Global Family Business Institute reinvents its conference with a gift from Drucker alumnus Woody Hunt.

She overcame daunting obstacles to graduate, and now she’s looking forward to visiting the campus for the first time.

“I keep on giving because my CGU experiences keep on giving.” Ray Garubo reminisces about why he keeps paying it forward.

San Manuel’s $14 Million Gift Is Transformative for CGU and the Future of Healthcare
Building the Future on a Foundation of Trust

by Len Jessup, President, Claremont Graduate University

The $14 million gift we received from the San Manuel Band of Mission Indians, which we are highlighting in this issue of Impact, is a huge investment in CGU and in communities that desperately need better health outcomes. The gift, which we are using to purchase the Huntley Bookstore building, lays the foundation for what will be known as the Yuhaaviatam Center for Health Studies, an innovative, multi-disciplinary research center rooted in integrated health and well-being for vulnerable populations. Once renovations are complete, we will welcome our School of Community & Global Health as the anchor tenant, with faculty from across campus participating in life-changing work at this innovative facility. The center will be further evidence of our transdisciplinary philosophy that no single discipline or profession can solve the world’s most complex problems.

The multiplier effect for this gift is incalculable because the research into integrated health and well-being will benefit so many people and could very well help break the pernicious cycle of poor health that plagues some communities in our neighborhood and beyond.

Though I had the great privilege of formally accepting the gift, it was only the most recent chapter in the story of a long and fruitful relationship between CGU and San Manuel, a story decades in the making. At its core, San Manuel’s gift is grounded in trust—that CGU will be a good steward and bring shared aspirations to life.

As you become more and more involved in philanthropy, you realize that every gift or grant, no matter its size, represents an investment grounded in trust that was earned by those who preceded us, in addition to those privileged to be involved in the relationship today.

All of us are committed to working hard to achieve CGU’s and San Manuel’s mission to transform lives for the better.

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This Historic Gift Was Generations in the Making

The Santa Ana winds were kicking up, providing a picture-perfect Southern California day when leaders from the San Manuel Band of Mission Indians arrived on campus. Wind conveys change, so the blustery weather was a fitting backdrop for the ceremony in front of the Huntley Bookstore—a ceremony that launched a new era for the university, for Indian Country, and for historically underserved communities.

As hair and coats were swept by the wind, adding a touch of levity to the photo shoot, San Manuel presented CGU with a gift of $14 million to fund the purchase of the bookstore, laying the foundation for a state-of-the-art integrated health research center.

Once renovations are completed, the Yuhaaviatam Center for Health Studies will serve as the nexus for CGU researchers, scientists, and outside partners to address vexing health and well-being challenges prevalent in vulnerable populations in the Inland Empire and Indian Country. The benefits will also ripple far beyond, manifesting the university’s mission to bring positive change to the world.

Transformative gifts are not happenstance. They are rooted in shared values, a common vision, and mutual trust. The journey to the check presentation began 25 years earlier with a budding friendship between a CGU alumnus and a San Manuel Tribal Citizen.

At a deeper level, the gift was generations in the making.
‘We Haven’t Forgotten Those Days’
Ken Ramirez, chairman of the San Manuel Band of Mission Indians, leads the elected Business Committee that oversees business development, education, infrastructure, government relations, philanthropic outreach, and cultural revitalization. Over the past two decades, San Manuel has become one of the Inland Empire’s economic engines and a major source of philanthropy. Ramirez, who grew up on the reservation, understands all too well that it wasn’t always that way.

“My knowledge of how things were 60 years ago is fresh in my mind. As I was growing up, San Manuel was a little tribe in the foothills of the San Bernardino Mountains, surrounded by orange groves.”
Tribal Chairman Ken Ramirez

A lone dirt road provided the only access to the reservation, which was dotted with hardscrabble homes and trailers. Employment was largely limited to spraying trees or picking fruit, and the kindness of others helped those living on the reservation to meet basic needs.

“We couldn’t get healthcare unless Loma Linda drove up in a little pickup truck to give us our shots and dental care before we went to school,” Ramirez says. “Seeing the reservation come from that point to where we are now makes me very proud, but we haven’t forgotten those days.”

The reservation, established in 1891, sits on a little over 900 acres, but the land that the tribe’s ancestors called home extends from the upper desert near Barstow south to the 29 Palms area, throughout the San Bernardino Mountains, and as far west as Rancho Cucamonga and, yes, Claremont—more than 7 million acres.

“We are still vested in the land, and it is prudent of us to have responsibility for what happens,” Ramirez says. “For us, the land is on loan, and we are caretakers.”

With that philosophical underpinning comes an
obligation to care for those who visit or live on the land, an interest driven by a guiding principle that has endured since ancient times and even through the difficult decades on the reservation. It is the call to Yawa’—to act on one’s beliefs, often expressed through a culture of giving.

A Turning Point
Life on the reservation changed dramatically in the mid-1980s with the construction of a bingo hall. New jobs and new revenue meant new hope, but bingo could take the tribe only so far. The next step proved pivotal, and it planted the seeds for what would grow into a deep relationship between San Manuel and CGU.

In 1995, Ramirez met Fred Balitzer. The CGU alumnus and professor at Claremont McKenna College and his son Rod Wilson knew the ins and outs of government and politics—a skill that San Manuel was seeking.

“We came up with the notion that gaming could be legalized in California, but if we didn’t begin to start talking about it, it was never going to happen,” Ramirez says. “Dr. Balitzer and Rod were my closest allies back then. They had run campaigns, they saw the struggles that we were going through, and they took it to heart. We formed a friendship and we introduced Prop. 5, which would legalize gaming in California.”

The proposition, approved resoundingly by voters in 1998, was ruled unconstitutional, but a follow-up constitutional amendment two years later received similar voter support, paving the way for San Manuel and other reservations to establish gaming operations. Prosperity followed, but more important was how the prosperity was managed, says Deron Marquez, who served as San Manuel’s chairman from 1999 to 2006.

“Wealth is just the vehicle. It’s what you do with the wealth,” says Marquez, who earned his master’s degree and doctorate at CGU and joined the Board of Trustees in 2018. “We started focusing on important issues: What is health? What is education? What do we want our government to look like? What do we want to build up? Back then, those were new questions.”

San Manuel established relationships with colleges and universities throughout the region to help address those issues.

“The history between Indian Country and institutions of higher education is a checkered history,” Marquez says. “It has many pitfalls of injustices—what
academics did to Indians under the guise of research. So there was always this hesitation when it came to higher education. But because of Dr. Balitzer, the fear of higher education in its relationship with tribal communities was really alleviated.”

In 2006, Marquez and Balitzer co-founded the Tribal Administration Certificate Program at CGU. Supported by an endowment from San Manuel, it fosters a new generation of leaders within the tribal employee workforce through professional development.

“It was all built around trust,” Ramirez says of the relationship that San Manuel and CGU have cemented. “It’s when you get to know people in a good way and know that your values are in alignment.”

The Project Takes Form
Shortly after Len Jessup came aboard as CGU’s president in the summer of 2018, Provost Patricia Easton led a strategic planning exercise to see what kinds of research the faculty were conducting and which themes might emerge. Health and well-being topped the list.

“Health is just the vehicle. It’s what you do with the wealth. We started focusing on important issues: What is health? What is education? What do we want our government to look like? What do we want to build up?”

Deron Marquez

About the same time, the Claremont Consortium informed the seven presidents that the Huntley Bookstore needed to be moved as part of a master plan for construction. CGU was offered first right of refusal to acquire the 23,000 square-foot facility on the southeast corner of the campus.

Jessup didn’t hesitate.

“I said, ‘We’ll take it. I don’t know how we’re going to pay for it, but we’ll take it. I’ll figure it out.’”

The School of Community & Global Health, which has been housed north of campus since its founding in 2008, would be the anchor tenant in a refurbished Huntley building.

“But I also knew that we could convince other faculty to move in or at least make use of the new labs and classrooms, and that idea grew into a center for integrated health and well-being aimed at vulnerable populations. And we knew that concept could really resonate with donors.”

Jessup raised the opportunity with the Board of Trustees, which led to conversations with Balitzer and...
We will soon begin renovating the Huntley building to create the Yuhaaviatam Center for Health Studies, a state-of-the-art facility with research geared to those most in need. We will foster discovery through inviting shared spaces and an open floor plan, as well as an embrace of nature. We invite you to join us through one of several naming opportunities.

For a brochure highlighting the possibilities, please contact:

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“The study of family business is not aligned with the traditional subject matter covered in business or law schools, but it is every bit as important as venture capital. The more you know about it, the better off you are in terms of being able to create value.”

Spencer Burke, seminar attendee and family business expert
Houshi Ryokan in Central Japan is a solid business—as in 46 generations solid. The traditional inn, with 74 guest rooms and a natural hot spring, was founded a little over 1,300 years ago. That makes it the world’s oldest known family business, but there has been noticeable tension since 2013, when the only son of Zengoro and Chizuko Houshi died unexpectedly, leaving their daughter, Hisae, as the sole heir.

“It is a heavy burden on my mind,” she told The Atlantic. For the business to survive, she will have to marry and have her husband adopted into the family to continue the tradition of male proprietorship.

Houshi Ryokan’s situation is unusual, but all family businesses, from multinationals to corner restaurants, share the same overriding issue of generational succession. Combine the challenges that all businesses face with those unique to families—which sibling gets to make the decisions, whether outside experts are brought in, should part of the business be sold to raise capital—and getting past the third or fourth generation, much less the 46th, becomes daunting.

The Drucker School’s Global Family Business Institute was launched in 2018 to help family enterprises navigate this maze. The institute connects members with academic experts and business leaders to assess challenges unique to family enterprises, provides resources to help identify and strategize effective solutions, and offers support to address the complexities of generational differences.

The idea for the institute began germinating when faculty noticed that many students attending the Drucker School had roots in family businesses, says Brian Dennis, associate dean and interim director of the institute. Add the fact that family businesses are a formidable economic driver—they make up more than 60% of American companies and a much higher percentage overseas—and you have a potentially wide audience.

With seed funding from founding member Andrew Chen (MBA, ’11), the institute launched in April 2018 with a conference that included participants from the Midwest to Asia. In the following years, the institute served members with workshops and seminars, leading up to a major conference in November 2020.

“The conference was intended to be a signature event that would attract hundreds of people and reach alumni and other institute members around the world,” Dennis says. The Woody and Gayle Hunt Family Foundation provided a $75,000 grant to fund the event, underscoring its commitment to support business values that reflect the philosophy of Peter Drucker.

Then came COVID-19.

Rather than cancel, the Drucker team did what the school’s namesake preached: Exploit change as an opportunity.

The all-day conference morphed into a series of six online seminars spread over several months, each with a specific focus. The Drucker School made research an integral part of each seminar, pairing an academic leader with an experienced family business member for an engaging conversation.

The first two hours of the initial seminar, held in November, involved a conversation about Drucker principles with Bill Betts, the sixth-generation president and COO of Betts Company, a manufacturer and supplier of springs and heavy-duty truck parts. To make the online event engaging and interactive, a high-end production company was brought in to give the seminars an intimate and interactive feel.

The Hunt Foundation made it all possible by committing to fund the seminar series.
“A family business is like any other business in that the fundamentals must be sound, but it can be unlike other businesses in its focus on sustainability, culture, place, and values,” says Woody Hunt, senior chairman of the board of the family-owned Hunt Companies Inc. and an alumnus (MA, Executive Management, ’89). “All of these differences confer advantages and opportunities, but they aren’t without their challenges. This seminar series offers a helpful framework for how to increase the likelihood of success for any family venture.”

Dave Whorton and Spencer Burke, who attended the first seminar, are also vested in the success of privately held businesses.

Whorton is the CEO and founder of Tugboat Group, an organization of what he calls “evergreen companies” that embrace the 7Ps: Purpose, Perseverance, People First, Private, Profit, Paced Growth, and Pragmatic Innovation.

“The idea is that these are the critical principles behind building and sustaining a company with the staying power to last 100 years or longer,” Whorton says. “Multi-generational family businesses comprise more than 40 percent of our 200 members and are part of the bedrock of our Tugboat Institute Evergreen leader community.”

He attended to hear Betts “and because I’ve been a fan of Peter Drucker and his principles for a very long time. I have most of his books on my bookshelf. The marrying of a multigenerational family business owner’s story with the principles was a really nice overlap.”

Burke was also drawn to the seminar because of the Drucker connection: “As an alum of Edward Jones, I had the privilege of sitting at the knee of Peter Drucker a number of times, so to speak.” His interest runs deep into the academic realm as well. As the family business executive in residence at Washington University’s Olin School of Business in St. Louis, he sees a need to infuse the traditional business school pedagogy with more discussion about “the most dominant segment of the world economy.”

“The study of family business is not aligned with the traditional subject matter covered in business or law schools,” he says, “but it is every bit as important as venture capital. The more you know about it, the better off you are in terms of being able to create value.”

As senior counsel at The St. Louis Trust Company, he knows well the challenges of managing family businesses for the long haul. One of the biggest issues involves simple math: “Family trees grow at a compound rate of about 6%, and businesses grow at a rate of GDP. It’s a collision course, and it explains a lot about why family businesses are challenged to stay in existence.”

Whorton and Burke agree on the value of organizations such as Drucker’s Global Family Business Institute.

“For family businesses, it’s very important to have time with peers to share best practices and new ideas,” Whorton says. “It’s also important to get advice and ideas from those who have the same long-term intentions that you do.”

“Family business education is a cottage industry in the world, with explosive growth everywhere but in the U.S.,” Burke says. “That needs to change.”

The next family business seminar, “Succession and Governance,” is scheduled for Wednesday, June 2. If you are interested in joining the online event and would like more details, please email druckerfamilybusiness@cgu.edu.
When 3 Minutes Is a Lifetime

Whether it's a musical sound, a throw from a baseball or softball mound, or a quick speech meant to persuade an audience, a pitch is an effective way to get one's point across.

The Big Pitch is a way for students to get across great ideas at CGU. Modeled after the Three Minute Thesis competition popularized by the University of Queensland in Australia, The Big Pitch provides students the opportunity to present their research to a panel of judges for cash prizes and a wealth of experience—in three minutes or less.

The competition is made possible by an anonymous $20,000 gift pledge to fund the awards: $1,000 for first place, $500 for second, and $250 for third, with the remaining finalists receiving $150 for participating. The inaugural event in 2020 attracted students from a wide range of CGU schools.

School of Educational Studies doctoral candidate Vinh Tran won the top prize, presenting “Shortest Way Home: Developing an Interstate Policy Exchange Framework for K-12 Math and Science Education.” Tran's research observed math and science learning in high- and low-performing states, believing that bringing together small clusters in prospering regions can help identify key factors and policies for student success in struggling regions.

Tran, whose emphasis is in education policy, asserts that states can align themselves with those that are “similar to each other and potentially adopt policies from those doing much better in math and science. ... It will make it easier [for states] to define what policies might work.”

Second place went to psychology student Amber Kea-Edwards for “Development or Discrimination?: An Intersectional Lens on Multi-Source Feedback,” while third place went to History student Katrina Denman for “Angels ‘Leaning In’: Uncovering Women’s Roles in Academic History.” Other awardees included SES’s Amanda Castillo for “Strengthening Teacher Evaluation Systems in K-12 Public Education,” history student Kerri Dean’s “(re)Imagining the Evergreen,” and cultural studies student Tamar Salibian’s “Reading Reality TV: Publicizing, Promoting, and Commodifying the Self.”

“The Big Pitch teaches translatable skills that are valuable for all students. I couldn’t be happier with the response to the event,” says Marcus Weakley, Big Pitch organizer and director of the university’s Center for Writing and Rhetoric. “Numerous students dedicated themselves to the competition and, from everything I’ve heard, learned a lot from it. The judges did a great job and ensured that the quality was up to CGU’s standards.”

With the donor’s generosity, future difference-makers will be given the chance to share their academic prowess with the greater community while preparing for the next step in their journeys beyond graduate school.

“Overall, I think this year built a strong foundation on which I hope the event continues to grow in the years ahead,” Weakley said.
You can understand why Zulmarie de Pedro-Serbiá pauses to gather her emotions when she reflects on her education at CGU.

“I almost wasn’t able... I almost wasn’t able to finish because it was very hard.” Certainly, the classes and projects were difficult, especially for an English language learner, but the challenges ran far deeper, as in existentially deeper.

De Pedro-Serbiá was homeless—and her grandmother was battling cancer.

The email inviting her to join the CGU community as an online master’s student in Evaluation & Applied Research arrived several months after Maria, a Category 5 hurricane, devastated Puerto Rico in September 2017. De Pedro-Serbiá was among the thousands who were displaced among the wreckage.

To say she pursued her dreams despite the obstacles would be simplistic, especially since she was
staying with a friend, working full time at a clinical research center, dealing with power outages, and driving two hours each way on weekends to tend to her grandmother. Though de Pedro-Serbiá had long thought about pursuing an advanced degree, it took a little serendipity and a lot of encouragement for her to follow through.

“I wasn’t seeking opportunities, but one of my university colleagues with a PhD in evaluation received an email announcement of CGU’s new online program, so she sent it to me,” de Pedro-Serbiá says. “She was really excited and pushed me to apply. So I did. I didn’t have any expectations at all, especially because I think my English was awful.” (It’s not.)

CGU helped her throughout the process, but de Pedro-Serbiá did not give much thought about being offered admission.

“I tried to switch my mind off it after I sent in the application. Then I received an email saying that I was accepted. I wasn’t sure if understood correctly what I was reading, but I was so excited. I called my colleague and shared the news. And then I got very nervous. Oh my God, it would be the first time in my life of going with an all-English education. The first time in my life I would take a completely online education.”

A fellowship covered part of her tuition, providing the final incentive by easing the financial burden and allowing her to focus more on her studies. “I loved my first semester. It was comfortable—not easy in terms of classwork, but in terms of all the support I received. We had a success coach who called monthly to make sure I was on track with my classes and keeping up with everything administratively.”

Because she was between homes, her employer allowed her to stay after work, using the power and internet connection to take her classes at night, do homework, and participate in live sessions and team projects. (Puerto Rico is in the Atlantic Time Zone, as many as four hours ahead of California.)

She says her perception of online education changed completely because of her CGU experience. “The tools the university provided online were exceptional. It’s even better than my previous face-to-face [undergraduate] experience because the professors are really organized, and you can contact them. One of the major benefits was the opportunity to collaborate on research projects with colleagues from Italy and India. We were able to include cultural aspects in our research design, and sometimes you don’t have that opportunity when you are in a classroom.”

De Pedro-Serbiá also appreciates the flexibility she was given to ramp down to one class per semester when things got particularly tough in Puerto Rico.

“If I hadn’t done that, maybe I would have dropped out because there was so much going on, including looking for an apartment and finding medication for my grandmother. A lot was also going on with my family having a safe place, so I decided to slow down, which helped me finish the program.”

Professor Stewart Donaldson, who taught de Pedro-Serbiá’s cohort, recalls her passion for evaluation work and its potential to make a difference in Puerto Rico. “Her wisdom, knowledge, and experience enriched the class discussion in so many important ways.”

Keisha Chandler, the online lead in the Office of Student Affairs, says de Pedro-Serbiá was an inspiration. “Zulmarie was an excellent student, but the feedback about her was more than just her performance. It was the value and heart she contributed to those around her that stood out. I knew she was facing obstacles that were unimaginable. My commitment was to ensure that our student success team assisted her in any way possible.”

De Pedro-Serbiá graduated last spring with her Master’s in Evaluation & Applied Research. Though she is disappointed that the pandemic disrupted her commencement—and her first opportunity to visit
Zulmarie de Pedro-Serbiá stayed after work, using the power and internet connection to take her classes at night, do homework, and participate in live sessions and team projects up to four time zones away.

She is focusing on the Family First Prevention Services Act, a federal public policy designed to assist families that are at risk of entering the child welfare system. She is working in the evaluation component of the program, reviewing local laws to ensure they comply with the policy and provide the best outcomes for children.

It puts her in a position to improve the lives of others who are experiencing what she did growing up.

“It gives me chills. I feel humbled and very proud of myself that I was able to break the cycle,” she says. “Now I’m a citizen that contributes. I am productive, I have a formal education to help children who were raised in the environment I was. My motivation to work in evaluation is those children who are living in the conditions I once did, and trying to make a difference in their lives, even though they don’t know me. It’s a privilege.”

In the Next Issue of Impact

The reasons for estate gifts are as varied as the gifts themselves. The summer issue of Impact will tell the story of how a family tragedy inspired a couple to provide fellowships for generations of CGU students. You will also meet a spirited philanthropist and a shipping executive who wrote poetry—two people whose estates have enriched the arts.
Drucker MBA student Nicole Dawson’s successes can be credited to a drive to serve others and a commitment to chase her dream. A significant grant is helping make that dream a reality.

“I was almost in tears when it was awarded to me. It’s been such a huge, huge blessing,” says Dawson, who received the Toyota Women of Achievement Scholars fellowship. The Toyota USA Foundation grant helps prepare women leaders for careers in global supply chain management while simultaneously supporting Drucker’s Center for Supply Chain & Logistics. Since the grant’s inception, 23 CGU students have received the award. This has led to their success in industries from healthcare technology to e-commerce to retail. Recent alumni have launched careers at Amazon, Niagara Bottling, and Kaiser Permanente, among others.

After gaining valuable experience in an internship last summer at Lowe’s Home Improvement in e-commerce and product merchandising, Dawson accepted an operations program manager position at Apple for the Beats team, where she will oversee the introduction of new products. She will assume the role following her graduation this spring.

Dawson’s journey began at Spelman College in Atlanta, where she graduated with a bachelor’s degree in computer science. She worked briefly in the healthcare industry before pursuing graduate school. “I became interested in products when I was on the sourcing side at GE Healthcare,” she recalls. “I was starting to gain understanding of the customer and products, and I wanted to see the end-to-end experience—to see an idea come to life.”

She chose CGU to further this understanding. It also helped that it came highly recommended: Her mother is an alumna and current PhD student, and her brother is a recent graduate. Like many, Dawson faced the potential financial burden of pursuing an advanced degree. She initially thought she would have to take another job.

Then came the Toyota fellowship.

“It has eased so many worries,” she says. “I have a dual concentration in supply chain management and marketing, and this award helps me to focus entirely on both.” It has also allowed Dawson to lead several organizations at CGU, including the Venture Capital Club and the GSC Student Affairs Committee. In addition, she is helping lead the Claremont Colleges’ newly formed chapter of the Institute for Operations Research and the Management Sciences (INFORMS), an internationally recognized association where students network with professionals in operations research and analytics. Dawson was selected as a graduate student ambassador for CGU, where she encourages students looking to make a career pivot or those who are intimidated by graduate school.

“One of my passions as a student ambassador is making students aware of how to network and the work involved in securing an internship or job offer,” she says. “It’s certainly not easy or quick; it’s very time consuming and it does take a level of dedication to yourself and your journey. I try to encourage this with all the students I speak to.”

Dawson’s commitment to supporting students reflects the opportunity she received.

“I hope awards like this encourage others to give back. These opportunities provide so much for so many students,” she says.

“It changed the trajectory of my life.”
Shortly after her arrival from Nigeria in 2018, Oluwanifemi Ologunorisa found herself trying to decipher the menu at Hagelbarger’s. One of the café staff came to the rescue. Try the chicken burger and fries! Ologunorisa happily accepted the advice, discovering what would become her go-to lunch choice. She laughs when she recalls the cherished memory, because for her it synthesizes the welcoming, helpful culture at CGU that was instrumental to her success in earning a master’s degree in Applied Gender Studies and, later, admission to a PhD program in African American and African Diaspora Studies at Indiana University Bloomington.

“When I first arrived, I was so shy and everything was overwhelming, but I had a lot of support,” Ologunorisa says. On her first day of orientation, David Altman, associate director of admissions, gave her a tour of campus, introduced her to Michael Sacoto at the Career Development Office (CDO), and told her, “This is a place you always want to come to.”

Over the next several months, Sacoto guided Ologunorisa in drafting cover letters and resumes, searching for opportunities online, and interviewing for jobs and internships. Christine Kelly, the CDO’s director, led a workshop in negotiation techniques and helped Ologunorisa prepare to meet recruiters.

“Since day one, Oluwanifemi knew the importance of a career and worked tirelessly to gain the experience and build a strong network of professionals,” Sacoto says. Because of her commitment, she completed three paid internships and a part-time work experience, building skills including networking, community engagement, program development, and grant writing.

Key among her experiences was a paid internship at the Inland Empire Section of the National Council of Negro Women, made possible through funding from the organization and CGU. Ologunorisa learned the inner workings of nonprofits—their challenges and the way they implement programs. She also implemented her own program for 9- to 18-year-old girls from Rialto, San Bernardino, and Colton called “Empowering Black Girls for a Brighter Tomorrow.” The program was part of the UN’s International Day of the Girl Child celebration. The mayor of Rialto was so impressed with the proposal, she and other board of directors funded it.

When she completes her PhD, Ologunorisa wants to return to Nigeria to bring a feminist framework to nonprofits throughout Africa, helping marginalized girls achieve their dreams.

“How you use your privilege to assist other people is important,” she says.
Maryah Garner, a student in the Computational Justice Lab who was featured in the fall 2020 issue of Impact, had good reason to fast-track her dissertation: She was offered a dream job. We caught up with her recently to see how her life has changed.

**Tell us about the job offer.**
I was offered a position at Coleridge Initiative in October. I told them I was on schedule to graduate in May 2021, but if they gave me a good enough offer, I would stop filling out job applications and put all my energy into finishing my dissertation. Two days after my second round of interviews, I was on a Zoom call with another CGU student when I got an email with the offer. I just froze. I tried to continue working but I was so overcome with relief that I started to cry, so I ended the Zoom call and just sat at my desk. Years of stress, worry, and anxiety were lifted. Finally, I went into the kitchen and told my sister and my kids, and we all hugged each other. My sister and I were laughing and crying, and my kids were confused but knew something really wonderful was happening. I took another 10 minutes to celebrate, during which I called my advisor Greg DeAngelo and a few close friends. I defended my dissertation on November 23 and started working for Coleridge Initiative a week later.

**Why is this a dream job?**
I wanted a job where I could use data to help make better-informed policy decisions and positively impact society. That is exactly what I get to do! I am in a role that challenges and excites me, and I have learned so much these past months.

**What is different now?**
There is much less stress, and somehow the sun seems to shine a little brighter, my kids’ laughter sounds a little sweeter, and sleep comes a little easier. This job readjusts the trajectory of my life yet again. It is exciting to dream of the possibilities. I grew up on welfare, and now I am in a position to help inform Temporary Assistance for Needy Families policy. I also feel like all the challenges I have overcome give me a unique perspective that will guide my research and allow me to have a greater impact. It is not just a job. My heart and my soul are in this. I am incredibly grateful for the training I received at CGU, which gave me the tools I needed to turn my dreams into my reality.

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**Investing in Our Students Pays Dividends**
CGU prepares students to be leaders for positive change—leaders who will help make the world a better place. You will find that commitment in our mission statement, our classrooms, and our labs. From the arts to public policy, education, health, and beyond, our alumni are doing just that, and our students look forward to joining them. Your generosity will help them on their journey. If you are interested in supporting students through fellowships, please contact Tony Todarello at 909-607-9230.
Research is fundamental to CGU’s mission of making positive change in the world, and funded research is the gateway to achieving it.

“Funding frees up time, marshals the resources, and enables you to engage organizations and individuals you might not otherwise be able to engage,” says Eusebio Alvaro, associate provost for research. “It’s in those settings that you develop networks and connections to tackle issues of central import not just to you and your academic colleagues, but to practitioners and community members.”

Alvaro, who is also a full research professor in the Division of Behavioral & Organizational Sciences, is focused on expanding the already rich culture of research at CGU by making the Office of Research, Sponsored Programs & Grants an integral part of faculty members’ lives. One key to success will be engaging junior faculty or those not currently grant-active through providing resources such as grant- and contract-writing workshops, as well as assistance with accounting and report preparation to the funding partners—not glamorous, but all part of the research tool kit. Drafting a proposal, especially to a government agency such as the National Institutes of Health (NIH), is an essential skill, especially with so many researchers seeking funding from a finite resource where there can be less than a 1-in-10 chance for success.

“For common NIH proposals, you have 12 pages, single-spaced, for the narrative, and sometimes you’re proposing a five-year project with multiple sites and trying to convey why it’s important, with
background, the theoretical foundation, the series of studies laid out, all the potential pitfalls. ... It’s very dense writing. As an added benefit, going through this process does clarify your thinking.”

Alvaro certainly knows the drill. As a doctoral student in communication at the University of Arizona in 1997, he helped draft a proposal as part of a graduate seminar.

The class found a state RFP—request for proposal—and with the professor’s urging made a case for funding. The class earned a good score, was asked to resubmit, and hit the research jackpot.

“There’s a real high from landing a grant—especially the first one. It was $1.2 million, and I’d never seen those kinds of numbers before.”

In quick succession, Alvaro was asked to assist in drafting two more proposals. They received funding for those as well, and he became the program director for all three projects. He added another the next year, “and I’ve been going ever since.” Alvaro believes that working on funded research teams, even just developing the proposal, provides students with invaluable experience and training that better prepares them for their professional careers.

Alvaro says the research culture fits his personality. “I’ve always been very entrepreneurial. There was some attraction to the traditional academic path—starting as an assistant professor, earning tenure, and then working to become a full professor—but I’ve really enjoyed the research faculty path. It has allowed me to be independent, part of a semi-autonomous entity within the university, and just do this work.”

The Keys to Communication

His research expertise lies in the study of social influence processes, health promotion, disease prevention, and medicine with a focus on mass media messages.

“My research interest is using communication channels, messages—any form of communication whether it’s mediated or not. How is it interpreted; how is it received? Can I craft a message that can encourage someone to give some thought to an issue and perhaps persuade them? The idea is not to encourage compliance, to get someone to mindlessly follow along. Rather, can you engage them to come around to a different way of seeing the world? We’re trying to sell human behavior, a much more daunting prospect than selling a product. In a lot of ways, we’re trying to unsell a behavior. The task is quite different from traditional marketing, where you’re trying to fulfill a need or create a new brand. Often, we’re trying to dissuade people who are already inclined to engage in a particular behavior that might be bad for them.”

Currently, Alvaro is part of a research team addressing Type 2 diabetes in the Inland Empire, a project that grew out of Professor Andy Johnson’s Community Translational Research Institute, which applies evidence-based technologies and practices in ways that improve health, especially in underserved communities. Johnson recruited Alvaro and CGU professors William Crano, Brian Hilton, and Bin Xie to join the transdisciplinary effort.

“Stopping Diabetes in Its Tracks” is a three-year, ongoing partnership with Pomona Valley Hospital Medical Center and other local agencies that is addressing individual health, health as contextualized within families, within the city, and in an environment influenced by policy and structural inequalities.

Those with prediabetes or diabetes who meet the program criteria are offered free health classes. In addition, participants are put in contact with a team that ensures access to care and follow-ups from the community partners. The program has expanded to include the City of Hope, which will provide an endocrinologist and other specialists.

“If you’re in Pomona and have diabetes or pre-diabetes, we are looking to direct you to local resources and motivate you to engage in prevention or management behavior,” Alvaro says.

This semester, Alvaro is working on messages to persuade people to get vaccinated against COVID-19. He and his research partners are working with a local medical center that serves a large minority population that historically distrusts the medical system.

“We’re just starting to look at potential barriers and will try to craft messages that physicians and staff can use in clinical encounters,” Alvaro says.
Making Sure Mentoring STEM Students Isn’t Lost in the Pandemic

Associate Professor of Education Guan Saw and the implementation of distance learning were two newcomers to CGU this past academic year. With help from frequent collaborator and University of Kansas Assistant Research Professor Chi-Ning Chang, Saw became interested in how mentorship between faculty and students in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) fields would shift as a result of school closures and the move to distance learning caused by the pandemic.

“An idea for the project first came about in March 2020,” Saw says, “when the conversation surrounding the pandemic’s impact on higher education was mostly about the disruptions in teaching and research. One thing we noticed that was missing was an important aspect of education, particularly at the graduate level: mentoring.”

With emergency funds allocated by the CARES Act for critical research, a National Science Foundation (NSF) RAPID Grant opportunity became available in April 2020. Saw and Chang jumped at the chance, and as co-leads were awarded a $153,899 grant in the early summer for this overlooked aspect of COVID-19’s impact.

The study investigated the challenges faced by STEM faculty and students in the United States due to the change from in-person to electronic communication. The parameters focused on how e-mentoring affects students’ academic, career, and mental health outcomes. “Our team paid close attention to students from underrepresented backgrounds,” Saw says. “In particular, we found that the COVID-19 pandemic has a larger negative impact on graduation timelines, job search confidence, and mental health for women, racial and ethnic minorities, persons with disabilities, and students from low socioeconomic status (SES) backgrounds.”

The National Study of STEM Faculty and Students occurred between June 3 and 22. It was administered online via Qualtrics, with electronic consent obtained from its participants. “We adopted a number of survey items used by the U.S. Census Bureau’s Household Pulse Survey, a recurrent survey launched that April,” Saw says, “so that we could compare the challenges and well-being of our STEM faculty and student sample with the U.S. general population.” The Census Bureau survey was designed to collect data quickly and effectively to measure household experiences during the pandemic, including factors such as employment, mental health, and educational disruption.

What resulted were 1,087 faculty and 4,603 undergraduate and graduate student participants in STEM fields by the time the study period was over. With involvement from over 150 higher education institutions in 41 states, the numbers were much larger than expected.

The study became a pioneer for e-mentoring research on a scale that large. With plans for a follow-up study in late spring 2021, Saw and the team envision how departments can use the information to benefit more underserved student groups. “In
“Our team...found that the COVID-19 pandemic has a larger negative impact on graduation timelines, job search confidence, and mental health for women, racial and ethnic minorities, persons with disabilities, and students from low socioeconomic status (SES) backgrounds.”

our current data, about half of STEM faculty and students generally think that e-mentoring could be equally as effective as face-to-face mentoring. However, it is concerning that disproportionately more students from lower SES backgrounds reported not being familiar with e-mentoring. A conversation with higher education officials can help inform policy on providing aid to low SES students, as well as other underrepresented groups,” he says.

The project’s findings have been widely disseminated. As of early fall 2020, three reports on the results have been shared with nearly 10,000 faculty and deans in STEM departments across the nation. About 30 participating institutions have also received a customized institutional report for each topic, with some deans requesting further data analysis and underscoring the importance of the evidence in their internal communications and decision-making.

The research team has also been invited to present its findings at several national webinars: the Institute for Operations Research and the Management Sciences Minority Issues Forum; the American Society for Engineering Education; and Columbia University’s Northeast Big Data Innovation Hub. Two manuscripts have also been accepted for presentations at the 2021 American Educational Research Association and the National Association for Research in Science Education annual meetings.

Saw is grateful that the grant funding serves those in most need.

“This ongoing NSF project has generated comprehensive, relevant, and timely evidence. It informs educators and stakeholders about the impact of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic on the life, work, and learning of faculty and students in STEM, as well as the benefits of e-mentoring for STEM students, particularly during a time of crisis.”

“One thing we noticed that was missing was an important aspect of education, particularly at the graduate level: mentoring.”
Encouragement Went a Long Way

Sometimes the fondest memories can prompt the greatest appreciation—a powerful reminder of the reasons we give back.

For Ray Garubo, it’s Ralph Waldo Emerson’s quote “Free should the scholar be, free and brave,” remembered from a place on CGU’s campus. The scholarly conversations held outside of McManus Hall. An iconic Viennese inflection emanating from the father of modern management.

“Peter Drucker was a rock star,” Garubo recalls. “I never took a class of his, but I had a few encounters with him that impressed me to this day. I once tried to upgrade him on a flight we both found ourselves on and he refused. It did not seem right that I was in first class and this brilliant man in coach. He encouraged me to keep up with my studies.”

Another encourager of Garubo’s was his faculty advisor Jack Schuster. With doctoral degrees from Harvard Law School and UC Berkley, along with experience as a congressional administrative assistant, Schuster had no shortage of connections, which aided Garubo directly while he was a student.

“In a Politics of Education course, I was interested in voluntary accreditation,” Garubo says. “Jack personally knew an assemblyman, who at the time was critical of professional accrediting bodies, and calls Sacramento to get me, a struggling doctoral student, an appointment with him to help guide my research. Just like that.

“That’s one of the reasons I keep on giving: for the practice of learning to manage and appreciate trustworthy connections. CGU faculty have those connections.”

Garubo went on to build connections of his own. Now the president of Political Harmony Consulting Services Inc., he manages consultants for city councils and school boards through his Political Harmony Survey, an online tool that helps public management and staff to be evaluated using a statistically accurate model. On the academic side, he worked as a faculty member at the University of La Verne and California Baptist University, where he has served on over 100 doctoral committees.

Garubo understands the sacrifices made by current PhD students, because he once faced them.

“At one point I was ready to stop pursuing my degree at CGU. I told Jack I was having too hard a time.” Schuster then took Garubo to lunch and the two sat down to talk. “He said, ‘Ray, I have a plan for you. It won’t be easy, but we’re going to do it.’ Jack gave me self-worth and value, and I gave it back with my research.” It paid off. Garubo was able to finish his dissertation analyzing the availability of tenured jobs in higher education. Now, he is every bit a philanthropist.

“I keep on giving because my CGU experiences keep on giving. Lessons from classwork and relationships with faculty generate valuable memories that morph into currently relevant, good ideas. The alumni have experienced a transformational connection, not a transactional one,” he says.

“Claremont becomes a part of your life, and you don’t have to make a lot to make a contribution.”

Giving Takes Many Forms

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Thank you for considering a gift to CGU. We are providing this resource to ensure that you have the information you need when the time comes. Feel free to share this with your attorney, accountant, or other professional advisor.
“One of the reasons I’m proud to belong to the CGU community is its commitment to transdisciplinary scholarship. If we as a society hope to successfully address the many challenges we face, we must do so in a collaborative way—one that crosses boundaries and expands opportunities for discovery. Fellowships and research grants are the fuel to help accomplish that.”

Patricia Easton
Executive Vice President and Provost