

A banner image at the top of the page featuring a dark background with a silhouette of a building's spire on the left and a stylized mountain range on the right.

# University of California Berkeley Armenian Alumni

NEWSLETTER, FALL 2012 | [WWW.UCBAA.ORG](http://WWW.UCBAA.ORG)

## About the U.C. Berkeley Armenian Alumni

The U.C. Berkeley Armenian Alumni is comprised of graduates, former students, and faculty of U.C. Berkeley. The purpose of our organization is to promote and support Armenian Studies at U.C. Berkeley, and to contribute to the many enriching activities of the Bay Area Armenian community. Some of the activities of the UCBAA include fundraising for the Armenian Studies Program (supported by the William Saroyan Endowment and Krouzian Endowment), supporting the U.C. Berkeley Armenian Student Association, organizing lectures and other academic or social events, and providing scholarship programs. Eligible alumnus can become a member of the UCBAA for a yearly membership fee of \$35. Associate membership may be granted to those who have not attended the University, upon paying the membership fees. For more information about the UCBAA and our structure:

[www.ucbaa.org/about](http://www.ucbaa.org/about)

[www.ucbaa.org/files/charter.jpg](http://www.ucbaa.org/files/charter.jpg)

## OUTGOING PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Dear Friends of the ASP and Alumni,

U.C. Berkeley Armenian Alumni (UCBAA) is pleased to take this opportunity and provide a summary of the U.C. Berkeley Armenian Studies Program (ASP) activities and give you an update on UCBAA's accomplishments over the past year.

The ASP, under the leadership of Prof. Stephan Astourian, continues to offer courses in history and two levels of Armenian language. During the past academic year, the ASP hosted seven public lectures and four successful symposia with a diverse roster of speakers and a wide spectrum of topics. If you missed any of these events, go to our website ([www.ucbaa.org](http://www.ucbaa.org)) and subscribe to receive our electronic newsletter and announcements about events sponsored by ASP and UCBAA.

Evelyn Boyd is featured in *Alumnus Among Us* section of this issue. As one of the founders of UCBAA, Evelyn has been instrumental in establishing and growing the organization over past three decades. Although she is a well known and highly respected member of the Bay Area Armenian community, we would like our readers to learn about her crucial role with respect to UCBAA and ASP. Thank you, Evelyn, for all you have done for us!

We are happy to announce that the winner of UCBAA's Hrayr Terzian Armenian Alumni Scholarship is Nanor Aghamal. In this newsletter issue you may read about Nanor and the article *For Our Hayrenik* she wrote for our readers. We would have loved to support more students with our annual scholarship but our limited budget allows us to select one student only. Hence, I would like to take this opportunity and invite you to support UCBAA in any way you can. Your generous donations to UCBAA General Fund would enable us to extend this scholarship to more than just one student.

As you will read in the following pages, UCBAA hosted two Armenian Students Association (ASA)/UCBAA mixers which, as always, were very much enjoyed by all attendees. This year, the UCBAA Board of Directors decided to hold its lecture events in form of a salon. A *salon* is "a gathering of people under the roof of an inspiring host [that's UCBAA!]" which is held partly to amuse one another and partly to increase the knowledge of the participants through conversation." Our two salons on Wilsonian Armenia and Diaspora and Economic Development which were moderated, respectively, by Prof. Stephan Astourian and Prof. AnnaLee Saxenian proved to be very fruitful and entertaining. Stay tuned and join us for our next salon!

My term as the President of UCBAA Board of Directors came to its end in June. It has been an honor to be a part of UCBAA Board for the past two years. I am grateful to all the UCBAA Board members for their hard work and for sharing their time, energy, invaluable insights, and ideas. It is my pleasure to introduce Mr. Victor Stepanian, who will serve as the President for the next two years. Victor holds a M.S. degree in Electrical Engineering from U.C. Berkeley College of Engineering and started his career designing and implementing remote computing systems for the Berkeley campus as a Development Engineer at the Berkeley Computing Center. He then joined the Telecommunications Division of Chevron Corporation in San Francisco. During a twenty-five-year professional career with Chevron, he was involved with all aspects of implementation and management of Chevron's global communications networks. For the past ten years, as an independent IT professional, he has been doing telecommunications consulting for large U.S. multinational corporate clients.

Thank you for your continuous support of UCBAA and ASP. Please check the UCBAA website regularly for updates and feel free to contact us at [contact@ucbaa.org](mailto:contact@ucbaa.org) should you have any feedback about our activities or any suggestions for upcoming events.

Yours Truly, Artin Der Minassians

# WILSONIAN ARMENIA AND “THE PRESENCE OF THE PAST: LEGAL DIMENSIONS OF ARMENIAN-TURKISH RELATIONS”

By Armen Sedrakian

About a year ago, Prof. Stephan Astourian organized an amazing panel of internationally renowned legal experts and historians to discuss Armenian-Turkish relations. The program was so powerful, that the UCBAA decided to revisit it in June and organize a salon to give those in attendance a chance to discuss the ramifications of facts and conclusions of the presenters. The conference was sponsored by the Armenian Studies Program, the Institute of Slavic, East European, and Eurasian Studies (ISEEES), and the International Organizing Committee for the Preparation of the Western Armenian Congress.

The day started with Prof. Susan Karamanian (Associate Dean for International and Comparative Legal Studies, The George Washington University Law School) who discussed the limitations of the international courts and past legal treaties in addressing the unresolved grievances of the descendants of the Genocide of the Armenian nation. Her's was a sobering talk that pointed out that the 1920 Treaty of Sevres which created an expanded Armenia in a large part of the former Ottoman Empire was never fully ratified. Thus, while many Armenians refer to this region as “Wilsonian Armenia,” it has no legal weight today.

Though sobering, Prof. Karamanian stated that her talk did not address the legal claims of church properties, appropriation of Armenian properties, or the legal claims of Genocide. Her talk was limited to the issue of boundaries between Armenia and Turkey.

Prof. Serge Sur (Université Panthéon-Assas, Paris II) spoke next about the Treaty of Kars. Some in the audience questioned the validity of the Kars treaty because it was signed by Armenian officials who were probably coerced by the Soviet government in Moscow. However, the issue of coercion was not fully addressed. Instead, the discussion moved to the acceptance of the current borders by the current post-Soviet Armenian government by not only failing to contest the borders but making pronouncements accepting the borders as is.

Prof. Alfred de Zayas (Geneva School of Diplomacy and International Relations) took on a more advocacy role by arguing that no entity, even Turkey, should benefit from murder, illegal appropriation, and genocide. He enthusiastically argued that the soft power of right and wrong had a powerful position in

the political, legal world and Armenians should make use of it. He claimed that the Treaty of Sevres may not be useful for the borders of Armenia, but shows a consensus that in 1920, a crime of humanity was committed and that there should be restitution even today.

His argument was countered by Prof. Sur who argued that only hard power and hard law counted. He engaged Prof. de Zayas in a fascinating debate at the end of the conference on the pros and cons of hard versus soft law.

Prof. Raymond Kevorkian (Institut Français de Géopolitique, Université Paris-VIII, Saint-Denis) spoke about the September 1915 Turkish laws of exploitation (plundering) giving Armenian properties over to non-Armenian Turkish citizens. When Mustafa Kemal came to power, the National Assembly essentially reaffirmed the law by writing a version legitimizing property transfer from Armenians to Turks in April 1923. In June 1926, the Turkish republic passed a new law stating that the state had the responsibility of taking care of “abandoned” properties, thus, legalizing the theft of Armenian lands. This law conflicted with the minority rights provisions of the Treaty of Lausanne (July 1923) that the Turkish Republic had signed. Prof. Kevorkian described an international project digitizing thousands of archival material referencing Armenian properties lost to the Genocide.

At the June salon, many participants shared their surprise that Wilsonian Armenia has no legal significance despite growing up in a community that glorified it. Others at the salon shared their greater concern that the sliver of land that makes up current day Armenia is in dire straits (a demographic implosion, corruption, economic despair, political injustice) and so we should focus on saving what is left of Armenia rather than dream about a greater Armenia. A few pointed out that working to make Armenia better for its current citizens is not mutually exclusive of continuing to work for justice and recognition of past crimes of inhumanity.

The full presentation of the conference is still available on YouTube in two parts; morning and afternoon sessions. Go to YouTube and search the full title or go to the following sites:

**Morning session:** [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cML\\_xrAOxWg](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cML_xrAOxWg)

**Afternoon session:** <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HpNp1qOY0Bw>

## HRAYR TERZIAN ARMENIAN ALUMNI SCHOLARSHIP WINNER

By Christina Moughamian

Every year one of the great pleasures of the UCBAA Board is to read and review the applications for the annual scholarship. It is wonderful to read about the many accomplishments and the exciting future plans and goals of our U.C. Berkeley Armenian students. The only down side is that we can have only one winner. But each year one student always shines a little brighter than the others and this year is no exception. The 2012 recipient of the Hrayr Terzian Armenian Alumni Scholarship is Nanor Aghamal.



Nanor is an English major with an interest in psychology. She hopes to participate in Birthright Armenia by teaching English in Gyumri upon her graduation. Throughout her childhood and teenage years she has been active in Homenetmen and AYP serving on the Hay Tad committee and writing articles for Haytoug. She has been active in the ASA and she hopes to become more involved in the future. Nanor's instructor described her as “all that a teacher hopes for in a student: inquisitive, determined and extremely hard working.” Nanor has been able to maintain a high grade point average while working full time to help support herself.

It is evident that her proven high level of academics and her clear commitment to her community make Nanor an exemplary Armenian student very worthy of this scholarship.

Congratulations Nanor!

# ARMENIAN STUDIES PROGRAM UPDATE By Chaghig Minassian Walker

## COURSE OFFERINGS

The ASP continues to offer courses in History and Armenian Language. This semester's courses include:

- **History 177A: Armenia from Ethnogenesis to the Dark Ages**
- **Eurasian Studies 1A: Beginning Armenian**
- **Eurasian Studies 101A: Continuing Armenian**

Prof. Stephan Astourian's **History 177A** course will cover close to three millennia of Armenian history, from the process of ethnogenesis to the almost complete destruction of the Armenian "feudal" system by the end of the 15th century. This course is based on the broad framework of Armenian political history and institutions, but also emphasizes economic development, social change, and cultural transformations.

Prof. Santoukht Mikaelian's **Beginning Armenian** course is an introduction to Armenian language and culture, aiming to give students basic competence in all four language skills and an introduction to traditional and contemporary Armenian culture. The **Continuing Armenian** course provides further development of students' Armenian proficiency using discussion, oral presentations, written assignments, and a variety of readings (literature, non-fiction, folklore, newspaper articles, etc.).

## ACADEMIC AND PUBLIC LECTURES

The ASP, under the directorship of Prof. Astourian, organized several symposia and lectures throughout the 2011-12 academic year:

### SYMPOSIA:

**SUNDAY, OCTOBER 2, 2011**

#### **The Presence of the Past: Legal Dimensions of Armenian-Turkish Relations**

Prof. Alfred de Zayas (Geneva School of Diplomacy and International Relations); Prof. Susan Karamanian (Associate Dean for International and Comparative Legal Studies, The George Washington University Law School); Prof. Catherine Kessedjian (University Pantheon-Assas, Paris II); Prof. Raymond Kevorkian (Institut Français de Géopolitique, Université Paris-VIII, Saint-Denis); Prof. Serge Sur (Université Panthéon-Assas, Paris II)

**SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 26, 2012**

#### **Yeghishe Charents: The Tragic Revolutionary**

Shareen Anderson (Filmmaker, Fort Greene Filmworks); Dr. Azat Yeghiazaryan (Chair, Department of Armenian Language and Literature, Russian-Armenian University, Yerevan); Dr. Vartan Matiossian (Independent Scholar); Dr. James Russell (Mashtots Chair in Armenian Studies, Harvard University)

**SUNDAY, MARCH 18, 2012**

#### **Diaspora and Armenian Literature**

Dr. Peter Cowe (Narekatsi Professor of Armenian Studies, UCLA); Dr. Marc Nichanian (Independent Scholar); Dr. Talar Chahinian (Department of Comparative World Literature, California State University, Long Beach); Myrna Douzjian (Doctoral Candidate, UCLA)

**WEDNESDAY, APRIL 25, 2012**

#### **The Politics of Genocide Recognition and Denial, Freedom of Inquiry, and Freedom of Speech**

Dr. Levon Marashlian (Glendale Community College); Dr. Keith Watenpaugh (U.C. Davis); Dr. Stephan Astourian (U.C. Berkeley)

### LECTURES:

**MONDAY, MAY 9, 2011**

#### **Book Presentation and Discussion:**

#### **The Armenian Genocide: A Complete History (London: LB. Tauris, 2011)**

Dr. Raymond Kevorkian (Professor, French Institute of Geopolitics, University of Paris VII-Saint-Denis)

**FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 30, 2011**

#### **The Independent Nagorno Karabakh-Artsakh Republic: The First 20 Years of Challenges and Achievements**

The Honorable Robert Avetysian (Permanent Representative of the Nagorno Karabakh Republic to the United States)

**WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 2, 2011**

#### **"Crimes Against Humanity: The Origins of the Western Response to the Armenian Genocide"**

Dr. Michelle Tusan (Associate Professor of History, University of Nevada, Las Vegas)

**TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 29, 2011**

#### **Armenian Women of Stage and Screen, 19th-20th Centuries**

Dr. Artsvi Bakhchinyan (Institute of History, National Academy of Sciences of the Republic of Armenia)

**MONDAY, FEBRUARY 27, 2012**

#### **An Invented Language from an Armenian Manuscript of the 18th Century**

Dr. James Russell (Mashtots Chair in Armenian Studies, Harvard University)

**FRIDAY, MARCH 9, 2012**

#### **For the Love of Aristotle: Armenians, Latins, and the Battle over an Intellectual Tradition**

Dr. Sergio La Porta (Haig and Isabel Berberian Professor of Armenian Studies, California State University, Fresno)

**MONDAY, MARCH 19, 2012**

#### **The Agony of a People: Armenian Testimony in the Twentieth Century**

Dr. Marc Nichanian (Independent Scholar, Armenian Studies and Philosophy)



# FOR OUR HAYRENIK<sup>1</sup>

By Nanor Aghamal

Living as Armenians in the diaspora we feel that tug at our bones, and in the night we hear the whispers of our Hayrenik calling to us. The love for our country is what fuels the power to strive for justice, to create beautiful songs about our country, and it invigorates that yearning to see our lands once more. This is what it means to be an Armenian and it is a choice to allow that yearning to thrive within us. When we ignore that whisper, the ardor for our country ceases to be; we begin to forget about our cause, our songs and our country. We as Armenians have an obligation that we may, or may not, choose to accomplish. Our obligation is to spread the word of what it means to be an Armenian, to be involved in our organizations and communities and eventually, become the backbone for our younger generations. We are able to attain this goal by attending those organizations' meetings, being present at the community events and informing others about our cause.

Ever since I moved to Berkeley, to pursue my education, I cannot recall how many times I have been asked, "What's an Armenian?" For times like that, I am grateful for all the informational seminars that I attended while I was in ARF Badanegan, Homenetmen scouts and AYE. Due to those organizations, and all that they taught their members, I knew how to properly answer who Armenians are, and in turn, who I am. Organizations such as ANCA, AYE, and Birthright offer programs that allow their members to experience what it means to be an Armenian by involving themselves in programs that make them see the productivity of their involvement. Hence, that strengthens their ties with their homeland since they have a direct impact.

AYE's Youth Corp takes their participants to their designated camp sites where they set up a camp ground for the children of Gyumri and Artsakh to partake in engaging activities that in turn allow them to learn and grow. This type of direct hands on activity allows for the participants to experience Gyumri and Artsakh in a different light as opposed to merely travelling the regions and seeing it from a tourist's perspective. There, you connect with the children and are given the privilege to play a role in teaching them and guiding them in their path to adulthood.

Birthright Armenia has a different approach yet it carries the same agenda as AYE's Youth Corp, which is strengthening the tie between the diaspora and Armenia. Through Birthright, one is still in the sphere of volunteering; however, the participants will be volunteering at an organization of their choice, and will stay with a host family.

On the other hand, Armenian National Committee of America's (ANCA) Leo Sarkisian Internship is a bit different in terms of not being located in Armenia, but in Washington, DC. The Leo Sarkisian Internship is more of the political, volunteering realm of aiding our homeland. The participants learn how to be effective leaders to further our cause in our communities.

I have met participants from all three of these programs and all of them came back with a new outlook on Armenia and they no longer see themselves as disconnected from their homeland. They begin to feel so strongly about Armenia and are constantly longing to visit our Hayrenik. Involving oneself in one's Armenian community's opportunities not only aids the participant, but also the organization. In order to grow as human beings, we must emerge ourselves in new, positive experiences which will lead to self-reflection, and personal growth; these organizations are providing that route for us. Encouraging our youth to take part in these prospective opportunities will not only strengthen their resumes for the job market, but most importantly, help reestablish that yearning to see our lands, to strive for our cause, to keep those songs alive for our Hayrenik.

<sup>1</sup> Hayrenik is defined as Fatherland in Armenian.

## DIASPORAS AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT: LESSONS FOR ARMENIA FROM THE SILICON VALLEY

By Christina Moughamian

On Sunday September 9, 2012 at 2PM, UCBAAs hosted its second salon at the Alumni House on the U.C. Berkeley campus entitled Diasporas and Economic Development: Lessons for Armenia from the Silicon Valley. Our special guest and moderator was U.C. Berkeley Professor AnnaLee Saxenian, Dean and Professor in the School of Information and Professor in the Department of City and Regional Planning. Prof. Saxenian gave us a very clear overview of what conditions are needed to create a "Silicon Valley." She explained that her research suggests that the places that have had the most success in growing a technology sector are those areas that are connected to the Silicon Valley through networks of highly skilled diaspora members as well as areas that foster and encourage higher education by supporting and developing a strong university system. A lively and interesting discussion continued throughout the afternoon emphasizing some very important and crucial lessons for the development of technology in Armenia.

# ARMENIAN STUDENT ASSOCIATION MIXERS

By Christina Moughamian and Armen Sedrakian

U.C. Berkeley Alumni continued its biannual hosting of current U.C. Berkeley ASA students. On Sunday, November 6, 2011, once again, students, alumni and friends gathered in the Oakland home of Armen Sedrakian and Ruth Alahydoian to enjoy an intergenerational afternoon. The students were most appreciative of the homemade salads and appetizers made by the alumni as well as the gourmet pizzas from Market Hall and Zachary's.

President of the UCBAA, Artin Der Minassians, welcomed those gathered and encouraged continued close ties between the students and the alumni. Unlike a generation ago, the vast majority of the students at Cal are now

coming from the Los Angeles area. Most of them return to LA after graduation. This is a challenge to the UCBAA in keeping in contact and interacting with the new alumni. The UCBAA Board is evaluating the possibility of creating a subchapter in the Los Angeles area.

On February 24, 2012 the UCBAA and the ASA planned an evening get together mixer. The students suggested bowling! So plans were made to meet at the Albany Bowling Alley. Being a Friday night, many families were there making the wait time for lanes very long. As we all gathered we decided to leave and go for pizza at La Val's rather than wait in the noisy bowling alley. Our group was a total of about fifteen; three alumni and twelve students. We all enjoyed an evening of good conversation and excellent company.



UCBAA and ASA members, November 6, 2011



UCBAA and ASA members, February 24, 2012

## ALUMNUS AMONG US

By Norma Balakian Kaufman



Evelyn and Armen Boyd

Evelyn Boyd, an invaluable member and historian of the U.C. Berkeley Armenian Alumni, is being showcased in this issue because of her work along with Madeline Adrian and Stella Michaelian in organizing the UCBAA in the 1970s.

While at Berkeley, Evelyn majored in English Literature with a minor in Applied Psychology. She also played the violin in the U.C. Berkeley orchestra, "a happy experience" as she recalls. During her college years, she was a member of a newly organized Armenian Students Association—an independent group including WWII veterans, young men and women from the San Joaquin Valley and Southern California as well as students from the Middle East.

It was within this group that there were many discussions about the need for an Armenian Studies Program at U.C. Berkeley. After one of their successful reunions of the classes from '48 to '52 in 1975, Stella, Madeline and Evelyn had a meeting about "where do we go from here?" They decided to have another reunion and offer an Armenian student a scholarship from the money raised from the 1975 gathering. In 1978, after discussions about

formalizing the group, the Armenian Alumni submitted their Articles of Incorporation and By-Laws to the California Alumni Association in the summer of 1979 and received its Certificate of Charter and Blue and Gold Banner. "We were pleased with our new standing as Alumni," Evelyn says. She served as board president from 1987 to 1988. Many in that newly formed group were instrumental in getting U.C. Administration officials to have an Armenian Studies Program. Thus through hard work and fundraising, the program was initiated.

Evelyn stated recently, "I am grateful for the UCBAA Executive Boards through the years who have worked hard and alongside the donors. They have brought recognition for the Armenian Studies Program within the larger community. I am gratified by the growth of the program under Prof. Astourian."

In 1963 Evelyn married Armen Boyd and raised five children. In her professional life she worked at Alameda County Social Services. Her main focus was in the Adoption of "Hard to Place" children. Evelyn also plays the violin and was a member of the Walnut Creek Diablo Symphony Orchestra and still plays in several venues. These days Evelyn enjoys seeing her family and does volunteer work. She also attends UCBAA Board meetings. "It's great to see recent graduates on the Board as well as retired Alumni who want to get involved. Some of the best times in my life have been with this group."

## Calling All L.A. Alumni!

The UCBAA is looking for any Cal Alumni living in the Southern California area who are interested in participating in alumni activities in the LA area! If you live in Southern California and are interested in gathering with other Cal Armenian Alumni, please contact us at [contact@ucbaa.org](mailto:contact@ucbaa.org).

## Join our Board or Volunteer on a Sub-Committee

Calling all alumni or interested community members! The UCBAA is actively searching for more volunteers to either join our Board or a sub-committee. Sub-committee members need not be Cal graduates and we welcome anyone who is willing to come help us plan culturally enriching and entertaining events for the Bay Area Armenian community. If you are interested in helping in any capacity, please contact us at [contact@ucbaa.org](mailto:contact@ucbaa.org).



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## Are you on Facebook?

Like the U.C. Berkeley Armenian Alumni page and stay in touch!

<http://www.facebook.com/pages/UC-Berkeley-Armenian-Alumni/228022577209796>

## Visit us online!

The UCBAA's website includes information about ASP courses and events, UCBAA events, scholarship programs, and more. Please visit us at [www.ucbaa.org](http://www.ucbaa.org) and sign up for the newsletter to receive electronic messages about upcoming events and important announcements. We appreciate your feedback, please feel free to drop us a line at [contact@ucbaa.org](mailto:contact@ucbaa.org).



## WILLIAM SAROYAN ENDOWMENT DONATIONS October 2011 to September 2012

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## UCBAA GENERAL FUND DONATIONS October 2011 to September 2012

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*In Memory of Madeline Sahagian Adrian*  
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## UCBAA GENERAL FUND DONATIONS

*In Memory of Stella Michaelian*  
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## Ways to Give to the UCBAAs and the Armenian Studies Program at the UCB

### U.C. BERKELEY ARMENIAN ALUMNI

**Donation** – Support our activities and services to the Armenian Studies Program

**Membership** – Become a member and have a voting voice

### WILLIAM SAROYAN ENDOWMENT FUND

**Donation** – The most immediate way to show your support

**Memorial Donation** – In memory of a loved one in lieu of flowers

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**Wills and Trusts** – Remember the U.C. Berkeley Armenian Studies Program (William Saroyan Endowment or the U.C. Berkeley Armenian Alumni) in your will

**Life Insurance, Brokerage Accounts, Retirement Plans** – Name the U.C. Berkeley Armenian Studies Program (William Saroyan Endowment or the U.C. Berkeley Armenian Alumni) as **beneficiary**.

For more information: [contact@ucbaa.org](mailto:contact@ucbaa.org)

## DUES ARE DUE AND REMEMBER, YOU DON'T HAVE TO BE A UCB GRADUATE TO JOIN US!

We have over 500 "alums" on our mailing list, yet we receive dues from fewer than 50. The dues become part of our General Fund which covers our operating expenses, including mailings, printing, honorariums and travel expenses for guest speakers, and much more. Remember, only dues paying members are allowed to vote in our elections. Annual dues are a small fee of \$35. Use the envelope provided in the newsletter and the forms below to send us your dues and updated contact information.

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