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.

President’s Message:

Dear Town and Gown of USC Members,

Happy summer! Please read the newsletter and see what we are up to! On behalf of the board of directors we wish you a happy and enjoyable summer. We look forward to seeing you in October.

Until then, Fight On!

Beth Petak-Aaron
CEO/President 2022-2024

president@townandgownofusc.org

In search of past and present scholars who would be willing to be interviewed. If you are interested, please reach out to me at president@townandgownofusc.org.

I look forward to hearing from you!
PROGRAMS

In May, we solicited speaker nominations from the programs committee, BOD and Past Presidents. The Programs committee met via Zoom and reviewed all 35 of the speaker nominations in depth. The ballot was then distributed to the committee members and was tabulated. The first speaker has been contacted and we will proceed forward after we receive confirmation.

We are excited about the coming year as we have many superb speaker nominations. The keynote speakers will be announced this summer, once they have been finalized.

Thank you and have a fantastic Summer!

Debbie Wong and Lisa Up de Graff
5th Vice President Programs

A MESSAGE FROM OUR BENEFIT CHAIR

Dear Members,

Another HUGE THANK YOU! We are pleased to announce that because of everyone who participated by donating, attending, purchasing at the Boutique and for Opportunity Drawing tickets, the 2023 Town and Gown of USC Benefit was a success! Not only was it a very enjoyable day, in a beautiful Cardinal and Gold setting, but it was inspirational and entertaining, thanks to the Trojan Marching Band and the USC School of Dramatic Arts. Dexter Holland's speech left us in awe by sharing his story. His accomplishments truly make him an ideal representative of USC and of Town and Gown.

We are honored to announce that we have been able to fund the "Town and Gown of USC Dexter Holland Endowed Scholarship." In addition, Town and Gown of USC will also be donating $15,000 to the USC Office of Financial Aid for their ongoing Computer Fund for students who cannot afford a computer. The students go through a rigorous application process for this much-needed aid to their education.

Here is another big THANK YOU and a FIGHT ON! for helping make students' lives better.

Carol Kroesche
2023 Benefit Chair
DONOR SPOTLIGHT

In the 1970’s, Bernie Rapan attended USC and received an undergraduate and graduate degree in Civil Engineering. He keeps up his connections with USC by going to football games and being an avid fan. Years later, his youngest daughter attended USC and became a Town and Gown of USC scholar. Her dad remembers well our General Meeting when his daughter, along with other graduating Town and Gown of USC scholars, were honored.

Fast forward to this year. Bernie always knew that he would find a way to give back to USC and we were extremely honored with his charitable donation which established the "Rapan Family Trust Town and Gown Endowed Scholarship Fund." His donation has been invested in our Town and Gown of USC Scholarship Endowment Fund 1, which continues to grow each year and its earnings fund our scholarship awards.

We are grateful for his generosity and look forward to honoring him at one of our upcoming General Meetings. And who knows, you may see him at a USC football game!

Patti Jamgotchian
1st Vice President, Investments

PHYSICAL FACILITIES/HISTORIAN COMMITTEE UPDATES

It came to the attention of Physical Facilities that the dining chairs within the Town and Gown Ballroom needed to be replaced; Not just a few chairs, but over 400 chairs!! The chairs were becoming unsafe, and with the help of the Preservation Fund, the Board of Directors agreed and the chairs were purchased. We are delighted to have beautiful and safe chairs for this coming year.

More good news! A new plaque acknowledging the 1965 gift of the Carillon to USC from the Ladies of Town and Gown in memory of our Founder and First President Elisabeth von KleinSmid will be created and installed over the summer. Conferring with the Town and Gown of USC Board of Directors and Jerry Wingate, Director of Design Operations, and Past Presidents, we presented sample plaques to USC for approval. We finally received word that a plaque was accepted. It is now being fabricated and will be installed where the original plaque was placed. We are so thankful that our First President, Elisabeth von KleinSmid, will receive the recognition she deserves.

Kate Farlow
Physical Facilities/Historian Co-Chair

JOIN OUR SCHOLARSHIP COMMITTEE

Scholarship is the heart of Town and Gown of USC. Each year, our enthusiastic and committed Scholarship Committee works diligently to select the newest class of Scholars, based on their leadership, academics, and commitment to the Trojan family. For the 2023–2024 academic year, our 501(c)(3) is proud to fund over 190 Town and Gown of USC scholars for a total of $2.2 million!

We would love to have you join us to meet and evaluate our potential Scholars. Being part of the Scholarship Committee is not only rewarding and fun, but it is also incredibly inspiring.

In the words of six-year committee member Laury DeSanctis, "I enjoy engaging with our students and making a difference in their lives. For many of them it was this scholarship that allowed them to pursue their dream of coming to USC. They are all inspirational and incredible and it’s an honor to be a part of their journey. I also really enjoy the women on the committee. It’s an honor to be a part of this wonderful committee."

Please join us on the Scholarship Committee and let us know if we may answer any questions at:

scholarshipvp@townandgownofusc.org

Shana Glassman and Linda Dankwa
2nd Vice Presidents, Scholarship

Susie Rhodes
Scholarship Advisor
THANK YOU! We are grateful to all of you who have renewed your membership. Our membership is strong and robust! Renewing online is super easy to do, simply click the image above. Log into the member portal and click the RENEW button. If you would prefer, you may also call Kari May, (213) 626-9070.

The deadline to be listed in our Directory and handbook is June 30th. We appreciate your timely attention to this so that our records are accurate in the coming year.

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS!

Stephanie (Erwin) Anderson-Ortiz (Westlake Village)
Stephanie graduated from USC with a BA, Communication Arts & Sciences. Since 1988, Stephanie has been self-employed while working in Real Estate, owning and managing apartment buildings. She also has volunteered extensively with many charitable organizations but some recent are, National Charity League Juniors, Manna and currently Sherwood Cares, an arm charitable organization of Sherwood Country Club in Westlake Village, CA. She is also a proud parent of a Trojan. Her skills include any event planning or hospitality.

Barbara Andes (Fullerton)
Her husband and their four children graduated from USC, he and daughter, Nancy Towbin also earned MD degrees. Five of their grandchildren are USC alumni. She and her husband of more than 65 years are proud supporters of USC.

Devon Beach Hogue (Ladera Ranch)
Devon is an alumna, a Trojan Parent and a Trojan spouse. She earned a BS in Occupational Therapy and has experience with event planning and interviewing. She has extensive volunteer service with National Charity League and NEGU.

Dominique Langerman (Los Angeles)
In addition to being a Trojan parent, Dominique is a graduate of San Diego State University (B.S. Business) and USC Price (MPA). She is a wealth manager focused on philanthropic giving and charitable organizations at Lido Advisors, a family office based in LA. She is the President of Ellevate Network Los Angeles, Advisory Board Chair for Kids on the Move for Success, and board member for Trojan League of Los Angeles. She is also a Sustainer member of the Junior League of Pasadena. In her spare time, she enjoys cooking, traveling, and sailing.

Sarah Zuercher Lawton (Manhattan Beach)
Sarah graduated in 1995 with a B.A. in Broadcast Journalism and Political Science. During her years at USC, she was a member of Delta Gamma sorority, served as Student Body Vice President, was a Pepster and is a member of Skull and Dagger. Sarah worked for nearly two decades in international public relations. Today, Sarah is active in volunteer efforts supporting recruitment and member development for National Charity League and event leadership, planning and fundraising for Catholic schools in Los Angeles.

Nicole Martin (El Segundo)
Nicole is the Assistant Director, Spirit Programs here at USC. She has over 20 years of cheerleading and dance experience as a coach and administrator and is thrilled to be working with The Trojan Marching Band and can’t wait for everyone to see the Spirit Leaders and Song Team at games and events. In addition to cheer and dance, Nicole is also a Customer Experience Strategist for AT&T, Inc. where she develops processes to improve the customer’s experience.
Pamela Nagel-Schwene (Huntington Beach)
Pamela graduated from USC in 1985 with her Bachelors of Science in Nursing. She has since been working as a registered nurse specializing in NICU and children’s pre-op. Pamela was a member of the Trojan Marching Band and is an avid supporter of the Spirit of Troy. She is excited to be a new member of Town and Gown and looking forward to meeting you all!

Lola Reyes (Arcadia)
Has a certificate in Management Development from USC Marshall School. She is a longtime staff member having previously worked for USC Admissions and the Price School of Public Policy. She currently works for USC University Advancement and is a Trojan parent.

Debbie Shepherd (Newport Beach)
Debbie has a daughter, Lauren, who is a Junior at USC in Marshall. Her son, John, graduated from USC Marshall last May and works in Irvine as a Private Equity Analyst. Debbie graduated from UCLA (but has become a true Trojan fan) and went on to the University of San Diego to obtain her law degree. She is a part-time Trademark Attorney with Knobbe Martens.

Nancy Towbin, M.D. (Brea)
Nancy received her undergraduate and medical degrees from USC. She is a part of the admissions committee at Keck School of Medicine where she interviews prospective medical students. She enjoys this contribution to the future of medicine by choosing the most well-rounded students to become a part of the Trojan Family.

Christa Ward (La Quinta)
Christa graduated with a BS degree from the USC Marshall School of Business, and later completed her MBA with the University of Phoenix. She has had a long career in the medical industry; over her 22 year history with Merck she has held numerous sales positions and special assignments, and then back in 2021 transitioned over to Merck’s spin-off company, Organon (a Women’s Health focused pharmaceutical company), as one of its proud founding members. She was also a founding member and active volunteer for numerous years with the Junior League of the Palm Springs Desert Communities. She is an avid reader and Mahjongg player, and loves to cook and travel.

We look forward to meeting all these new members in the fall. If you know someone who would like to become a member, we process applications all summer long. Signing up is easy to do from the website. We’d love to welcome them in October at our first meeting!

Fight On!

D’Arcy Dietrich McLeod and Colleen Stroyke
4th Vice Presidents, Membership

Do you have any news to share with Town and Gown of USC? Please email Kari May, karidmay@gmail.com.

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• Please remember to share your pictures on Facebook and follow us on Instagram. •