How was Cal’s mythical “golden bear” born?

Answer inside.
A Note from the Executive Director

Welcome to Cal Futures: Spring 2019! We hope you’ve enjoyed UC Berkeley’s 150th anniversary celebrations this past year. The revelry will wrap up this spring with events including a Chancellor’s Welcome and Berkeley 150 Retrospective on Cal Day, April 13.

The brilliance of Berkeley’s first 150 years was made possible by the stalwart support of generations of donors — beginning with its first planned gift in 1872! The university’s achievements and those of its students will continue to depend on our donors, including people like Cal alumna Marion Nestle. Her recent beneficiary designation gift, highlighted in this issue, will help ensure Berkeley’s success — particularly its students — in the years to come. We hope you’ll find inspiration in Marion’s Cal story, too.

On a personal note, this is my last column. After spending more than 14 years working for this great institution, I have decided to retire on June 30. It has been the highlight of my career to lead an incredibly talented team of professionals who are helping Cal’s most loyal alumni and friends make their philanthropic dreams come true. After July 1, Randi Silverman will serve as Interim Executive Director. Randi was my first hire and having worked with her for the last 14 years, I know the Gift Planning program will be in good hands.

To learn more about the ways in which our team can support you, please contact us at (800) 200-0575 or ogp@berkeley.edu. We would be glad to talk with you.

Kevin T. Crilly, J.D.
Executive Director
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Nourishing Future Nutrition Leaders

Public health crusader honors her Cal experience with new endowments

Incisive, cheerful, and energetic, 82-year-old Marion Nestle ’59, Ph.D. ’68, M.P.H. ’86 continues to stretch the definition of “prime of life.” A crusader for transparency in the food industry and Paulette Goddard Professor Emerita in the Department of Nutrition at New York University, Marion was recently invited to present a series of lectures at UC Berkeley’s Graduate School of Journalism and promote her ninth book, Unsavory Truth: How Food Companies Skew the Science of What We Eat. It’s yet another eye-popping exposé of the political and corporate influences that undermine the integrity of nutrition and health research in America.

As Marion stood before a packed house at Berkeley Engineering’s Sibley Auditorium, she was delighted to discover so many familiar faces from her first days at Cal — 65 years ago — including her beloved English 1A teaching assistant, Renata Polt.

“It thrilled me to see her,” says Marion, who earned a B.S. in bacteriology after being drawn to the science end of dietetics. “[Renata’s] class was so exciting. It was the McCarthy era, and you were not allowed to discuss dissenting ideas. But we did! It was all about having our own opinions.”

Marion, who grew up poor in Los Angeles, chose Cal not only because it was one of the few colleges she could afford...
Until 1895, UC Berkeley and its athletic teams lacked an official symbol. That year, Cal’s 12-man track team traveled to the East Coast for a series of meets, becoming the school’s first athletic team to compete out of state. They brought along two blue silk banners with the word “California” embroidered in gold beneath a large golden grizzly bear, part of the state seal. The runners swept the competition. When the banners were displayed at the team’s homecoming reception, English Professor Charles Mills Gayley was inspired to write the song “The Golden Bear,” and Cal’s beloved symbol was born.

“Cal made it possible for me to have a career,” says Marion. “I’d like to give others the same opportunity.”

William Dow, interim dean for the School of Public Health, says, “We are so grateful for Marion’s bequest. She is one of our most influential and inspiring alums, and her gift allows us to support the next generation of leaders in public health nutrition.”

As Marion closed out her February lectures by encouraging the audience to “Keep making noise!” toward positive change, the room erupted into wild cheers and applause. The loudest came from the students in the back, who lingered afterward to meet her.
The Benjamin Ide Wheeler Society

Wheeler benefits inspire new campus connection for Cal alumna

A world traveler by trade, remote sensing (GIS) expert Kass Green ’74 has a ritual of collecting unusual Christmas gifts for her family — particularly her grandson, Jack. Though her mementos often hail from far-flung places like Africa, Egypt, and Cuba, this year the former UC Berkeley Foundation Trustee found a bevy of unique items in her own backyard. As a member of The Benjamin Ide Wheeler Society, she was invited to a members-only holiday pop-up last December at the UC Botanical Garden. “The pop-up was so well done!” says Kass, who is being featured in an upcoming book titled Women and GIS: Mapping Their Stories. “It was beautiful . . . and I found so many great gifts.”

Inspired by her experience that day, she also became a member of the garden so she could bring her grandson, Jack. With plant collections spanning nearly every continent, the myriad landscapes of the garden will allow Kass to share elements of her global work with him from home.

U.S. Total Retirement Market Assets Are on the Rise

Since 2000, the growth of defined contribution (DC) — 401(k)s, 403(b)s, etc. — plans and individual retirement accounts (IRA) has nearly tripled to more than $16.9 trillion! If you’ve been thinking about how to support UC Berkeley while maintaining control of this asset, consider naming Cal the remainder beneficiary of your retirement plan. When Berkeley receives the remainder, we pay no income tax; if your heirs receive it, they do.

GO BEARS, GO GREEN!

Sign up at calfutures.berkeley.edu to receive Cal Futures electronically. You can also view, download, and share past issues.

This newsletter offers only general gift planning information. We urge you to seek the advice of an attorney in developing your personal estate plan, as the Office of Gift Planning may not render tax or legal advice to friends and alumni of the university. If you would like more information concerning charitable giving as a component of estate planning, we would be happy to provide you with more specific ideas.

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