley '04 readily acknowledges that her religious studies degree provided little insight into doing leather and vinyl repair, restoration, and re-coloring. But the second-generation owner of Vinyl Ladies—the Running Springs-based business founded by her mother, CC, in 1986—insists that she "got what she came for" at Occidental.

Although she found her religious studies classes to be "compelling and enjoyable," Barley says, "Oxy's more valuable contributions to my education were things like networking, articulating myself and my ideas, and the importance of service learning and action within one's community. All these have directly helped me as a business owner and operator, as well as on a personal and spiritual level."

Barley admits she felt "rudderless" after graduating—"no more enlightened about my ideal job description than when I entered Oxy." Meanwhile, her mother had carved out a niche industry with her vinyl repair business, and she was struggling to find

apprentices. “I saw that the business would eventually fade as she moved closer to retirement, and it seemed like a waste to let that happen,” says Barley, who dyed her first panel at age 7.

To her surprise, she fell in love with the business. “The work is creatively demanding and mobile, so I’m not tied to a desk in an artificially lit room,” Barley says. Most of her work is done on-site at large RV dealerships and airports. Her latest project is developing Rub ‘n Restore, Vinyl Ladies’ proprietary dye, with the goal of revolutionizing the coatings industry. She has pioneered new techniques, expanded their clientele base, built a website, received aerospace training, and met FAA guidelines to work on aircraft.

“The ultimate goal, which I don’t think is unreasonable, is to manufacture and market Rub ‘n Restore not only to consumers but also to professionals in the aerospace industry,” says Barley, who recently was nominated for a Spirit Award, given to small business entrepreneurs in the Inland Empire. It may not be the spiritual reward she was expecting as a religious studies major, but it’s restored her faith in a job well done.

—SAMANTHA BONAR

Listen, sing, laugh, and pray as a pastor in South America.

The daughter of professional musicians, **Sarah Henken ’02** came to Occidental with a song in her soul and faith in her heart. “I wanted an education that made me a critical thinker, a global citizen, and a better writer,” says the native Angeleno. “My time at Oxy helped lay the foundation for the journey that I’m on.”

That journey has taken Henken from the San Fernando Valley to South America, where she now serves as the Presbyterian Church (USA)’s regional liaison for the Andean region, with her home base in La Paz, Bolivia. In her current role, Henken hopes to keep lines of communication open between the U.S. national church and its South American affiliates. She also works to support the Andean churches with institutional development and mediate problems that they encounter as they are working to grow as organizations. “There’s something about being in South America that has awakened a different part of myself.”

Photo courtesy Sarah Henken '02



THE REV. SARAH HENKEN '02
MUSIC

“I wanted an education that made me a critical thinker, a global citizen, and a better writer. Oxy introduced me to a lot of the complexity that exists in the world.”

Henken’s family switched churches while she was in high school. She was impressed and inspired to find a female minister at her new church, and her subsequent experience as a youth delegate at the church’s biennial General Assembly convinced her that she could combine her passions for music, language, and working with youth by being a pastor. In college, Henken worked closely with the Rev. Anne Cohen, then Oxy’s director of religious and spiritual life. “I appreciated having that space to explore what faith means to people’s lives and making that part of the conversation on campus.”

Henken knew that she should have more life experience before becoming a pastor. So, equipped with a firm grasp of Latin American culture and fluency in Spanish (thanks in large part to professors Robert Ellis and Adelaida López), she headed to South America to participate in her church’s young adult volunteer program—first in Uruguay, and the following year as a supervisor in Argentina. “In Uruguay, I was working mostly with kids at a community center in a marginalized part of town where I was living, and it really opened my eyes to life in South America.”

After completing her master’s of divinity at McCormick Theological Seminary in Chicago, Henken became a coordinator for the Presbyterian Church (USA)’s ministry of accompaniment in Colombia. Violence is a big part of life in some parts of South America, and the idea of the accompaniment program is to protect religious and human rights workers against threats of violence, which are often thwarted by the presence of U.S. citizens or other international workers.

“Being present as someone who cannot identify with that, but can listen with love and empathy, can be a powerful act,” Henken says. “To me it is worth going and listening to everything from the most unspeakable violence to the daily struggle to make ends meet and raise children with the best education and opportunities possible—and singing and praying and finding things to laugh about in the midst of it all.”

—COLLEEN SHARKEY



Photos by Max S. Gerber

DENNIS McMILLAN '06
ART HISTORY AND THE VISUAL ARTS
 “My Oxy education gave me the necessary tools to be able to consider a problem from all sides, generate a number of possible solutions, and then pick the best one.”

Cut the “Ultimate Cake Off” competition, for starters.

Dennis McMillan '06 took his art history and the visual arts major and translated it into a career editing reality shows. Working for Discovery Studios as an assistant editor, he has shaped, trimmed, and finessed a body of work that includes such recent efforts as “Bridalplasty” (E!), “Ton of Cash” (VH1), “Top Secret Recipe” (CMT), and “Same Name” (CBS). He earlier had a hand in cutting the confectionery trifecta of “Chocolate Wars,” “Ultimate Cake Off,” and “Cake Boss: Ultimate Cake Boss.”

McMillan entered Oxy with plans to major in physics, although he had always had an interest in video editing. “It was important to me to go to a small college, and there are surprisingly few colleges that have a film program, a physics program, and men’s swimming,” says the Portland, Ore., native. As a swimmer at Oxy, McMillan was SCIAAC champion in the 200 freestyle in 2004 and currently holds school records in the 500, 1,000, and 1,650 freestyle.

“Though I didn’t end up going very far in the physics program, it was still important to me that I had the opportunity to try it before fully focusing on an art major” centered on film, he says. “I knew I wanted to major in film as a way to continue editing, but before beginning the major I didn’t have much of an understanding of the rest of the art world. However, the art courses I took outside of the film discipline ended up having a dramatic impact on my understanding of art, media, and culture in general, and of my place within it.”

After graduating, McMillan was assisted by associate professor Broderick Fox, who helped him apply for the American Cinema Editors’ internship program. Although he didn’t end up winning the internship, as a finalist he was invited to a lecture series with current feature and TV editors and assistant editors, and through that was introduced to a network of professionals who helped him get future jobs. He scored his first job through

a recommendation from Danica Barnes '05, at a post-production house in Burbank.

In the editing room, he says, “There are many times when my creative decisions are informed by art theory that I was exposed to in college. The most important things that my education afforded me were problem-solving and critical thinking skills. As an assistant editor, half of my work is creative and the other half is technical, and when problems arise I need to be able to come up with solutions that satisfy both needs. I think my Oxy education gave me the necessary tools to be able to consider a problem from all sides, generate a number of possible solutions, and then pick the best one.”

A veteran of several competition shows, McMillan admits to being “horrible at guessing who’s going to win any of them. It’s our job to flip the viewers’ expectations and create a dramatic arc so that the viewers won’t be able to guess either.”

—SAMANTHA BONAR



Photo by Jim Block

MOLLY RUSSELL '05
URBAN AND ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY
 "I love being the facilitator of getting things to people and places that need them. That was definitely influenced by my education."

Create sustainable health in a clutter-free environment.

What does de-cluttering a home have to do with urban and environmental policy? For **Molly Russell '05**, it is taking the philosophy of community change she learned as a UEP major and using it on a micro-level. In her Bay Area business, 100% Organized, Russell says she applies social movement organizing "to actual physical organizing of a space. They are interconnected—they can't be possible without each other. No effective sustainable change can happen if you're living in a mess."

Russell's business, she says, allows people "the physical space so they can have the mental space to do the work that they're really meant to do here in the world." She sees the effects of her de-cluttering work on the lives of all kinds of individuals, from "mothers who I help to be more effective mothers, to executives, to people who are running their own business."

"When I was looking for a college, Oxy seemed to be the most authentic to me," Russell says. "I had this vision of becoming a stronger leader, and I knew that I could do that through an education and experience at

Oxy. I knew that I wanted to be trained to effect positive change in the world, and UEP really spoke to me as something that was not only just fundamentally doing that training, but acting upon it. I was seeing people coming out of the major becoming these vibrant, active leaders of change."

Another way UEP influenced Russell's business is her emphasis on eco-cycling, a core component of her service. She provides a sustainable hauling service for her customers' purged items and also networks with community organizations, recycling and repurposing items. "I love being the facilitator of getting things to people and places that need them," she says. "That was definitely influenced by my education—the deep-rooted organizing and community-building that the major really fused into me."

As much as Russell enjoys helping people organize her lives, she has a larger ambition. She is currently in her second year of a three-year program to become an ayurvedic wellness counselor, with the goal of opening her own practice. "I've always wanted to be

of service and wanted to be a healer—going back to the micro-level," she says.

"What most inspires me about ayurvedic medicine is this true deep value of your health being contingent on your ability to allow health for others," she says. Both business pursuits "have allowed me to take more responsibility for my own health and my own organization, which in turn helps me be more effective in service." Russell chose ayurveda, a traditional form of medicine practiced in India, because she found it to be "one of the most holistic forms of medicine that I've come across. It really addresses all parts of the person, and I feel like it really has a potential to create sustainable health."

Reflecting on the vast difference in her two career paths, Russell says, "The biggest thing that I got from my Oxy education is it allowed me to be a really effective and responsible thinker. That skill allowed so much and has manifested in so many parts and pockets of my life. It has manifested in some totally different and interesting ways—that's the beauty." —SAMANTHA BONAR

Edit comic books that go “BOOM!”

“I knew that Oxy had a reputation for being a little weird,” **Shannon Watters '07** says. But she also knew it was “somewhere you could become a bigger person—a place that had opportunities for expressing yourself.”

Watters got into comic strips at an early age, devouring *Calvin and Hobbes*, *Foxtrot*, and *Peanuts* collections. “My mother and grandmother would buy me *Archie Digests*,” says the Sedona, Ariz., native, who gravitated toward more indie-minded offerings by the time she reached high school. Long before she applied to college, she adds, “Editing comics is what I wanted to do.”

Watters opted for Oxy over Colorado College after visiting Eagle Rock and hearing then-President Ted Mitchell address a roomful of prospective students. She got a campus job working on the yearbook, editing two editions of *La Encina*. A survey course on Greek literature taught by assistant professor Damian Stocking was “the best class I’ve ever taken,” she says. “He went through the etymology of everything, and broke it down in a way that felt so personal. That changes you.” Meanwhile, associate professor of English writing Thomas Burkdall “took me under his wing and let me do my independent study in creative writing with an eye toward comics. I can’t imagine my life without Oxy.”

Soon after graduating, Watters snagged a job as a copy editor at Tokyopop, a manga publisher. “I met some incredible people, made some great contacts,” she says. “It taught me a lot.” But in July 2008 Tokyopop laid off about half its staff, including Watters.

She interviewed for a job as an assistant editor with BOOM! Studios, a fledgling L.A.-based comic-book publisher that stepped up to the big leagues after acquiring the Disney license in May 2009. (Although the company surrendered the license to Disney subsidiary Marvel in November, BOOM! has a full slate of titles in the pipeline, including the first new *Peanuts* comic books since 1964.)

But lacking a full slate of benefits, “it wasn’t the right time,” Watters says. She wound up instead at Flintridge Sacred Heart Academy as associate director of communications (“There’s nothing like working for the



SHANNON WATTERS '07
ENGLISH AND COMPARATIVE
LITERARY STUDIES
“There’s a language that you
get when you attend a liberal
arts school. There are
discussions that I can have
with my Oxy friends that I
can’t have with anyone else.”

Photo by Marc Campos

Catholics—those nuns take care of you”). Then, a year and a half later, she got a call out of the blue from BOOM! CEO Ross Richie saying, “We have health insurance now—do you still want a job?” Watters recalls. “I got an email the next day with a job offer.”

These days, Watters has a full slate of projects, working with veteran scribe Mark Waid on a pair of superhero titles, *Irredeemable* and *Incorruptible*; a comic based on Michael Moorcock’s sword-and-sorcery *Elric*

series; a licensed book based on the *Ice Age* characters; and an anthology title based on the popular Cartoon Network series *Adventure Time*, that allows her to work with some of her indie-comic idols, such as *Dinosaur Comics* creator Ryan North.

With the benefit of her Oxy degree, “I’m an editor at a top-10 comic book publisher,” Watters says, smiling. “I can live comfortably. I can buy blazers from *the Gap*. Not too shabby for a B.A. in English.” —DICK ANDERSON

Sport a pair of World Series championship rings (so far).

Hosei Maruyama '00 never would have landed his dream job in St. Louis were it not for his best friend and former Oxy roommate, Jeffrey Yin '00. The two met as freshmen in Erdman Hall and have been close ever since. In 2003, when Yin and girlfriend C. Ming Saelee '02 relocated to St. Louis to pursue master's degrees in social work at Washington University, Yin jokingly asked Maruyama if he wanted to move with them to try to snag a job with the Cardinals, Rams, or Blues.

A kinesiology major, Maruyama taught and coached in the Los Angeles Unified School District for three years after graduation, all the while working toward a master's of sport management through a satellite program of the University of San Francisco. To realize his dream of working in the sports industry full-time, a move to the Midwest seemed like the only feasible thing to do.

"I couldn't live in Los Angeles without a full-time job because I wouldn't have been able to pay rent," the Sacramento native explains. "I compare it to the hordes of people moving to L.A. to pursue an acting career—it doesn't always work out."

Two years after landing a part-time job with the St. Louis Cardinals, the playoff pitch

for Maruyama finally came when the organization christened the new Busch Stadium in 2006. He was offered a full-time position in stadium operations, and has since worked his way up to systems administrator. He now deals with myriad assignments from preparing for a presidential first pitch and calming inebriated ballpark guests to ushering the 2011 World Series trophy around St. Louis for appearances.

"Hosei's job is pretty cool and interesting," says Yin, who married Saelee at Busch Stadium in 2007. "Some people in California don't realize there are 49 other states and cool things going on there."

The Cardinals are to St. Louis what the Lakers are to Los Angeles—dominating the National League Central Division and the postseason for much of the past decade. Maruyama has been behind the scenes orchestrating some major events and witnessing history in the making. In 2009, President Barack Obama '83 threw out the ceremonial first pitch at the Major League Baseball All-Star Game; this past October, First Lady Michelle Obama attended a World Series game. "I worked very closely with the Secret Service as a part of the stadium security per-

sonnel," Maruyama says. "It was almost like being a Secret Service agent for a day."

Major League baseball teams play 81 home games per regular season. Home-game days are long, requiring Maruyama to work his regular shift and then prepare himself and his team for the game. A pre-game check of the stadium is routine, and then he is basically on call during the game in case any issues of safety, comfort, or security arise. "Our job is to get everyone in, make sure they have a good time and head home safely. We want to provide our guests a fun, family-friendly atmosphere with world-championship customer service so that they come back again and again."

As a student at Oxy, Maruyama built strong relationships with his professors in the kinesiology department. "My adviser, Stuart Rugg, was a big influence on me," he says. "He often gave motivational talks on campus, encouraging us to pursue something that we were passionate about because then it wouldn't feel like work." Maruyama also credits Oxy's small class size and the opportunity for deep, detailed discussions—hallmarks of a liberal arts education—with preparing him for working with people.

Every MLB team hopes to be playing well into October, but the Cardinals have had better success than most (eking into the playoffs on the last day of the 2011 season following the Atlanta Braves' historic collapse). Maruyama serves as a liaison between the Cardinals and MLB in the postseason, ensuring that even the tiniest detail is taken care of in preparation for the Fall Classic. But no amount of work is too much to witness a champagne-spraying party in the locker room after a seven-game battle for the title of World Champions.

It's safe to say that there's only one Oxy graduate who has earned two World Series championship rings without ever donning a uniform, running the bases, or stepping up to bat. "I am so lucky and blessed to do what I do for a living," says Maruyama, who abandoned any dreams of being a professional athlete after injuring his knees playing high school football. "My office is inside a Major League Baseball stadium, and I get to watch a lot of baseball." —COLLEEN SHARKEY

Photo by Scott Rovak





COURTNEY HOFFACKER '02
PSYCHOLOGY

“Four years of study at Oxy gave me confidence in general. After I graduated, I felt that I could go into any job.”

Photo by Aaron Bunch

Iron out employee issues with the Outback as your office.

Steel-toed boots, safety glasses, sun hat, a blue and canary-yellow long-sleeve shirt, and long pants are not the typical look for a human resources specialist. But an Ann Taylor suit and sensible shoes just don't cut it when you work for Rio Tinto Group, the world's third-largest mining company.

Based in the Australian port city of Perth, **Courtney Hoffacker '02** helps recruit and train employees, and provides case management, workforce planning, and other HR services for 300 staff across 17 sites in Perth and the Pilbara, a remote section of the Australian Outback. Iron ore is a hot commodity, and Rio Tinto has the second-largest iron-ore mine on the planet.

So Hoffacker hops on a two-hour flight every week over a serene landscape of red rock and deep canyons to the Pilbara mine, which fills trains and ships more than half-a-mile long that transport the ore around the world. A recent recipient of a master's degree in labor law and relations from the University of Sydney Law School, she consults with mine managers and offers them legal advice

and support, among other tasks. “I love helping people, and human resources is a way to help people without having to take their problems home at night,” she says.

Born in Arizona and raised in Louisiana, Hoffacker graduated with a B.A. in psychology from Occidental. She became enamored with Australia after taking a six-week tour through Europe—accompanied by a bus full of exuberant and friendly Australians and New Zealanders—after college graduation. With no promising job prospects back home, Hoffacker thought, “Why not?” and traveled abroad to work.

Prior to joining Rio Tinto last February, she worked as a human resources manager at an island resort on the Great Barrier Reef (“the entire island is a national park”) and a regional HR manager for the Laminex Group, a building products company based in Sydney. “I love it here,” says Hoffacker, who has called Australia home since 2004.

With her background in psychology, “I understand what motivates people and why and how they behave,” she adds. “I have to

deal with a lot of different people in my job, and I have to do a lot of negotiating with trade unions.”

Her jobs at Oxy also reflect a desire to benefit others. As a hall director and resident adviser, Hoffacker helped develop Braun Hall's Living and Learning Community. She also worked as a help desk assistant for the College's information technology services, and gave instructional therapy to children with autism at the Institute for Applied Behavioral Analysis in Los Angeles. Those positions gave her a jump start in the real world. “I'm not sure I would've had those leadership opportunities at a bigger university. And four years of study at Oxy gave me confidence in general,” she says. “After I graduated, I felt that I could go into any job.”

Hoffacker's position involves a lot of writing to internal and external audiences, so the core writing course that Occidental requires of all students has been put to good use Down Under: “Even my colleagues ask me to proofread their documents,” she says.

—RHEA BORJA

Diagnosed with cancer of the blood cells, chemistry professor **Tetsuo Otsuki** prepared to die. Then **Dr. Len Farol '94** made it his mission to save his mentor.

SECOND OPINION

BY RHEA R. BORJA
PHOTOS BY KEVIN BURKE



EVEN ON A CAMPUS WITH ITS share of colorful characters, Tetsuo Otsuki stands out. The Bertha Harton Orr Professor of Chemistry commutes to campus most days wearing a black Oxy football helmet with orange paw prints—a gift from the Class of 2003—and riding an old road bike. He bakes chocolate-chip cookies for his students before every exam. And when he has a bit of free time, he sits in a sunny patch of the Academic Quad and knits.

More than his idiosyncratic habits, though, Otsuki is known for his energy, warmth, and commitment to students. Over his 25 years at Occidental, “Dr. O” (a nickname that dates back to the late 1980s) has always been happy to answer students’ questions, mentor them, and help them in whatever way he can. His office door is always open.

So when Otsuki abruptly took a leave of absence in February 2011 and turned over his teaching load to a colleague, people worried, with good reason. The vibrantly healthy professor had fallen ill—so ill he wasn’t sure he would ever recover.

“I thought I had done everything I could do within my capabilities. I had no regrets,” Otsuki recalls. “I had lived my life.”

IT’S COMMON AFTER THE WINTER FESTIVITIES to feel exhausted from all the holiday cheer. Otsuki chalked up the malaise and dull pain he felt in late December 2010 to too much merrymaking. He had hosted and entertained old friends at his house for a few weeks over the winter break. He’d also taken a recent spill from his bicycle; perhaps that was the cause of the pain he felt in his ribs and pelvis.

But his symptoms worsened over time. Otsuki’s good friend, Carolyn Adams, also noticed. He visited her regularly in her office, where she works as the executive assistant to the College dean, and at the start of the day they often did push-ups and other calisthenics together, Otsuki doubling the number of exercises Adams did. But last January, he didn’t have the strength to manage even one push-up. “I told him to go to the doctor,” she says.



Most days, Otsuki commutes to campus from his Pasadena home on a bicycle he bought more than 20 years ago. **LEFT:** Dr. O poses with the future Dr. Farol for a photo following Occidental’s Commencement ceremony on May 15, 1994.

Otsuki hates doctors. The picture of health for virtually all of his life and blessed with good genes—his mother died at age 99 and his father at 83—he rarely had occasion to see them. At 69 years old, he had not seen the inside of a doctor’s office in years, nor did he take any medications.

His daily habits bordered on the ascetic. Besides riding his bicycle seven miles each day to and from Occidental, Otsuki ate a low-fat diet rich in vitamins, eschewed smoking, and slept a restful seven to eight hours a night. His sole vice, if you could call it that, was a glass of beer or wine with dinner.



Otsuki finally saw a doctor in February. A battery of tests, including liver function and MRI, showed nothing wrong. But one test measuring bone density did. Further testing, including a bone-marrow biopsy, revealed the cause of his pain and exhaustion: Otsuki had multiple myeloma, cancer of the blood plasma cells, which originate in the bone marrow. Plasma cells help protect the body from infection by producing proteins, or antibodies, that fight foreign substances.

In a healthy person, plasma cells make up 1-2 percent of bone marrow. In a person with multiple myeloma, that number sky-

rockets, crowding out “good” platelets and ultimately destroying the bone. Eighty percent of Otsuki’s bone marrow was composed of abnormal antibodies. The five-year survival rate for multiple myeloma is about 40 percent, according to the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society. Otsuki calmly asked his doctor how much time he had to live. Three years, he was told, if he didn’t fight back.

Otsuki tried to accept the diagnosis with equanimity. Though he’s lived in the United States for more than 30 years, his belief system is deeply Japanese. In Japan, the span of one lifetime is traditionally measured at

50 years. Indeed, two of Otsuki’s favorite writers, Soseki Natsume and Tatsuo Hori, died at age 50. Otsuki felt he had been given a 19-year bonus.

Even as he began chemotherapy to combat the disease, he prepared to die. A private man, he told few people of his diagnosis and considered his options. He could stop eating. A trained chemist, he could mix a fatal potion. There were many ways to end life with dignity, he thought.

He did not yet realize that the Oxy community and a certain former student would not let him give up.

LEN FAROL '94 KNEW EARLY ON that he wanted to go into the medical field. He loved science, math, and the nature of scientific inquiry and research. His mother died of cancer, and one of his brothers had open-heart surgery as a child to close an opening in his heart.

The son of a school principal and an elementary-school teacher, Farol was born the youngest of nine children in the Philippine province of Batangas, a region of gently rolling plains and islands south of Manila. His early years were comfortable, and he lived surrounded by his extended family.

That was cut short by the death of his mother when Farol was 6. Soon after, his father moved the family to California for a fresh start. While they settled into a cramped two-bedroom apartment in Los Angeles' Koreatown, Farol went to school in the San

Fernando Valley community of Chatsworth, a 60-mile daily round trip dictated by the court-ordered desegregation of the Los Angeles Unified School District in 1978. Mandatory busing was controversial, and Farol recalls white adults holding picket signs and yelling as his bus pulled in front of the school. "They said, 'We don't want your kids,'" Farol says in a matter-of-fact tone.

The vitriol did not deter him. Farol took as many Advanced Placement and honors courses as he could at Chatsworth High School, graduating in the top 10 percent of his class. He taught himself how the college-admission process worked by assisting his high school guidance counselor, and he counseled his classmates on college academic requirements and financial aid. "Len is very driven," says Chatsworth classmate and friend Sam Patel, now a radiologist in the Bay Area.

"We weren't the smartest people in our class, but we made up for it by working hard."

Farol entered Oxy on a full academic scholarship and majored in biochemistry. He did well in Otsuki's classes and remembers Dr. O as a tough but supportive teacher. The professor was also his adviser, and he helped Farol get an undergraduate research grant for a marine biology/chemistry project. After graduation, Otsuki attended Farol's wedding (to Hanako Yamauchi '95, another advisee), and they exchanged phone calls and met for brunch at least once or twice a year. "Len worked very hard, and he stayed in touch with me," Otsuki says. "Many students I don't see after graduation."

While at Oxy, Farol volunteered at Huntington Hospital as a candy striper. There he saw his first bone marrow biopsy, a painful procedure in which a very large,



An oncologist and bone marrow transplant specialist at Kaiser Permanente, Farol (shown outside City of Hope Cancer Center in Duarte) and his colleagues are the go-to team in Southern California for blood cancer, the "Super Friends" of hematology.

hollow needle is inserted with a corkscrew motion into a patient's bone to extract marrow. "I almost fainted," Farol recalls. "I had to sit down because I was lightheaded."

Nonetheless, he decided in his final year at Occidental to go to medical school, graduating with his M.D. from UC Irvine. After a residency in internal medicine at Northwestern University, Farol traveled east, to New York University, as a hematology/oncology fellow. While at NYU, he was named Hematology Fellow of the Year in 2002 and Oncology Fellow of the Year in 2003.

Another friend from Chatsworth, Arlene Hoang, credits Farol for helping to save her mother-in-law, who came down with leukemia in 2003. He advised that she be given a bone marrow transplant after chemotherapy failed to work. "Her doctor didn't want her to undergo a transplant because she was already 65, but Len really pushed us," says Hoang, a lawyer in the San Fernando Valley. "Frankly, she wouldn't be alive today without that."

MARCH 10, 2011, started out as a normal Wednesday for Farol. An oncologist and bone marrow transplant specialist at Kaiser Permanente, he was at a meeting at City of Hope Cancer Center in Duarte, 16 miles east of Eagle Rock, to discuss patient caseloads with several colleagues. Together, they're the go-to team in Southern California for blood cancer, the "Super Friends" of hematology. In discussing their caseloads, one colleague spoke of a patient named Otsuki with multiple myeloma. Startled, Farol asked if Otsuki was a college professor. His colleague said yes.

"I was devastated," Farol recalls. "This is a horrible disease."

Farol got on the phone immediately with his old professor. Later that day, he visited Otsuki at his home and brought vitamins and packs of Boost, a nutritional drink. "Len's phone call saved me. He changed my psychology all around," Otsuki says. "He said, 'This is treatable. You don't have to die.'"

AS A 3-YEAR-OLD in wartime Japan in 1945, Otsuki watched American B-29 bombers fly overhead before his parents whisked him into an underground shelter. Despite living in the shadow of a devastating war, his childhood was happy. The youngest child of a grade-school principal and a schoolteacher,

Photos courtesy Tetsuo Otsuki



ABOVE: Otsuki's parents, Ki-ichi and Yoriko Otsuki. **ABOVE RIGHT:** As a freshman at Kyoto University in 1961, Otsuki (right) and classmate Akira Tanaka ride a ferry to Hokkaido. **BELOW:** Six-year-old Otsuki stands in front of the Japanese emperor's tomb in Kyoto in 1948, accompanied by his babysitter, Ai Matsubara (behind him) and two of her friends. The photo, he recalls, was snapped by an American soldier stationed in Japan.



ABOVE: Otsuki plays with his nieces in 1964. **BELOW:** On a train days after learning he was accepted to Kyoto University, Otsuki (in 1961) enjoys his first beer. **BOTTOM:** Otsuki's first passport photo, taken in 1977.



Otsuki lived in a small, self-contained community in Kyoto, 300 miles west of Tokyo. Food rationing was the norm, but Otsuki always had enough to eat since his parents had a vegetable garden.

As a kindergartner, he chased after American soldiers, who were part of the Allied occupation in the years after World War II. They gave him chewing gum, chocolate, and even softball bats and balls. "They were nice to kids," Otsuki says.

He studied hard and was accepted into prestigious Kyoto University as a science student. But Otsuki spent much of his first two years reading Japanese, American, and French novels; hiking in the mountains; and relaxing instead of going to class. He didn't buckle down until he had to declare a major in his third year. Physics came easily to him, but his older brother was already a physicist. Biology sounded promising, but he didn't

want to dissect animals. Geology and meteorology didn't hold his interest. "So left over was chemistry," he says with a smile.

As it happens, Otsuki thrived in his studies and received a bachelor's degree, master's degree, and Ph.D in chemistry in quick succession, all from Kyoto University. In 1980, he received a national chemistry research award from Japan's Society of Synthetic Organic Chemistry. But he found the Japanese system of research confining and non-collaborative. Otsuki got a taste of American-style science research as a post-doctoral student at the University of Chicago in the late 1970s, where he met Wayne Bolen, then a young faculty member at Southern Illinois University.

With Bolen's help, Otsuki won a one-year appointment as a visiting associate professor of chemistry and biochemistry at the university. He moved to Carbondale, Ill., with his wife and two young daughters. "It was very unusual for anyone to immigrate to the United States from Japan, as Japan had a very strong educational system," says Bolen, now an emeritus professor at the University of Texas, Galveston. "Tetsuo was very brave to come."

Otsuki went on to teach for two years as an assistant chemistry professor at Penn State Schuylkill, acquiring the university's first nuclear magnetic resonance instrument. "They were very impressed with him because of his emphasis on education and research," Bolen says—even if Otsuki remembers that time a bit differently. He grew up reading and writing English, but communicating solely in English was challenging—and teaching in English for the first time was "very difficult."

Language wasn't the only barrier. In Japan, professors lecture for much of class and write a lot of information on the blackboard, while students copy that information in their notebooks and ask few questions. By the time he landed at Occidental in 1986, Otsuki understood that the Japanese way of teaching didn't translate into the Western classroom.

He adapted by focusing on one concept and talking about it from different angles instead of overwhelming students with too

much information. Instead of covering the blackboard with scribbles, he wrote only the most important points. He also abandoned the "sage on the stage" mentality and encouraged class discussion by asking students questions. And he encouraged students to see him after class if they wanted more help. "You have to make sure they understand the concept," says Otsuki, recipient of Occidental's Graham L. Sterling Award for excellence in teaching, research, and service in 2002. "I have learned a lot from my students on how to teach."

As a biology major at Oxy, Lisa (Ritter) Pickard '91 remembers Otsuki's organic chemistry class "as one of the most difficult classes I've ever taken," she says from her home in Austin, Texas. "But Dr. O made it worth it. He is so dedicated to empowering students. He's more than a teacher; he's a confidant, friend, and mentor."

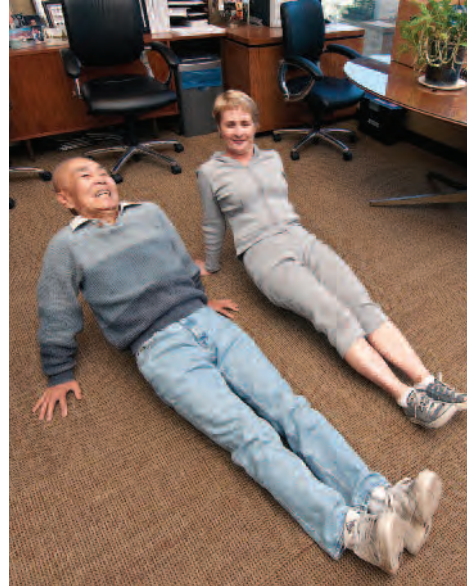
Some years back, another former student sent Otsuki a photo of the two of them taken at Occidental after his graduation. "Thanks for all your support and encouragement during my years at Oxy," he wrote on the back. "I wouldn't be where I am without all the help you gave me.

"Thanks a million, Len (class '94)"

FAROL WASN'T THE ONLY ONE WHO urged Otsuki to fight. Adams was one of the few people the professor told of his cancer diagnosis. With his permission, she marshaled a small army of Oxy faculty, staff, students, and friends (a disparate group that included Nadine Skotheim, Otsuki's knitting teacher and wife of former Oxy President Robert A. Skotheim, and alumni such as Lisa Rutledge '10, a City of Hope researcher) for support. The list grew from a handful of people to more than 50. "Tetsuo is surrounded by many good friends who care so much," Adams says. "He is genuinely a nice guy. When I took him to his doctors' appointments, everybody gravitated to him."

The support and good wishes were among the weapons needed to combat his multiple myeloma. And Otsuki needed all the help he could get. Even though he didn't start to feel pain and fatigue until last January, Farol says Otsuki had likely been living with the cancer for years.

The professor began several rounds of oral chemotherapy and steroids to kill the



Otsuki starts most mornings with a cup of tea and calisthenics with Carolyn Adams on the third floor—literally—of Arthur G. Coons Administrative Center.

abnormal antibodies. After three months, Otsuki's immunoglobulin (antibody) level had dropped dramatically—a good sign. Still, a bone marrow biopsy showed that Otsuki's bones were still composed of 75 percent myeloma cells. "So we had to attack the cancer in a different way," Farol says.

He and the other doctors prescribed an aggressive three-tiered system of intravenous and oral chemotherapy: Cytoxan, Velcade, and Dexamethasone. Recent studies have shown that this mixture gives better results and fewer side effects, such as numbness and tingling in fingers and toes, compared with other chemotherapy combinations.

Otsuki underwent this second treatment for another two months. Throughout that winter and spring, he was a model patient. He showed up to his many medical appointments on time. He did not drink alcohol or caffeine. He remained cheerful and upbeat despite feeling weak and tired.

The chemo combination worked. A bone marrow biopsy in June showed that less than 1 percent of Otsuki's marrow was composed of "bad" cells. "His marrow was clean," Farol says. "He was officially in remission."

MULTIPLE MYELOMA tends to resurface after several years. Survival rates are higher for myeloma patients who have undergone chemotherapy and a stem cell transplant to blast out as much of the cancer as possible. Farol and Otsuki's other doctors recommended he do the same. "With chemotherapy alone, the doses aren't high enough to do that," Farol says. "The transplant allows us to do much more intensified chemotherapy."



For many years, prospective students to Occidental received admission materials including this photo of Otsuki (shown in the lab with James Ewing '01, center, and Alicia McCarthy '02), taken in 2000.

Otsuki was just under the cut-off age of 70 for such a procedure. But apart from the cancer, he was healthy and thus a relatively good candidate. The stem cell transplant was autologous—meaning he would grow his own healthy white cells, which would get transplanted back into his body. Despite his fear of hospitals and doctors, Otsuki gave his consent for the transplant. “Since I trusted my student so much, I said, ‘Let’s do it.’”

Preparation for the transplant, as well as the procedure itself, is straightforward, but exhausting and trying for the patient. Otsuki was injected with a drug called Neupogen for 10 days to stimulate rapid production of white cells. An intravenous catheter was inserted into his chest to collect his blood, which was sucked through a tube into a centrifuge to separate and harvest the white cells. A second tube shot the processed blood, which still contained red blood cells and platelets, back into Otsuki’s bloodstream.

The professor underwent this harvesting procedure four times. At least 2 million healthy white cells per kilogram of body weight are needed for a stem cell transplant. “I felt like I was a machine for producing white blood cells,” Otsuki jokes.

By early September, Otsuki had produced enough, and the transplant was scheduled soon after. He checked into the City of Hope cancer center for a 2½-week stay. “Len got me star treatment at City of Hope,” Otsuki says with a smile. “He told everyone that I was his teacher, so they treated me very nicely.”

Otsuki underwent a last blast of chemotherapy—Melphalan, a particularly nasty strain whose side effects include nausea and temporary baldness—to nuke any lingering cancer cells. Farol then transplanted the saved white blood cells back into Otsuki’s bloodstream via a flexible tube inserted into the professor’s stomach. The professor was conscious throughout the procedure. Within a few days, his white-blood cell count started rising, from a low of 200 to eventually 4,000—a normal level. Farol checked on him daily and gave updates on his progress to Adams, who notified Otsuki’s support group. But besides him, Otsuki received few visitors.

It wasn’t for lack of trying by the Oxy community. Otsuki received dozens of encouraging email messages from friends,

colleagues, and his daughters, both now grown and living on the East Coast (he and his wife divorced in 1997). But he did not want to see people because he wanted to concentrate on healing. Otsuki walked a quarter-mile each day, up and down the hospital halls, pushing his IV bag, to build endurance.

“He is a very focused person, and he knew what he needed to do,” Bolen says. “He had to focus on his nutrition, his exercise, his sleep, and his medication. And he really turned around quickly after the first week.”

The continuous outpouring of help and good wishes from Farol, Adams, and the Oxy community surprised Otsuki. “Without Len, without Carolyn, I probably wouldn’t be here today,” he says. “I didn’t expect the support from campus. I didn’t expect this happiness.”

Farol remains as busy as ever, caring for patients and conducting stem cell transplants. He regularly checks on his former

professor, who is on medication and is going through another round of chemotherapy as a preventive measure. But overall, Otsuki is feeling good. He’s back to cycling to and from campus, baking cookies for students and colleagues, and spends most days in Norris Hall.

About 70,000 people nationwide live with or are in remission from multiple myeloma. Most, like Otsuki, are men over 65. After 11 months away from the classroom, Dr. O will resume teaching chemistry in late January. “I want to start teaching again, to work in the lab. I miss my students,” he says. “I want to get back to normal.”

A critical need persists for bone marrow donors, especially those of color, between ages 18 and 60. Farol urges everyone to join the National Marrow Donor Program’s Be the Match registry (www.bethematch.org). A simple cheek swab is all that’s needed to become a prospective donor.



“I feel accomplishment when I see my former students established and successful in their careers,” Otsuki says. “I’m very proud of Len.”





Photos by Rwei-chi Huang

The Occidental Model

Can the liberal arts flourish at Taiwan's vocation-minded National Chengchi University? Oxy professor of politics **Tsung Chi**—a Chengchi alumnus—gives it the old college try

By ANDY FAUGHT Illustration by JAMES STEINBERG

PROFESSOR OF POLITICS TSUNG Chi is one tough lunch date. Just ask Spencer Jemelka '08, who occasionally catches up with his mentor in the cafeteria at National Chengchi University in Taipei, Taiwan, where Chi is working to bring a liberal arts framework to his vocation-based alma mater.

"He couldn't stay seated for more than three minutes because someone from the Chengchi faculty would have to shake his hand," says Jemelka, a diplomacy and world affairs graduate and Taiwan Scholarship recipient while at Occidental. "It was like having lunch with a celebrity."

"Tsung's like the Pied Piper," adds President Jonathan Veitch, who met with Chi last May while visiting Asia on Oxy business. "He is somebody who is deeply admired in Taiwan. They're very proud of him and follow his career in the United States. He's soft-spoken and quite modest,

but he's very smart and passionate about liberal arts education. I think he's already making a huge difference. We can't wait for him to come back."

More than 6,700 miles from his academic home of the last 20 years, Chi has taken on the role of tireless export agent. But he's not trading in everyday commodities. Instead, Chi traffics in liberal arts teaching philosophies that traditionally have had little standing in Far East higher education. He's hoping to change all of that—with a huge nod to what he calls "the Oxy model."

"This is my mission, my dream," Chi says from Chengchi, where he is taking a two-year leave from Occidental to bring a new learning template to NCCU—one with a strong emphasis on a core curriculum and residential, beyond-the-classroom approach. "I hope what I'm doing right now will be influential and of some consequence. Like Martin Luther King said, the purpose of

education is to weigh evidence, to tell the differences between fact and fiction. Learning the standard of evidence is the first and foremost goal. Also, we want our students to discover who they are."

Until he returned to his native Taiwan two years ago (the first year a sabbatical to lay groundwork for his plan), little had changed from the days when Chi attended Chengchi (Chinese for "politics") from 1977 to 1981. Students pursued higher learning as avenues to careers, not as a means to explore the humanities—a philosophy codified over the generations in Asia. That changed a decade ago in China, when Beijing University started a small liberal arts program in addition to emphasizing general education courses.

Since Beijing, at least five other Chinese institutions have developed their own liberal arts projects, Chi says. Communications between Chinese and Taiwanese universities with respect to liberal arts experiments are

“very limited at this time,” he adds, with institutions developing their own models.

Those models would likely be only nominally recognizable to most Occidental alumni. But, like all experiments, Chi acknowledges bringing change is an “inch-by-inch” process that encounters inherent hurdles: “It’s like trying to democratize a country. It’s very difficult.” He nurtures Chengchi’s shallow liberal arts roots with unrestrained fervor, all the while reflecting on an Occidental vision he calls “the best model of undergraduate education in the world.”

CHI’S LIBERAL ARTS DREAM had its beginnings at Arcadia High School, of all places. It was there in 2007 that he was invited to give a presentation on what it takes to be a student in the social sciences and how it differs from the natural sciences. Chi’s son, Martin (a 2009 Oxy graduate), had attended the school, and the Chinese Parents Association asked Chi if he would speak to students.

His talk was so well received that Chi was invited back the next semester, this time to talk about the liberal arts model. “It was

States to pursue his graduate degrees—first at Northern Illinois University and then at Michigan State. “I had no idea about the liberal arts,” Chi says. “Also, liberal arts are not very popular in Michigan.” Before he earned his doctorate, Chi also was offered a job at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville and Wittenberg University in Springfield, Ohio. The choice was clear. “I knew immediately I wanted Occidental. Like so many of my colleagues, I like teaching more than research.”

When Chi visited Oxy, Roger Boesche, the Arthur G. Coons Distinguished Professor of the History of Ideas, noted that the young scholar had a way of making research methods—long perceived to be dry and onerous—into something that could be “wildly popular.” “He puts on a performance that instructs and entertains,” Boesche says, acknowledging his colleague’s taciturn ways outside the classroom. “He doesn’t really brag about his accomplishments, but as his friend and department chair, I can brag about them. They’re enormous. For years, he’s made Occidental well known in the Chinese-American community.”

Photo by Ruei-chi Huang



“Students here are changing their mindsets regarding the meaning of the residential campus,” says Chi.

even better received,” he says. “I’d been teaching at Oxy for 16 years already, and this was an important moment to reflect on my experiences there with my colleagues and students. That was the beginning.”

Chi himself was first exposed to the liberal arts when he interviewed at Oxy. After completing compulsory military service in Taiwan, he traveled to the United

“He’s very popular with the students and very funny and unassuming,” says Samuel Owenshine ’12, an economics major from Pittsburgh who took a comparative politics class from Chi during his sophomore year. “He’s a very modest man and has a sort of presence about him.” According to Boesche, Chi routinely earns some of the College’s highest ratings on student evaluation forms.

Photo courtesy Tsung Chi



Chi as an undergraduate (right, holding the books) in front of Chengchi’s library in a 1979 photo.

Some of his students even took their affinity online, creating a Facebook page titled “Chi-Unit: The Professor Chi Fan Club.”

As a student at Oxy, Jemelka applied for the three-year Taiwan Scholar Scholarship on the recommendation of Chi. He studied Mandarin Chinese and political science courses at Chengchi, and now works at an outdoor education program in Taipei. “Professor Chi carries a lot of weight at NCCU,” Jemelka adds. “A lot of people are on board with what he’s trying to do and are really excited about it.”

CHI’S INITIAL EFFORTS ARE MODEST: He’s targeting 120 of Chengchi’s 9,797 undergraduate students, with hopes of adding 60 students each ensuing year. Participants are required to live on campus and, much like Oxy students, they’re enrolled in general education “core” courses that expose them to a wide breadth of ideas and perspectives. Chi is the master (the equivalent of dean) in developing the university’s nascent Residential College of International Development.

He acknowledges that, because of the size of Chengchi’s large student body, it would be impossible to implement a wholesale copy of the Occidental ethos. While borrowing heavily from the College’s learning philosophy, he’s attempting instead to replicate efforts at UC San Diego, which is also a sizable public university. That institution has a renowned residential education program and an honors college. His goals are simple on the face of it, but students who use residence halls exclusively as a base to eat and sleep are no doubt in for a surprise.

“One of my mottos is that learning is 7/11—from 7 in the morning to 11 at night,”



Chi's 118 students are divided into eight groups, or "learning families," who meet with the professor for "English Chat-room" about twice a week.

Photo by Yu Cheng Liu

Chi says. "It used to be that classroom instruction composed 100 percent of learning in Taiwan. But look at Oxy. We have been learning in the Quad, in the dining hall, and in the dorms. Students here in Taiwan are changing their mindsets regarding the meaning of the residential campus."

Chi's impact on many Chengchi students has been immediate. Hung Chun Wang, a second-year student at Chengchi, says he was disappointed by his initial collegiate experience ("It just seemed like a bigger version of my high school"), until he attended one of the 20 informational meetings Chi hosted to explain his plan. "He kept talking about his dream, and his enthusiasm made his eyes sparkle. I was moved by his ideas and passion," Wang says. "Dr. Chi spends more time discussing the essence of life and education rather than simply diving into the act of imparting knowledge to his students."

Chi says none of his students have had anything negative to say about the format, which requires them to take part in "English Chatroom" (in which they present, discuss, and sometimes debate current affairs in the world in English) and attend salons and speaker series, among other requirements. A recent discussion focused on the impact of global warming on the tiny South Pacific nation of Tuvalu. Students also must enroll in Chi's "Globalization and Taiwan" course, which considers global issues from a Taiwanese perspective.

Chi's efforts at Chengchi are no guarantee of success. A large number of faculty members

still see the format as peculiarly American, he says. And while Chengchi's current president supports the changes, he will leave his post in 2½ years, meaning the liberal arts ideology will be left to the scrutiny of a new leader. More immediately, there is no obvious faculty firebrand to succeed Chi when he returns to Occidental in August. For now, Chi's team consists of himself, two recently hired Ph.Ds, one doctoral candidate as the executive secretary, and two part-time staff members (one doctoral student and one master's student).

One prominent supporter is Taiwanese President Ma Ying-jeou, who met with Chi and Veitch during the Oxy leader's visit. "President Ma is making a big push for reform in higher education," Veitch says. "There's a perception that they've got the medical schools and engineering down. What they look to the United States for is innovation and invention, and they attribute that to a liberal arts education."

Another backer, RCID executive secretary Ming Chi Wu, has seen firsthand the nimbleness of Chi's leadership and vision. "When we encounter institutional challenges—like regulatory rules and social norms—Tsungh has adapted innovations to meet the requirements of the institution while keeping the novelty and value of the innovations. He's great to work with, and he inspires me with his confidence."

Chi isn't alone in his aspirations. Since 2008, about 15 Taiwanese universities have developed various aspects of the liberal arts.

So far as Chi knows, there is one single liberal arts college in both Japan and Hong Kong, and the Hong Kong Chinese University has incorporated liberal arts tenets, while Singapore, in conjunction with Yale University, will launch a liberal arts program in 2013.

Chi projects restrained optimism for the future of liberal arts at Chengchi and points to one factor that could bode well for his efforts. Of the university's 732 faculty members, 561 of them received degrees from overseas—many from U.S. institutions. "Even though they didn't have firsthand experience with the liberal arts, many of them have heard about it," he says.

"This is a long journey," Chi adds. "They're beginning very cautiously, very prudently. They want to do things incrementally. The professional education has been going on so long. It's deeply rooted in the minds and hearts of Taiwanese university presidents and professionals. It's a very different mindset. They don't think they can transplant something so foreign, so American, back to Taiwan. I think they need time to digest what is happening right now."

If all goes as planned, Chi will return for Chengchi's centennial in 2027. He will be an older and wiser man of 68, and perhaps an even tougher lunch date. The liberal arts, he observes, are already seeping into those same hearts and minds. "It's kind of irreversible," he says. "I hope." □

Freelance writer Andy Faught lives in Fresno. He wrote "Today the World, Tomorrow Occidental" in the Fall 2011 issue.

Second Act

Following a 38-year career with the United Nations, **George Sherry** became the primary liaison between Oxy students and the world

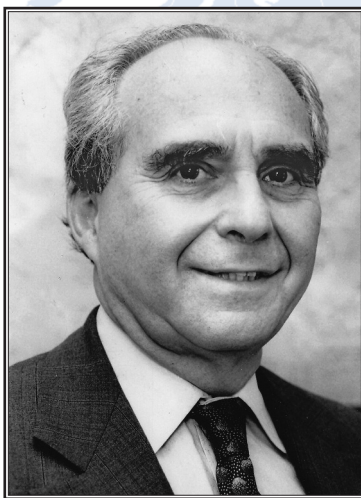


Photo courtesy Occidental College Special Collections

GEORGE L. SHERRY WAS NEVER at a loss for words. Words were his currency, after all, and the Poland native—a graduate of the City College of New York and fluent in five languages—joined the United Nations as an editor and interpreter soon after its founding in 1947. In 1960, he was assigned to the U.N. headquarters staff directing U.N. operations in the Congo. The following year, Secretary-General Dag Hammarskjöld had him transferred to the Office of the Secretary-General, where for 24 years he was involved with developing the organization’s peacekeeping functions and with managing and settling international disputes in Africa, Asia, Europe, and the Middle East.

By any measure, his was a full career. Then, in 1985, Sherry came to Occidental as Stuart Chevalier Professor of Diplomacy and World Affairs. He established the College’s U.N. program in 1986 and served as its director for 16 years, enabling some 300 Oxy students to enhance their understanding of global affairs through internships in the U.N. Secretariat and member state missions as well as in his own courses on such topics as politics and peacekeeping, U.S. foreign policy, and Middle East diplomacy. At the 20th-anniversary celebration of the College’s U.N. program on Oct. 19, 2005, Occidental awarded Sherry an honorary doctorate in recognition of his achievements.

Sherry—who died Oct. 21, 2011, in Manhattan after a long illness—professed his gratitude for the honor in his remarks, then proceeded to “confess that for a brief moment—very brief, but a real moment nonetheless—I had the feeling that this must all be the result of a misunderstanding. After all, the core credit for the success of the Occidental-at-the-U.N. program belongs not to any one person or group of persons. It belongs, first and foremost, to the United Nations, which has provided the substance and the source of inspiration for what the Oxy-U.N. program has set out to accomplish over the last 20 years, even while maintaining the highest standards of critical objectivity.

“And in practical terms,” he continued, “credit belongs to this wonderful academic institution, Occidental College, which has so generously provided the vision and the resources without which our innovative melding of scholarly and international engagement could scarcely have been so seamlessly translated into reality.”

Sherry’s skills as a rapid-fire interpreter —“his colleagues regarded him as one of the two or three truly superlative interpreters in memory,” writer Ved Mehta observed in a 1962 profile of Sherry for *The New Yorker*—made him a hot commodity from the instant he joined the U.N. Interpretation Section in 1947. “When a speech is being made, Sherry jots down the key words—the operative

“As an interpreter from French and Russian into English, he was supreme,” a U.N. colleague wrote of Sherry in 1985—so much so that Soviet politician Andrei Vishinsky, “on more than one occasion, refused to speak when George was not there to interpret.”

words—of the sentences,” U.N. colleague Nicholas Spooove told Mehta. “For instance, if [Soviet ambassador Valerian] Zorin says, ‘In the Congo, mercenaries are a hideous manifestation of the age-old, eternal iron heel of imperialism,’ Sherry is likely to jot down ‘hideous’ and ‘mercenary.’ But I am really as mystified as you are.”

Sherry’s deep-seeded roots in the United Nations doubtless opened doors to Oxy where few other undergraduate programs have gone. “Occidental interns not only study the daunting complexities of peacekeeping operations—they learn about them literally at the feet of the men and women who may have been under fire in Rwanda or Angola or Congo a few weeks earlier,” Sherry said in 2005. “The same applies to the internship supervisors who so often and generously turn their offices into high-level tutorials whose intellectual quality will yield to no one.”

Concurrent to his Occidental duties, in 1993 Sherry became a consultant at what is now the International Peace Institute. He also continued to carry out the occasional assignment for the U.N. Secretary-General, notably in July 1993 as head of a technical team assigned to survey peacekeeping in Georgia and in December 1993 as envoy to Russia to follow the electoral process there.

With the Oxy-U.N. program having just completed its 26th year (the 10th under John Hirsch, former U.S. ambassador to the republic of Sierra Leone), Sherry’s legacy to Occidental is secure. Looking to the future in 2005, Sherry said, “the U.N. must undergo the most sweeping overhaul of its 60-year history, recapture the spirit of San Francisco, and forge a new world compact to advance the cause of larger freedom. I have no doubt that in the months and years ahead the Occidental faculty and students will continue to build on this indispensable agenda.”

Sherry is survived by his wife, Doris, and a daughter, Vivien Sherry Greenberg. □