



PHI BETA KAPPA

NORTHERN CALIFORNIA ASSOCIATION
THE GAMMA ASSOCIATION OF CALIFORNIA
Association Chartered June 14, 1946

September 2023

Go to the Mobile copy <https://pbknca.com/Newsletter/>

From the President

Year 2023 may end up being the hottest summer in recorded history. July was the hottest month ever recorded on Earth, and June was the second hottest. The global average temperature for the first seven months of 2023 was 2.7 degrees Fahrenheit above the pre-industrial average. Urgent challenges such as those facing us require the creative brainstorming a liberal arts and sciences education provides. To solve climate change, we need innovative solutions from visionaries who can work collaboratively across disciplines and borders. There has never been a more pressing moment to invest one's time, energy, and money into fostering excellence in the liberal arts and sciences.



We at Phi Beta Kappa, the oldest and most prestigious academic honor society in the United States, actively advocate for education in the liberal arts and sciences, believing it to be essential for creating well-rounded, broad-minded world citizens who possess critical thinking and complex problem-solving skills, as well as the ability to communicate effectively with those who have different perspectives. Investing in the liberal arts and sciences is an investment in democracy, a thriving US economy, and a healthy planet Earth with clean air.

As always, PBK Northern California Association board members, committee members, trusted advisors, valued supporters, and friends have worked diligently over the past year toward fostering liberal arts and sciences education via the many events, programs, and awards that we enthusiastically sponsor, including our annual Asilomar conference; our young professionals' program; meetups that occur throughout the year; scholarship awards; and teaching excellence awards. We invite you to visit our website's scholarship and teaching excellence award pages to meet the phenomenal scholars—both students and faculty—honored and showcased in 2023: <https://pbknca.com/> While there, sign up for one of our friendly meetups, and don't forget to put our 37th Annual Asilomar Conference (February 16 – 19, 2024) on your calendar!

Renewing your membership is easy on our website, thanks to our diligent communications team.

In other news, after serving on the committee for three years, Melisa Lasell is now Chair of the Teaching Excellence Committee. Melissa Stevens is now PBKNCA President after serving as Chair of the Teaching Excellence Award Committee for the past three years.

We look forward to meeting or seeing you again in the coming months!
Warmly,
Melissa Xanthe Stevens, President

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Teaching Excellence Awards, 2023

The Teaching Excellence Awards were presented to the following outstanding professors:

[Hans Bork](#) (Stanford) Classics (Latin) and Digital Humanities

[Seeta Chaganti](#) (UC Davis) Old and Middle English Literature

[Lianne Kurina](#) (Stanford) Primary Care and Population Health/Human Biology.

Lianne Kurina additionally received this year's [Hasenkamp Award](#).

[Tom McEnaney](#) (UC Berkeley) Comparative Literature/Spanish and Portuguese

[Esther Yu](#) (Stanford) Early Modern Literature

Thank you to the 2023 Teaching Excellence Award Committee members: Andrea Braga, Melisa Lasell, Leilani Miller, and Melissa Stevens.

Scholarship Awards, 2023

Eight graduate students received \$10,000 scholarship awards to assist them in completing their educational objectives:

[Jennifer Guidera](#), (UC San Francisco) Bioengineering

[Katherine Magoulick](#), (UC Berkeley) Integrative Biology

[Thais Miller](#), (UC Santa Cruz) Literature ([Gilliland Award](#))

[Remy Nguyen](#), (UCSC) Biomolecular Engineering & Bioinformatics ([Hendess Award](#))

[Cody Pham](#), (UC Davis) Ecology ([Norall Award](#))

[Reagan Reed](#), (UC Davis) Plant Biology

[Nicholas Stevers](#), (UC San Francisco) Biomedical Sciences ([Reed Award](#))

[Qiyi Zhao](#), (Stanford) Economics ([Hardardt Award](#))

The Scholarship Committee: Jeff Fenton, Lynne Fovinci, Rona Giffard, Judith Hardardt, Jean James, Joanne Sandstrom (Chair)

Membership Directory 2023

You may have just received the hardcopy Directory of Members, if not, watch your mail for it. I wish to thank Pat Kenber for her invaluable assistance in gathering the data for this publication. While our new database system provides an online directory list of all members to date for each year (sign into pbknca.com using your email address, and click on Directory), the hardcopy provides a “keepsake” of all 753 paid members for 2023.

Ray Hendess, Communications Chair

Upcoming Events

Currently, the Phi Beta Kappa Northern California Association suggests masking for indoor activities.

Note: The price of the events is for current NCA members; elapsed- or non-members (except guests of members) will pay a surcharge. Full event information, and means of credit card payment, are available on our website <https://pbknca.com/Events/>. If you want to register for an event but don't have Internet access, please contact O'Neil Dillon, cell 510-207-8761.

If you won't be able to make an event, contact O'Neil Dillon at oneildillon@gmail.com ASAP, or if it is the day of the event call him at 510-207-8761 as there may be others on the waiting list who will then be able to take your place.

No-shows do NOT receive a refund!

Sign up for all events at <https://pbknca.com/Events>

Guide Dogs for the Blind. Wednesday, Sept. 20, 2023, 10 AM



Who isn't enchanted by cute puppy eyes? And what if those eyes mature to transform the lives of the severely vision impaired? Please plan to join us for a tour of the California Guide Dogs for the Blind in San Rafael on Wednesday, September 20, at 10 AM.

The tour will begin and end at the Visitors' Center - first building on the left as you come in the main entrance. (Look for the red and white "Tours" signs). After a short video, we will be escorted on a walk through the residential grounds, visit the Learning Lab to see puppies being socialized and at play, and view the Training Courtyard where puppies encounter and learn to overcome everyday obstacles.

Photographs of clients or other people working with dogs are prohibited, but photographs of the grounds, the Learning Lab, and designated photo stops are encouraged.

Date: Wednesday, September 20, 2023

Time: 10 AM. (The tour takes approximately an hour and a quarter)

Address: 350 Los Ranchitos Rd., San Rafael, CA

Parking: There is a parking lot, but it fills up quickly. Free parking is available on surrounding streets. Allow extra time for parking.

Cost: Members and their guests \$30 (\$20 to our scholarships and \$10 to Guide dogs for the Blind), Non-members \$40.

Limit: 24.

Sign up at <https://pbknca.com/Events>

Garden Tour at Blake Gardens, Friday, October 20, 2023, 11 AM



A 60-minute tour of the 10.5-acre garden followed by optional lunch in upper Kensington.

Come join us for a tour of U.C. Berkeley's splendid Blake Garden, located 4 miles north of campus, in the small hillside community of Kensington. Learn about the history and design of this 10.5-acre teaching-garden managed by UC Berkeley's Department of Landscape Architecture and College of Environmental Design. Known for its outstanding collection of plants assembled by the Blake family between 1922 and 1962, and since augmented by the University, the Garden also features stunning views of the San Francisco Bay and the Golden Gate Bridge. The tour will be led by Museum Scientist and Horticulturist Timothy

Cole. Free on-site parking lot. After the tour, meet up for no-host lunch at Inn Kensington Restaurant, 293 Arlington Avenue in Kensington.

When: October 20, 2023. 11:00 AM – 12:00 PM (no-host local lunch to follow)

Location: 70 Rincon Road, Kensington, CA 94707, (4 miles north of UC Berkeley Campus)

Group Size: Minimum 10; Maximum 25

Cost: Members \$20 (one half to be donated to the PBK scholarship fund and one half to the Blake Garden Fund at UC Berkeley Foundation); non-members \$30.

PBKNCA Leader: Libby Tyler, ehtyler6@gmail.com; 217-493-4372. Sign up at <https://pbknca.com/Events>

John Muir House and Garden Tour, November 18th, 11:45 AM

The John Muir House



"Fruit Rancher, Family Man, Writer... Father of the National Park Service" lived in this home with its orchard. Learn about the history of this influential conservationist and see how he and his family lived in Martinez. In addition, the Martinez Adobe (see page 5) tells the history of the Anza Expedition of 1776, establishing the first Spanish settlement at San Francisco Bay.

Depending how the orchard does, we may be able to pick some fruit to take home. Picnic grounds are available for lunch after the tour. Nearby Mt. Wanda hiking trails are part of the park and can be enjoyed as well. Facilities are limited. Bring water.

Event: 1-hour ranger-led tour of John Muir's home and orchards. ADA accessible

Location: John Muir National Historic Park, 4202 Alhambra Ave, Martinez, CA 94553

Date: November 18th, 11:45 AM Parking: Limited onsite. Street parking on Walnut street opposite parking entrance to park. All day and 2 hr. parking available.

Group limit: 25. Cost: Members \$15. non-members \$25. Sign up at <https://pbknca.com/Events>

Rain cancels

The Martinez Adobe

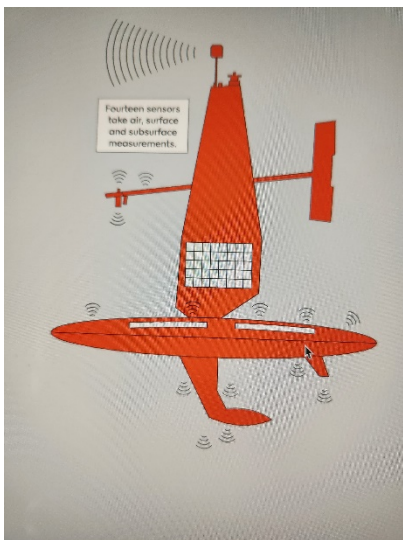


Websites: <https://www.nps.gov/jomu/learn/historyculture/places.htm#>, the John Muir House

<https://www.nps.gov/juba/index.htm>, the Martinez Adobe, which may be self-guided or, if there are enough rangers, ranger led.

PBK Rep O'Neil Dillon at 510-207-8761

Saildrone explorer SD 1045, sometime in January



Are you interested in Oceanography, Climatology, Sea Level Rise, ocean mapping, marine security, why hurricanes are getting stronger and moving slower, and what oceanographic features of a changing planet like sea-water salinity and temperature affect hurricane behavior?

Ever wonder what it is like being on the sea surface in a hurricane with 143 MPH gusts and 80-foot waves?

Now is your chance to learn from data and video that has never been collected before!

Richard Jenkins has developed an un-crewed (drone) sailboat with 14 different sensors to monitor ocean conditions both above and below the ocean surface. He is the CEO of the Saildrone Company in Alameda, California. He works with NOAA and governments and businesses all over the world.

We will have a tour of Saildrone in January, date as yet undetermined. See <https://www.saildrone.com/>

Dogpatch Art Walk, March 23rd, 2024, 11 AM



This exclusive, guided tour of contemporary art will begin at the Minnesota Street Project, a three-warehouse complex dedicated to educating the public through exhibitions, galleries and programs. Led by collector, traveler and art historian Rhoda Becker; participants will have access to galleries, meet owners and collectors, speak with artists and get an insider's perspective on this vibrant contemporary art community. Our guide will have previewed the most current exhibits and created a varied itinerary showcasing current artists and works. They recommend allowing three hours to view all galleries and visit with the creatives.

The Minnesota Street Project is in Dogpatch which is the new epicenter of innovation, craft and artistic expression. The Museum of Craft and Design, the California College of the Arts, the San Francisco Center for the Book, entrepreneurial ventures, and various art spaces make this an internationally recognized art destination. After the tour, people may want to explore this vibrant area.

Nearby cafes are available for lunch and refreshments, or bring your own and eat in the nearby park

When: March 23rd, 2024

Where: The Minnesota Street Project, 1275 Minnesota St. San Francisco

Time: 11 AM, Length: 3 hours

Group limit: 20

Cost: members \$40 (\$15 for scholarships), Non-members \$50 (\$25 for scholarships)

Parking: Ample street parking

PBKNCA Rep: Tina Hittenberger. Sign up at <https://pbknca.com/Events>

PBKNCA Book Club



There is an ongoing virtual book club open to interested members.

Vaccination, booster and mask may be required, but may be changed as needed later. [for a virtual book club?]

Contact Program VP O'Neil Dillon at oneilsdillon@gmail.com

PBK 2022 Financial reports are at <https://pbknca.com/Financials>

37th Annual Asilomar Conference Feb 16–19, 2024



Sign up at <https://pbknca.com/event-5159419> or go to pbknca.com, select “Events”, then “Current Asilomar”
Do NOT make a reservation at Asilomar. Information for reserving full room + meals will be sent to registrants in October. Please wait for this, rather than registering directly, since we are committed to 45 such full reservations.

“A faithful study of liberal arts humanizes character, and allows it not to be cruel.” -- Ovid

Deirdre Frontczak, Asilomar Chair

Once again, the antidote to news of fires, floods, fights and criminality – a new season for the PBKNCA Asilomar Conference in the Spring! It is again time to reserve your space for a fresh weekend of learning, inspiration, fellowship and a breath of sanity, on the magnificent Monterey coast! Past participants describe the weekend as “the best aspects of college, without the exams” and “the greatest high of the year – without drugs!”

If you have questions on this year's program, please contact dfrontczak@scu.edu. For registration or logistics matters, please contact Barry Haskell at bghaskell@comcast.net. Registration is \$125, which goes mainly to scholarships. Cost will be similar to last year, about \$550 per person, double occupancy, and includes all nine meals and parking. All registered participants will receive forms to reserve their Asilomar accommodations, including meals; please check your email. **(Remember, to be part of the PBKNCA package, do not reserve directly with the facility.)** Sign up at <https://pbknca.com/event-5159419> or <https://pbknca.com/Events>

Please join us once again for the annual Asilomar Conference, where we gather to learn, engage in discussions, and to listen to one another in new ways. Speakers are still being confirmed; here's a sneak peek at what's planned for 2024 so far:



Friday night: Brant Robertson, Ph.D., PBK. “The James Webb Space Telescope”

In December 2021, NASA launched the James Webb Space Telescope (JWST), the most powerful telescope ever put into space. Prof. Brant Robertson of UC Santa Cruz has been a leader in efforts to use JWST to study the early cosmos with remarkable success, including the discovery of the most distant galaxy known in the universe. In this presentation – an update to last year's introduction to the Webb -- Prof. Robertson will share the newest discoveries made with JWST and reveal how scientists find and study the faintest and most distant objects in the sky.

Dr. Brant Robertson is a Professor of Astronomy and Astrophysics at University of California, Santa Cruz. He previously held the Maureen and John Hendricks Visiting Professorship at the Institute for Advanced Study in Princeton NJ, an Assistant Professorship in Astronomy at University of Arizona, and a Hubble Fellowship at Caltech. He studies theoretical astrophysics and works in the scientific areas of galaxy formation and evolution. His research has been featured in the television programs 60 Minutes and COSMOS and has been covered by news media including TIME Magazine, the Washington Post, FOX News, and the BBC.



Saturday afternoon: Michael Dylan Foster, Ph.D., PBK. “The Persistence of the Kappa and Other Creatures of Japanese Folklore”

This talk introduces a panoply of Japanese folkloric creatures, often called *yōkai*. I start with the kappa, a river imp found in legends and folktales throughout the Japanese archipelago. Although there are references to kappa-like beings in texts from over a thousand years ago, today this water goblin is more common than ever, infesting popular culture formats such as anime and video games. The kappa survives because of its mutability, its ability to adapt itself to the concerns of the given historical moment

Folkloric creatures like these are often dismissed as trivial or childish, but their persistence in the cultural imagination suggests that they actually reveal a great deal about how humans grapple with a complex and changing world.

Michael Dylan Foster is a professor in the Department of East Asian Languages and Cultures at the University of California, Davis, and the recipient of a [PBKNCA Teaching Excellence Award \(2022\)](#). He teaches classes on Japanese folklore, heritage, tourism and popular culture, and is the author of “The Book of Yōkai: Mysterious Creatures of Japanese Folklore” and “Pandemonium and Parade: Japanese Monsters and the Culture of Yōkai”,

as well as articles and reviews. Since 2022, he has served as the “Yōkai Navigator” for a television series about Japanese folkloric creatures on NHK World.



Sunday afternoon: Robert Shanklin, Ph.D., PBK, Santa Clara University, Philosophy

Robert specializes in Chinese philosophy and American Pragmatism. He has promised to create a talk directly relevant to contemporary issues or concerns....



Sunday night: Katherine Magoulick, Ph.D. Candidate, PBK, UC Berkeley, Integrative Biology

Katherine's work examines the controls on mammalian migration during the Great American Biotic Interchange (GABI). She uses the fossil record to study past migrations--why did some species migrate while others did not? During the period under study (approximately 2.5 million years ago), there was a series of migrations across the isthmus of Panama between North and South America. Her dissertation research focuses on establishing the ecological drivers of the patterns of dispersal and thereby, it is hoped, increases our ability to make predictive models to conserve living biota and improve our ability to predict how animals will move across the landscape as the climate changes.

Her research uses ecological niche modeling (ENM) to determine the extent to which climatic factors alone can account for the migration patterns or whether other factors such as predation intensity are needed to explain these

patterns.

The broader impacts of this work range from strengthening online repositories of paleontological data to enhancing our understanding of how species will respond to ongoing global change.

ΦBK Board, July 1, 2023 to June 30, 2024

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