

California University JOURNAL

VOLUME 17, NUMBER 1 JAN. 19, 2015

READ THE JOURNAL ONLINE: www.calu.edu/news/the-journal

Two Presidents Address Graduates

Advices from two Cal U Presidents, both distinguished alumni, highlighted Cal U's 179th Commencement.

At ceremonies on Dec. 12 and 13 in the Convocation Center, interim University President Geraldine M. Jones '72, '80 awarded degrees to nearly 1,100 graduates, including students whose diplomas were awarded in absentia.

Emeritus President Dr. John Pierce Watkins '53, who served as University President from 1977-1992, addressed the graduates at both ceremonies.

"Like so many others gathered here today, I am very proud to be associated with California University," President Jones said.

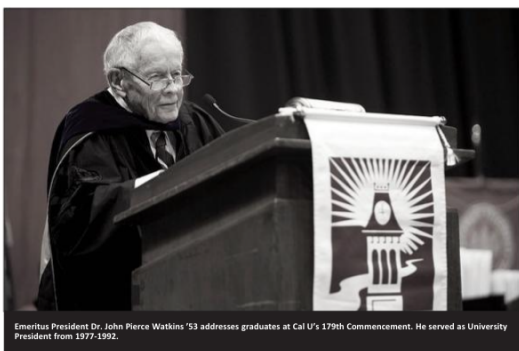
"This great institution has been an important part of my life, and now that you are entering the 'alumni phase' of your association with Cal U, I encourage you to remain close with your alma mater, your fellow alumni, and the professors and staff members who have made a difference in your lives.

"I know you will continue to work hard as you enter this new phase of your life."

President Watkins — who recalled that his first two semesters of graduate-level study cost him just \$25 six decades ago — began his remarks to the master's degree candidates by leaving no doubt about the significance of the event.

"There is no more important ceremony on any university's calendar than Commencement," he said. "It is important in that it declares the achievements of the University's graduate students and faculty.

"The work of the University is to prepare you student scholars. It is your task as learners to reach this point in your careers."



Emeritus President Dr. John Pierce Watkins '53 addresses graduates at Cal U's 179th Commencement. He served as University President from 1977-1992.

One who did so was Michael Kirk, a nontraditional student from Columbus, Ohio, who earned his master's degree in criminal justice through Cal U Global Online.

"From ... admission to graduation, the University has been friendly and helpful to the point where I feel more of a connection to Cal U than my previous alma mater," he said.

"Commencement has given me an opportunity to meet all the people I worked with online and find out what the physical campus was all about. It's very nice to be here."

Victoria Hunt, who earned her Master of Education in Secondary Education, also mentioned her ties to the

— Continued on page 3

Two Named Women of Year

Just before they graduated, the President's Commission for the Status of Women honored two students as Fall 2014 Women of the Year.

Amber Preston, who earned a master's degree in clinical mental health counseling, and Melissa Sivaram, who completed a bachelor's degree in psychology, were honored at a luncheon on Dec. 3.

The women nominated each other for the award, having worked together at Cal U on projects and initiatives with the Activist Club and the Women's Center. Both also were involved in the women's studies program.

"Amber is very passionate about women's issues on and off campus and is very involved with survivors of sexual assault," Sivaram said.

"She is also an animal rights activist and not only volunteers at local shelters, but takes in and finds homes for stray animals herself."

"I look up to her a lot and use her as an example for my life."

The feeling was mutual.

"Melissa has helped the Activist Club collect bras for the Free the Girls campaign, which helps survivors of domestic violence, and she has always been supportive and engaging with the topics presented at the Audrey-Beth Fitch Women's Studies Conference," Preston said.



Amber Preston (left) and Melissa Sivaram are the President's Commission for the Status of Women's Fall 2014 Women of the Year.

Dr. Marta McClintock-Comeaux, associate professor in the Department of History and Political Science and director of Women's Studies, also nominated each woman for the awards, which she presented at the luncheon.

"I've seen her grow so much," she said of Sivaram. "Her actions and passion inspire other students; she is focused on her goals, but also the goals of others."

McClintock-Comeaux noted Preston's outstanding work as well, particularly in planning and promoting the Audrey-Beth Fitch Women's Studies

Conference as a graduate assistant.

As part of Preston's work at a local school during her internship and practicum, she started a group for girls to help them with self-esteem and social issues.

"Amber works tirelessly to make the world a better place for women and girls. She embodies why this award exists," McClintock-Comeaux said.

Preston and Sivaram, along with the spring 2015 Women of the Year winners, will be recognized in March at the second annual Celebration of Women dinner.

Mentorship Has Global Reach

As an assistant professor and internship coordinator for Cal U's Professional Golf Management (PGM) program, Dr. Vanessa MacKinnon helps teach valuable life skills to girls through various free clinics and programs.

However, her work with young people is hardly confined to Cal U's indoor golf facility inside Gallagher Hall.

MacKinnon is a mentor with Women Win, an international nonprofit organization that supports grassroots initiatives around the world that pertain to women in sport, particularly programs that use sport to improve the health, education and life skills of girls and young women.

Recently MacKinnon was one of 15 mentors selected through a competitive application process to give a presentation in Amsterdam at Women Win's Young Women in Sport Leadership Camp. The selected mentors are all professional women from North America or Europe who have been actively involved with women and sport in some capacity.

Each mentor provides advice, counsel and support for a young woman from the

— Continued on page 2

Reports to Trustees Focus on Enrollment

The growing popularity of Cal U's five-week Winter College will help the University begin 2015 on a positive note, members of the Council of Trustees learned at their quarterly meeting on Dec. 3.

Interim President Geraldine M. Jones reported that this year's Winter College preliminary offerings consisted of 30 undergraduate courses and 16 graduate courses. With a total full-time equivalency (FTE) of 485 students as of the meeting date, enrollment was up significantly over last year's inaugural winter session.

"Winter College is one way we continue to increase enrollment and encourage our students to remain enrolled until they earn a degree," President Jones told the council. Winter College courses began Dec. 15 and continued through Jan. 17.

"New programs and concentrations are another way to increase enrollment," the President said, noting strong enrollment in programs such as mechatronics engineering technology and the online Master of Science in Exercise Science.

"It is our goal to offer programs that students are interested in, and which will lead to good jobs."

President Jones opened her report with brief comments about the review of the football program being conducted by The Compliance Group of Lenexa, Kan.

In the wake of several incidents involving alleged criminal activity by players, "this experienced group is assessing the current culture of the football program," she said.

TCG is expected to return recommendations for potential changes in policies and practices "best-suited to recruit, retain and graduate student-athletes who embrace the educational opportunities afforded by a Cal U education and understand the obligations associated with being part of a living-learning community."

Both council chairman Lawrence "Larry" Maggi '79 and fellow trustee state Rep. Peter J. Daley II '72, '75 commended the actions of President Jones and her administration.

"It was a difficult, sensitive situation that you handled in a positive manner. You maintained the integrity of the



The growing popularity of Cal U's five-week Winter College will help the University begin 2015 on a positive note.

University in your decisions," Maggi said.

Daley noted that the actions of a few individuals do not define the entire team. "You did absolutely, unequivocally the right thing to 'let the steam out of the teapot,'" he said, referring to the decision to cancel and forfeit a game before completing the season. "The law will take care of this matter."

On a separate subject, council members voted unanimously to approve a policy designed to protect children and teens who participate in activities sponsored by Cal U or held on University property. The campus policy, effective Dec. 31, 2014, was developed in adherence with the State System's Protection of Minors Policy.

Under the policy Cal U will establish and maintain a registry of all University-sponsored programs that are offered to minors. Programs must be registered annually with the Office of Human Resources, which will maintain records of background checks for all authorized adults.

In other business:

- CPA Mark Gillett, an auditor with the CliftonLarsonAllen accounting firm, reported on the annual financial audit. This is the second time that CliftonLarsonAllen, one of the nation's

top 10 accounting firms, has conducted the University's annual financial audit. As part of that process, the firm examined the University's budgeting process and financial controls, scrutinizing the way revenue and expenses are handled and recorded.

"We didn't find any errors," Gillett said. "This was not a cookie-cutter approach but an audit based on your needs, and we found no weaknesses in your internal controls. In our opinion this was a clean audit."

Robert Thorne, vice president for Administration and Finance, updated trustees on renovations to the Natali Student Center and the University residence in South Hall. The student center is on track for completion this summer, and the residence was being prepared for the final occupancy inspection.

Dr. Bruce Barnhart, acting provost and vice president for Academic Affairs, reported that for the first time Cal U is poised to confer Master of Business Administration degrees, a more attractive degree option compared to the former

Master of Science in Business Administration. In fact, 37 students received MBA degrees at last month's graduate-level Commencement.

Barnhart also pointed out that Cal U was third in the State System, trailing only IUP and West Chester, in the total number of degrees awarded for 2013-2014.

He told the council that student applications for the spring semester are up by 4 percent compared to this time last year. "As an early lead indicator (for enrollment), this is a good sign for spring. I'm encouraged by what we are seeing."

Dr. Nancy Pinardi, interim vice president for Student Affairs, focused on student activities. Collectively, students are devoting thousands of hours to community service and engaging in worthwhile collaborations on and off campus.

"Our students are responsible, respectful and enjoy being a part of the community," she said.

Craig Ruzizine, vice president for Marketing and University Relations, displayed the new interactive, touch-screen kiosks that have been installed in the Convocation Center lobby.

"While these displays are not intended to replace face-to-face recruitment efforts, they can supplement those efforts as we continue to get more parents and high school students attending events in the Convocation Center," he said.

He also cited the latest Student-View marketing report for western Pennsylvania, which shows that awareness of Cal U is increasing. Nearly four in 10 students polled recalled seeing or hearing a Cal U advertisement, a figure higher than the national benchmark.

Tony Mauro, associate vice president for University Development and Alumni Relations, announced the pending completion of the \$35 million capital campaign. He emphasized that his area will continue to engage alumni and other potential donors.

"There's no commitment without involvement, and we will continue to be all about relationship building," he said. The Council of Trustees is scheduled to meet again March 4.

Mentorship Has Global Reach for Young Women

— Continued from page 1

developing world who is involved with a program supported by Women Win. This year, mentors were paired with young women from Uganda, Zambia, Kenya, India and Nepal.

"Many of the young women selected have overcome great barriers in their lives through the assistance of these programs," said MacKinnon. "Now they are heavily involved with these programs as volunteers or employees, teaching girls the skills that they themselves learned coming up through the programs."

MacKinnon's mentee is from Delhi, India. The young woman, a Muslim, works with the NAZ Foundation and its GOAL program, which introduces girls and young women from the slums to life skills and basic financial literacy in conjunction with the sport of netball.

"Her role is to reach out to and recruit for the program young women from the minority Muslim population who live in the predominantly Muslim slum in



The mentoring efforts of Dr. Vanessa MacKinnon, an assistant professor in Cal U's Professional Golf Management program, are impacting young people worldwide.

Delhi." MacKinnon helped her mentee to develop a business plan, marketing strategies and an "elevator pitch" for her

program. They also discussed time management.

Her mentee is pursuing a college education online, MacKinnon said.

"As English is not her first language, I will be assisting her remotely during the upcoming year with her academic assignments as she works to improve her writing and English skills."

MacKinnon called the trip to Amsterdam "an amazing opportunity" to increase awareness of Cal U's program offerings in exercise science, sport studies and PGM as the University seeks to attract an increasingly global student population.

"I am also hopeful that my involvement will show my students here at Cal U firsthand that participating in volunteer and community outreach programs can be a fantastic, enriching and enlightening experience," MacKinnon said.

Although Cal U's PGM program is not involved directly with Women Win, its resources and facilities are used to support outreach programs sponsored by the Women's Sports Foundation and the LPGA Foundation that have introduced many girls from the local community to the sport of golf.

Students End Fall Semester #CalUProud

Cal U students closed the Fall 2014 semester by showing their #CalUProud spirit and their passion for giving.

Led by Student Government, 16 student organizations participated in a Toys for Tots toy drive through the 96.1 KISS-FM Stuff-a-Bus program.

After collecting toys and monetary donations since early November, the students stuffed a Vulcan Flyer with an estimated \$4,000 worth of toys and delivered the playthings to the radio station's collection point in Monroeville.

Helping the students pack the bus on Dec. 4 was interim University President Geraldine M. Jones.

"Our students are amazing," she said. "They understand the importance of helping others."

This was the fifth consecutive year that Student Government has coordinated a Toys for Tots drive.

"Our students have donated toys, money and their time. This is a big deal to them, and their effort reflected that," said Brendan Garay, Student Government president.

Later that day members of Cal U's fraternities, societies, clubs, athletic teams and student organizations conducted a pre-holiday cleanup to demonstrate their respect for the California community and the University's neighbors.



Cal U students top their rain ponchos with #CalUProud T-shirts during Light Up Night festivities.

"Part of what we do is establish better relationships with people, and there are always areas that need to be cleaned up," said Jacynne Zetter, a junior psychology major and a member of Options@CalU. "We want to show California that students can be a positive and grateful part of the community."

On the following night nearly 150 Cal U students braved pouring rain to

join their community neighbors at the borough's Light Up Night festivities on the basketball courts at the corner of Third and Mechanic streets.

The pre-holiday event included performances by the Cal U Carolers, refreshments, and a Toys for Tots collection.

A number of Cal U students topped their rain ponchos with red #CalUProud

T-shirts and walked to the Light Up Night event as a group. Delta Zeta sorority member Coby Detar, a senior majoring in public relations, started the hashtag campaign on social media.

"I'm proud to be a student at Cal U, and this was a great opportunity to show others our spirit," Detar said. "I think the event went well and everyone had a great time!"

Two Presidents Address Winter 2014 Graduates

— Continued from page 1

campus community.

"The testing to get my degree was difficult, but I am very excited to be at Commencement," she said. "One of the best parts of my experience at Cal U was all of the wonderful connections I have made. I am going to miss everyone."

Before undergraduates received their diplomas, Kirsti Elizabeth Roemer, chair of the Senior Gift Drive Committee, presented President Jones with a check for more than \$20,000 contributed by graduating seniors and their families.

More than \$95,000 has been raised for an endowed scholarship since the first senior class donation was delivered at the spring 2010 Commencement.

"Those of us who worked on and contributed to the 2014 Senior Class Gift Drive certainly embrace the idea of a lifelong relationship with Cal U," Roemer said.

President Jones acknowledged Lauren Jennifer Behory for earning a bachelor's degree in communication disorders while attaining a perfect 4.0 grade-point average with at least 90 credit hours at Cal U. A dozen other students earned two separate degrees simultaneously.

While speaking to the graduates at both ceremonies, President Jones mentioned her high regard for President Watkins, whom she described as a friend and mentor.

"I encourage all of you to think seriously about the value of mentorship—both in terms of giving and receiving—in your careers and in your personal lives," she said. "It will truly make a difference for you, and for those whose lives you touch."

The message struck home with new graduate Steve Fortunato '14, who will work in Maryland as a police officer.

"A college education is a blessed thing to have," he said. "We have to remember to appreciate that and to give back when we can. We have to be mentors once we leave Cal U, and not just in the workplace."

President Watkins told the undergraduates that a university has three fundamental purposes: to collect the accumulated knowledge of the world, to add to this knowledge every day, and to produce the next generation of scholars.

"Work! Work!" he said. "Perceived talent and skills are not enough. You must become a high-precision weapon in your work. What effort are you prepared to make, what investment can you afford, and what commitment can you muster? ..."

"We do not produce widgets here that can be counted at a shift's end. You are what we count."

President Jones urged the graduates to enjoy their moment in the spotlight.

"Please pause ... and savor your success," she said. "You have worked hard, you have persevered, and you have accomplished something significant."



Above, Interim President Geraldine M. Jones proudly accepts a check for more than \$20,000 contributed by graduating seniors and their families. It was presented by Kirsti Elizabeth Roemer, chair of the Senior Gift Drive Committee. At left, Michael Kirk, a nontraditional student who earned his master's degree in criminal justice through Cal U Global Online, enjoys a moment after the ceremony with his granddaughter, Maddie Kirk.



GRANTS AWARDED

The Office of Sponsored Programs and Research reports that:

- Craig Butzine, vice president for Marketing and University Relations, has received a contract for \$75,000 from the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. This funding will support the Marshbrook Farm Stream Mitigation project.
- Dr. Katherine Mitchem, of the Department of Special

Education, has been awarded \$75,000 from the Edith L. Trees Charitable Trust to support her project, "Technologies to Support Students with Intellectual Disabilities."

- Dr. Tom Mueller, of the Department of Earth Sciences, has been \$24,900 from the US Geological Survey through AmericaView. This funding will continue to

support the development and operation of the Pennsylvania View Program for 2015.

The Office of Sponsored Programs and Research serves faculty and staff by providing comprehensive resources related to external funding for sponsored projects. For more information, call 724-938-1662 or e-mail vsprg@calu.edu.

Miller's Record Still on the Books

Editor's Note: Cal U will hold its 20th annual Athletic Hall of Fame luncheon at 12:30 p.m. Feb. 21 in the south conference wing of the Cal U Convocation Center. For reservations, contact the Office of Alumni Relations at 724-938-4418.

A determined Kim Miller led the nation in batting — and she used that determination to eventually earned her degree from Cal U five years after her splendid playing career came to a close.

Miller was a two-time National Fastpitch Coaches Association (NFCA) All-American and a three-time all-conference third baseman for the Vulcan softball team from 2001-2004.

After attending Cal U and then working for several years, Miller returned to California and completed her bachelor's degree in special/elementary education in 2009.

"Absolutely it was important for me to come back and finish as soon as I could," said Miller, a restaurant manager. "I have not gone that (teaching) route, but it's a wonderful Plan B to have."

"The professors were very engaged and got you involved with a lot of field experience and projects. They got you out there ... so you knew what to expect."

A member of four PSAC-West championship teams, Miller helped Cal U make four consecutive NCAA Division II Regional Tournament appearances, with two trips to the Pennsylvania State Athletic Conference championship finals.

She led the NCAA Division II in batting her senior season. Eleven years



On Feb. 21, two-time All-American third baseman Kim Miller will become the 15th softball player to be inducted into the Cal U Athletic Hall of Fame.

later, her .523 average remains the single-season school record and third best in PSAC history.

Along with earning first-team national All-American honors, Miller was selected as the 2004 PSAC-West Athlete of the Year.

Now she jokes about looking at the University magazine, *The Cal U Review*,

to see if her record remains intact.

"I look at the part on softball each summer to see if anyone has broken my batting average record. No one has yet, which is one thing I am very proud of," Miller said, laughing.

"At the time I'm not even sure if I was aware of that, but now I check each year."

Miller's .390 career batting average still ranks fourth in school history, bolstered by a .409 showing in 2002, her first All-American season.

The 15th softball player to be inducted into the Cal U Athletic Hall of Fame, Miller played under current Cal U softball coach and 2013 NFCA Hall of Fame inductee Rick Bertagnoli.

"When (Bertagnoli) called, it brought back memories immediately and put me back on the field again, feeling the dirt and the air like when I was out there," Miller said.

"It's kind of brings everything back into perspective again, because over time you lose touch, even though your teammates are your friends forever. I would not have wanted to hear this news from anyone else."

"It's so special to be recognized. It shows you must have left a mark." Bertagnoli emphasized that Miller brought more than just a powerful bat and swift glove to Cal U's softball program.

Her 338 putouts in 2001 are ninth in the record books.

"Kimmie Miller is one of many great western Pennsylvania student-athletes that we've been blessed with here," he said.

"More important than her obvious athletic accolades were her character and leadership abilities. Those traits played a huge role in her individual success and our team's success during her four years."

Miller, a 2000 graduate of Chartiers-Houston High School, resides in Meadowlands, Pa., with her son Derrian, 9, and daughter Kenadie, who was born in December 2014.

Basketball Player Remembered

Dressed in black T-shirts bearing Shanie Clark's name and number, the women's basketball team lined up in the Convocation Center Jan. 24 for the first home game after the death of their friend and teammate.

The T-shirts were "something the team wanted to do, so they could feel that Shanie is always with them," said athletic director Dr. Karen Hjerpe.

Clark, a senior, died Jan. 18 when she apparently aspirated chewing gum in her sleep. Less than a week later, the campus community rallied to celebrate her life and support both the basketball program and Clark's family.

Before the game Vulcan basketball fans heard a message from the Pennsylvania State Athletic

Conference, watched a brief video tribute to Clark and observed a moment of silence in her memory.



Shanie Clark

In the Convocation Center lobby, members of the Fastbreak booster club, the Fellowship of Christian Athletes and the Athletic Training Club raised funds for the Clark family by soliciting donations, selling ribbons and raffling baskets of Cal U gear.

The Athletics Department, Student Association Inc., Vulcan hockey and men's golf programs, PSECU credit union, AVI food service, Cal U bookstore and Bee Graphics all donated fundraising items.

Sophomores Jawan Turner, Vondel Bell and Tom Greene sat quietly beside a Memory Box they

created to collect special remembrances and messages of condolence for the Clark family. Students jotted notes and tucked them inside the brightly decorated box.

"There's not much you can say to make people feel better when something like this happens," Turner said. "But we wanted them to know that their daughter touched so many lives on campus."

"The crowd in the stands was one of the largest in recent memory for a women's basketball game."

Like many students, sophomores Taylor Dawkins and Shante Wright said they don't go to every game. "But we wanted to be here today, to show support for Shanie."

"I am heartened by the support shown by our campus family," said interim University President Geraldine M. Jones. "This is a reminder that every life is precious."

Jazz Ensemble on the Road

The Cal U Jazz Ensemble will open its 2015 season with two off-campus performances later this month.

Under the direction of Marty Sharer, associate director of bands, the group will perform Feb. 15 at the Latitude 360 entertainment venue in Robinson Township and Feb. 21 at the South Fayette Jazz Festival at South Fayette High School in McDonald, Pa.

Both shows begin at 6 p.m.

For more information about the show at Latitude 360, call 412-693-5555.

Headlining the jazz festival will be the Sax Pack, featuring Jeff Kashiwa, Steve Cole and Marcus Anderson.

Jazz ensembles from Duquesne University, as well as Peters Township, South Fayette and Upper St. Clair High Schools, also are on the program.

Tickets for the festival can be purchased at the door or online at severingofjazz.bpt.me.

The California Journal is published by California University of Pennsylvania, a member of The Pennsylvania State System of Higher Education.

Geraldine M. Jones
Interim University President

Dr. Bruce Barnhart
Acting Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs

Robert Thorn
Vice President for Administration and Finance

Dr. Nancy Pinaroli
Interim Vice President for Student Affairs

Craig Butzine
Vice President for Marketing and University Relations

Christine Kindl
Editor

Bruce Wald
Wendy Mackall
Jeff Bender
Writers

Office of Communications and Public Relations 250 University Avenue California, PA 15419 724-938-4195 wald@calu.edu

INTEGRITY · CIVILITY · RESPONSIBILITY