



Town & Gown
OF THE UNIVERSITY
OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

General Meeting & Speaker Series

Town and Gown of USC

Nov 2, 2021, 10:45 a.m.

IN-PERSON: Town and Gown Courtyard and Ballroom;

ONLINE: Livestream

MINUTES

Mission Statement

Town and Gown of the University of Southern California is a nonprofit philanthropic organization whose purpose is to support USC through scholarships for students, building and campus enhancements, and cultural programs.

PRE-MEETING SOCIALIZING AND HOLIDAY BOUTIQUE

Check-in, socializing, and the Holiday Boutique took place in the Town and Gown Courtyard. Thanks to Kate Farlow and Janyce Teasley, Hospitality Co-Chairs, for organizing the smooth check-in.

Groups selling at the Boutique: Trojan League of South Bay, Trojan Affiliates, Trojan League Associates of the Valley, Trojan Guild of Los Angeles, Spirit of Troy Marching Band, and Joanne Asman/Traveler

LUNCH

The Town and Gown of USC Scholars were invited to stand and be recognized

GENERAL MEETING

Live-streaming of the meeting began at 12:45 p.m.

CEO and President **Hilary Crahan** welcomed everyone and expressed happiness to be back, with a luncheon, in the Town and Gown Ballroom.

Attendance: 208 members and guests in-person (236 registered) and 38 who live-streamed; 11 scholars in-person and 4 scholars who live-streamed. The number of online views increased significantly on the T&GUSC Facebook page after the live event.

Parliamentarian **Ayuko Siegel** led the attendees in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Patti Jamgotchian, Member of Board of Directors and Finance Committee Member, introduced a number of attendees.

1. Board of Directors stood and were recognized as a group
2. The Past Presidents in attendance, either in-person or on the live stream, included **Yvonne Bogdanovich, Sally Edwards, Carol Fox, Linda Givvin, Carol Mollett, Alli Solum, and Pat Whitman**
3. VIPs: **Amy Ross**, Trustee, USC Board of Trustees, and Life Member of Town and Gown of USC; **Vivian Gumbiner**, Chair, Alumnae Coordinating Council; **Tony Mazza**, Director, USC Auxiliary Services Transportation; today's Featured Speaker, **Karen North**, Ph.D., Clinical Professor of Digital Social Media, USC Annenberg School; **Pedro Noguera**, Dean, USC Rossier School of Education; **Alexander Pampalone**, Associate Dean for Advancement, Rossier School of Education; **Tabitha Courtney**, Assistant Dean and Executive Director Strategic Enrollment Services, Rossier School of Education; **Peter Weil**, General Counsel, Town and Gown of USC; **Rachel Beal**, Director of Major Gifts, Rossier School of Education; **Pinchas Cohen**, Dean, USC Leonard Davie School of Gerontology; **Sara Fousekis**, Chief Advancement Officer, USC School of Dramatic Arts; **Marissa Gonzalez**, Director of Special Events, USC School of Dramatic Arts; and **Jake Vogel**, Director, Trojan Marching Band.
4. Special VIP, **Kari May**, Executive Associate, Town and Gown of USC. Kari has been instrumental in the success of our organization. She received a standing ovation.

STUDENT SCHOLAR.

Carol Wright, Second Vice President, Scholarship, introduced the Luncheon Scholar Speaker, Luke Scorziell, senior at the Annenberg School for Communication and Journalism, majoring in Journalism major. He has been a leader at the Annenberg School's Media Center, and has produced award-winning coverage for radio, TV, and digital media. He has traveled throughout the country on various reporting trips. He loves Jesus, wake boarding, and his family's golden doodle, Ellie. He is from Lake Arrowhead.

Luke Scorziell was grateful for being invited today; he thanked the ladies of Town and Gown of USC and the Second Vice Presidents, Scholarship, Carol Wright and Susie Rhodes. A T&GUSC Scholar since the fall of his freshman year, he is grateful for the group's generosity and the community and support it provides. He confessed growing up as a fan of UCLA, where his parents and maternal grandparents attended school. He now is a true Trojan who knows all the "chants of USC," and, in fact, leads them. His experience at USC has been incredible. He has met journalists and politicians in Washington, D.C., has followed presidential candidates in Iowa, and has produced award-winning journalism from "perhaps the best studio in Los Angeles, right here on campus, the Annenberg Media Center." That is in addition to the luncheons he has enjoyed with the members of Town and Gown of USC. When COVID-19 began in March 2020, he packed up his apartment. It was very difficult to be away. However, he adapted. A few days into the lockdown, he hosted an online church service with friends from home. He hosted it for

more than a year, and it became a good source of community, strength, and comfort as he saw “those faces” on a weekly basis. The lesson he learned from that: the biggest blessings are the people in his life. The last few months have been great for him: he has been an anchor of the Annenberg news, and has attended football games, Intramural soccer, church, and the Town and Gown of USC luncheons. He is grateful for the lessons he has learned, and he knows he will take them with him for the rest of his life.

BENEFIT.

Edie Etmekjian, Benefit Chair, was pleased to announce that thanks to the foresight of the six Benefit Honorees, the Town and Gown of USC Fund I Endowment is now valued at \$69 million. She also thanked the Benefit Committee Chairs for their efforts to ensure the 2022 Benefit will be a success.

In an exciting Sizzle Reel, designer Robert Ellis announced he would be doing the Benefit’s Fashion Show, on April 5, that will honor the six women. Robert is a USC alumnus, graduating in 1986. This will be the fourth time he does the Town and Gown of USC Fashion Show, and the first time at the Beverly Hills Hotel. “It will be a wonderful day.”

Robert Ellis’ clothing is designed for all women, for all occasions. As proof, Edie invited everyone wearing Robert Ellis clothing today — or who brought a photo of themselves in his clothing — to please stand.

Patti Jamgotchian, Benefit Public Relations. Patti praised Robert Ellis fashions as timeless and classic, and as an investment that will last. He began his career after graduating from USC. Robert’s mother was a buyer at I. Magnin. He opened his boutique in Studio City almost 30 years ago. He has an outstanding reputation for dressing and stylizing his customers in beautiful and elegant gowns and everyday wear.

FEATURED SPEAKER.

Colleen Stroyke, Fifth Vice President, Programs, was honored to introduce the day’s featured speaker, **Karen North, Ph.D., Clinical Professor of Digital Social Media, USC Annenberg School for Communication and Journalism**. Karen is also the founding director of the Annenberg Digital Social Media Program at Annenberg.

Karen’s experience over the years includes working 1) for Senator Edward Markey, of Massachusetts, when he was Chairman of the Subcommittee on Telecommunications and Finance, 2) on “a little something called” the Information Super Highway, which became the “worldwide web,” now very familiar to everyone as *www*, 3) for the Clinton Administration, in the Office of Science and Technology Policy, in the early days of the Internet; 4) on “all things” Internet.

A recognized expert in digital social media and in psychology, she built USC’s digital social media program, designing the first Masters Degree focused on the leadership and management of social media and online communities. She is a perennial Favorite Professor at USC. She often is interviewed on the Today show, ABC and CBS, and is a frequent source for publications. Both of

her parents went to USC and UCLA, and Karen herself did her undergrad at UCLA. She started working at USC in 2006. USC is at the top of her twins' college lists.

Karen North thanked everyone for their warm welcome. Her topic today was entitled, “Exploring the Digital Social Media World: The Good, the Bad, and the Ugly”

Having grown up as a Bruin fan, she said she now can say and do “Fight On.”

These are highlights of her presentation:

While the first things we think of when asked about the Internet may include Searches, Shopping, Social Networks, Online Dating, Entertainment, and Streaming Services, this material is less than 10% of what exists online.

In the early days of the Information Superhighway, Karen needed a top security clearance to see the “Trojan Room Coffee Pot” in Oxford, England. (It had nothing to do with USC.) It was the subject of a famous real-time test of the newly invented webcam. The Internet seemed great for collaboration and communication, but no one dreamed it would be used for commerce.

In 2021, everything is there. Her slides gave a “whirlwind tour” of What We See, What We Don't See, and What We Don't Want to See.

- What We See (The Good). *Platforms* collect and use data to curate an engaging, personalized experience to the user. *Information and Access* — finding like-minded people, answers to questions, people outside of our daily lives.
- What We Don't See (the other 90%). *Deep Web* — not-searchable, protected material, such as hotel bookings, bank accounts passwords, etc. It is defined by privacy, lack of accessibility by others, a unique ownership. Having this protected material is good because others cannot access it directly. This data also is collected and curates experiences for the user so he/she can be protected or continue to find like-minded people. The same data is used to target us by third parties. Keep in Mind: ***Everything I'm doing online is collecting data for someone.***

Group chat: also part of the deep web that we don't see directly. They are used to communicate privately. They include encrypted messaging apps such as Parler (pronounced as in French, *Par-lay*), Gab, Signal, Telegram. The important thing to remember: It's not what the apps do, it is how we use them. An encrypted chat room may sound “sketchy;” some are, some are not. They are tools which enable people to have private conversations that they don't want to be seen publicly.

Crypto Currency. Many people are interested in this, and some have invested in it, but it remains a mysterious product to many people. In general, crypto currency is a digitized currency, and the agreement is that if you find a rare line of the mined digits, they are worth something. They will run out eventually. The bottom line: The currency can be used for good, but it also is used for ransoms, terrorism, and other evil things. It is kept in Blockchain, which is a ledger, a decentralized way (no banks) to store and share data. It is very volatile.

NFTs (“Non-Fungible Token”). It is the blockchain version of art. A person can be the unique owner of art that exists publicly, and then is copied and encrypted. The encrypted

version is the NFT. Other people can have a screen shot of the same art, but not the NFT version.

- What We Don't Want to See (The Bad and The Ugly). The same technologies that allow for privacy also allow for bad things such as terrorism, hacking, ransoms, election meddling, and "swatting" (false reports to emergency services or the common (fake) robo-calls regarding our car's warranty). The dark web is selling data, including fake IDs and fake passports.

Moral #1. Think before you click or answer anything that asks for personal data, even fun things such as Facebook quizzes. Know you are giving data to people who are collecting it. When you "Like," "Share," Comment, or "Dislike," you may have started a chain reaction just because you were engaged with the posting. When you play games on your phone, data is being collected — ALWAYS — including your location. Trust no one. You don't know why your data is being collected.

More to Beware of:

- Swatting: Hackers can change the caller ID output so it appears a call is coming from your phone. Swatting occurs when a call to 911 matches your phone number and/or address, and the emergency responders show up, mistakenly, at your door. It's a prank that can be deadly.
- Election Meddling. Manipulating stories that look like news.
- Scams, such as "You didn't pay your bill." or "You won..."
- "Deepfakes" — they can be good or evil. TikTok, for example, collects and spreads data faster than anything. It also does facial scans and spreads bad information.
- Dark Web — stay away from this. One gets there by downloading free software. The "Tor" link looks like an onion. Do Not Go There.

Moral #2: We live in a digital world. Use technology well. Use it for good., Use it to connect and make that world a better place. Use it for love.

From the Q&A Session:

Can you speak to the Internet as a source of both laughter and loneliness? It is a misconception that "friends" on social media really are friends. This gives a false sense of community, and it hits harder when people realize it's fake. People get drawn into this false community because they always can find someone there, and they avoid going out and making personal contact. It is important that depressed people get out into the world. Unfortunately, many people don't feel miserable enough to change.

Regarding "Alexa." Karen: Unplug it. While it is a phenomenal tool, "Alexa" is listening ALL THE TIME. This goes for Siri, as well. Beware of these voice-activated computers that take action on what you say.

Colleen thanked Karen and presented her with a gift. Karen thanked T&GUSC for changing people's lives with scholarships and the caring community we provide.

CLOSING BUSINESS

Bonnie Suffridge, 5th Vice President, Programs, previewed the Monday, December 6 Holiday Luncheon.

For this year only, it will be at the California Club in downtown Los Angeles. It will feature the traditional tabletop decorations. The invitations will be emailed on Thursday, November 4. This popular event will sell out. Tickets are first-come, first-served.

Today's Opportunity ticket sales totaled \$3,200. Hospitality Chairs **Janyce Teasley** and **Kate Farlow** pulled the winning ticket for today's prize, a \$500 American Express gift card (winner: **Lindsey Lytle**).

Colleen thanked everyone for coming. A group photo was taken of everyone in Robert Ellis clothing.

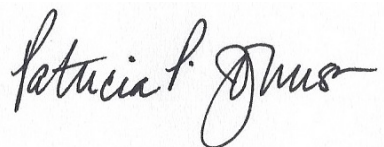
The Centerpieces were on sale for a \$10 donation each; all proceeds were given to T&GUSC.

Hilary reminded everyone that Nominations are due tonight at midnight.

The next General Meeting will be on **Monday, December 6, at the California Club**. It also will be available to view on live stream through the T&GUSC website and Facebook page.

The Meeting was adjourned at 1:43 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Patricia P. Johnson". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized initial "P".

Patricia P. Johnson
Town and Gown of USC Secretary, 2020-2022