

Shang-Yi Ch'en, right, conducting research with a 35-foot spectrometer



LEGACY OF A MILLIKAN PROTÉGÉ LIVES ON THROUGH A PROFESSORSHIP

In 1997, Eugene Ch'en was combing through the files of his deceased father, Shang-Yi Ch'en (PhD '40), when he came across a stack of letters. The typed notes—formal and concise yet imbued with sincerity—were addressed to his father and sent by Robert A. Millikan, co-founder of Caltech and a 1923 Nobel laureate.



THE ROBERT AND AMELIA PEELER SCHOLARSHIP FUND: A LEGACY OF SUPPORT

Robert Peeler (BS '48) came to Caltech in 1944, in pursuit of a chemistry degree. But his plans were waylaid by World War II. He redirected his focus to mechanical engineering to help the U.S. Navy meet its need for commissioned officers through the V-12 Navy College Training Program. After two years, he resumed his chemistry studies. Remarkably, he still managed to graduate in four years.

After Caltech, Peeler earned his master's degree at MIT and embarked on a long, fulfilling career. He was granted a patent in 1956 for inventing a rust-inhibiting lubricating oil, and conducted research in Northern California for Chevron Corporation for nearly four decades.

Through the years, Peeler kept abreast of Caltech's breakthroughs in alternative energy sources, advancements in artificial intelligence, and glimpses of uncharted skies made by the Keck Telescopes. These contributions to science and society sustained his pride in his alma mater and inspired him to help others benefit from a Caltech education.

In 1990, Peeler established the Robert and Amelia Peeler Scholarship fund, named in honor of his parents. When he passed away, his bequest considerably enhanced the fund. To date, eight students have received support through Peeler's gift, and more will benefit from his generosity for generations to come.

"I am delighted that you are keeping on with your publishing since your doctorate," Millikan wrote. When he sent that letter in 1944, Millikan had not seen his protégé in five years. Due to escalating Japanese aggression in China, the elder Ch'en had returned to China after completing his final examinations. Compelled to be close to his family during these tensions, he would not attend Caltech's commencement ceremony and would miss the opportunity to be recognized among his peers for attaining cum laude honors. Soon, World War II would begin, and after the attack on Pearl Harbor, invading forces would shutter Yenching University where Ch'en conducted his research. As the letter indicates, the Caltech-trained scientist still found a way to continue his investigations.

After the war, Ch'en joined the physics faculty at the University of Oregon and pursued research in optical spectroscopy. In 1952, Millikan wrote that he would endorse Ch'en's work: "Be assured that I shall reply favorably to any inquiries that come to me from the National Science Foundation with respect to your capacity for contributing in the field indicated in your letter."

For Eugene Ch'en, the correspondence offered a glimpse of his father as a young physicist during a dramatic time in the 20th century.

"When he came to Caltech, it was really, truly a foreign environment for him," he says. "There was nobody he knew here. He had very limited resources, and I think what he accomplished with so little is especially admirable."

As the senior Ch'en adjusted to his adopted country, he had a friend in Millikan, who would speak with him whenever there was a gathering of graduate students. These friendly conversations evolved into a lasting friendship as the two corresponded, and led to a visit from Millikan at the Ch'en family home in Oregon.

Continued on Page 4



TORCHBEARERS CELEBRATED AT SPRING LUNCHEON



Caltech President Thomas F. Rosenbaum and Katherine T. Faber, the Simon Ramo Professor of Materials Science, hosted local Torchbearers at a luncheon on Saturday, April 9.

The group of 70 Caltech supporters escaped a spring rain shower when the garden event was transformed into a convivial luncheon in Dabney Lounge. Rosenbaum, holder of the Sonja and William Davidow Presidential Chair and professor of physics, expressed appreciation for Caltech's 565 Torchbearers and the powerful long-term impact of their planned gifts on education and research at Caltech.

Sophomores Anne Dorsey and Anusha Nathan (pictured at podium), whose studies are underwritten in part by planned gifts, described their experiences at Caltech. Morgan Kousser, the William R. Kenan, Jr., Professor of History and Social Science—whose professorship was created via a charitable trust—provided a glimpse of his recent work.

The event wrapped up with a final thank-you from Allyson Simpson, who directs the Office of Gift Planning, and the presentation of Caltech-themed gifts—small tokens of huge appreciation.

For all Torchbearers: Caltech's leaders, students, faculty, and staff alike offer heartfelt thanks for your generosity and support.



Left, Top: Sophomores Anne Dorsey and Anusha Nathan speak. Middle: Torchbearers Delores and William Bing are greeted by a staff member. Bottom: Gifts help signal Caltech's gratitude to Torchbearers.

RECOGNIZE THIS ALUMNUS?



As a new engineering graduate, this alumnus didn't realize how much he got out of Caltech. But that changed. During his multifaceted career, he worked for a company that makes wireless data-communication devices, as a contractor for engineering firms, and for the Al Mann Foundation, where he designed ultraminiature biomedical implants.

"Creativity was always part of the Caltech approach, looking at things very fundamentally," he says. "It's important to be able to approach a problem that you haven't seen before."

He did just that, in a different sphere, when he graduated in 1970. A federal judge had ordered Pasadena to desegregate its schools. He felt drawn to bring parents and teachers together and help the schools move forward.

Then Pasadena's redevelopment agency began razing historic buildings to construct new ones in the name of urban renewal. The alumnus and other Pasadena residents successfully campaigned for plans and city leaders that promoted growth and also honored history. Old Pasadena thrived—and landed on the National Register of Historic Places.

What better place to call home than the city he had done so much to preserve and improve? In 1982, he bought a cottage in a courtyard two miles from campus. He and his wife—the poet, professor, and printmaker Deborah Meadows—lived in the bungalow for two decades.

When the couple outgrew the space, renting their beloved bungalow became a hassle. But selling it would wreak havoc with their taxes. He thought of a new approach. He had been giving to Caltech since the 1980s; why not use the cottage to make a larger gift?

Assisted by Caltech's gift-planning staff, he established a trust to hold the proceeds from the bungalow's sale. It will provide Deborah and him income for life, and the assets they don't use will benefit future Caltech students.

"It's really tough for kids to pay for college and have any kind of financial flexibility when they get out of school," says **Howard Stover (BS '70)**. His and Deborah's gift will support undergraduate scholarships, giving students freedom to pursue the challenges and solve the problems they find most interesting, at Caltech and afterward.



Howard Stover (BS '70) & Deborah Meadows



Torchbearer

In recent months, nine new members have joined the Torchbearers of Caltech. One member wishes to remain anonymous.

HONOR ROLL:

Richard H. (MS '66, PhD '71) and Ruth Ault

Robert C. and Kimiko Bonner

Kendall L. (BS '60) and Sue A. Dinwiddie

Richard L. Heinze

Adelaide F. Hixon

*John C. Russ (BS '62, MS '63)
and Mrs. Helen Adams*

Paul B. (BS '60, MS '61) and Betty D. Skov

*Michelle Hsiao Tsing Teng
(MS '87, PhD '90)*

ESTATE GIFTS

The generosity and foresight of alumni and friends are crucial to Caltech's success. Below are just a few of the many individuals who have supported Caltech through estate gifts.

From the estate of Robert E. Townsend, Caltech has received over \$225,000 in unrestricted support.

From the estate of John M. Slye, Caltech has received over \$1.7 million to be directed to the Institute's general fund.

From the estate of Robert G. (BS '36) and Janice Heitz, Caltech has received \$100,000 for undergraduate scholarships.

MAYBE YOU CAN'T TEACH AN OLD DOG NEW TRICKS, BUT YOU CAN MAKE AN IRA ROLLOVER (AND FETCH A TAX BREAK)

You may be seeking a way to turn your IRA disbursements toward a cause that is important to you. And if it created a tax benefit, that would help as well.

There is good news. Thanks to the Protecting Americans from Tax Hikes Act of 2015, the IRA charitable rollover provision is now permanent. What this means: Each year, those age 70½ and older may transfer up to \$100,000 directly from their IRA account to a charity, and that contribution will not be included in their gross income.

In contrast, old rules treated withdrawals from IRAs as income, even if the funds were immediately directed to a charity—and that could still create tax liability. Most people find the charitable rollover provision offers more advantages come tax time.

Such gifts do count toward an IRA holder's minimum distribution. At the same time, there is no double dipping by seeking an additional itemized charitable deduction for the gift.

The charitable rollover provision originally went into effect in 2006 and was renewed by Congress every year or two, sometimes at the 11th hour. Now that this benefit is secure, prudent philanthropists can plan ahead to boost the causes that matter most while also trimming their taxes.

For more information about making a qualified charitable distribution to Caltech, contact the Office of Gift Planning at (626) 395-2927 or giftplanning@caltech.edu.

A NEW GIVING OPPORTUNITY TO SUPPORT STUDENTS

A gift of \$25,000 can make a significant difference in the life of a Caltech undergraduate. Your contribution will establish a one-year scholarship, which can bear your name or that of a loved one. An annual reception brings together donors and the students who have benefited from their generosity. Most Caltech students depend on aid; scholarships help them reach their academic goals.

LEGACY OF A MILLIKAN PROTÉGÉ LIVES ON THROUGH A PROFESSORSHIP

The younger Ch'en knew that his father had mentioned giving back to Caltech but was unable to do so before his death. When the time came for Eugene Ch'en to begin planning his own estate, he thought of his father, the letters, and Millikan.

Eugene Ch'en established the Shang-Yi Ch'en Professorship in Physics, an endowment that honors his father and intertwines the legacies of the Ch'ens with Caltech. The gift of a professorship offers generations of scholars the assurance of consistent support, enabling them to dream bigger when imagining new research ideas. Additionally, because they free up Institute resources for other purposes, professorships remain one of the Institute's highest priorities.

After thoughtful discussions with Caltech's Office of Gift Planning, Eugene Ch'en transferred some of his rental property to Caltech and created a flip charitable remainder unitrust. With this arrangement, he will receive net income generated from the trust until the property is sold, or at another agreed-upon date. Then, the financial arrangement flips to a traditional charitable remainder unitrust, with Eugene Ch'en receiving a fixed percentage of the trust value annually. At the end of the trust term, the remaining funds will support the Ch'en Professorship and Caltech. This type of unitrust is ideal for people who would like to contribute assets—such as real estate—that take time to liquidate.

The endowed gift may not be Eugene Ch'en's final contribution to Caltech. To build on the rich history of the Ch'en Professorship, he is considering donating his father's cherished letters to the Caltech Archives.

CONTACT US

Techniques is published by Caltech's Office of Gift Planning. For more information about the stories featured in this issue or if you have questions about deferred or other planned gifts, please contact:

Allyson Simpson
Senior Director

Phone
(626) 395-2927

Jim Ehlers
*Deputy Director and
Senior Gift Planning Officer*

Email
giftplanning@caltech.edu

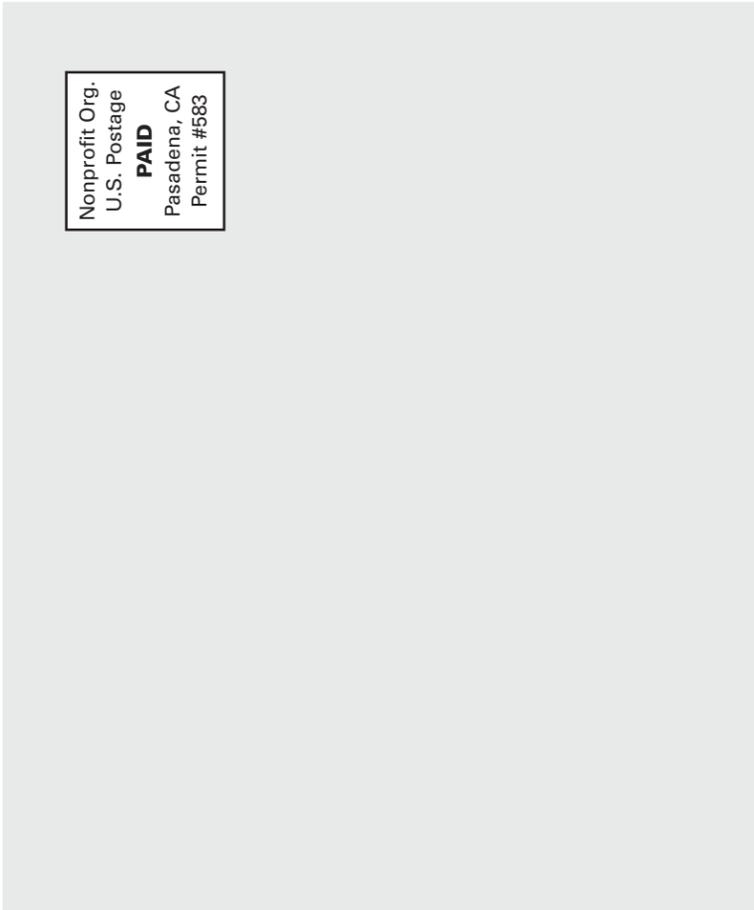
Oliver Mueller
Senior Gift Planning Officer

Web
plannedgiving.caltech.edu

Natalie Piega
Manager, Trusts and Bequests

breakthrough

THE CALTECH CAMPAIGN



Nonprofit Org.
U.S. Postage
PAID
Pasadena, CA
Permit #583

Caltech

Office of Gift Planning
Mail Code 5-32
Pasadena, CA 91125



WHAT'S INSIDE

- Legacy of a Millikan Protégé Lives on Through a Professorship
- Caltech Legacies
- Tombbearers Celebrated at Spring Luncheon
- Maybe You Can't Teach an Old Dog New Tricks, but You Can Make an IRA Rollover (and Fetch a Tax Break)
- Recognize This Alumnus?

RECOGNIZE THIS ALUMNUS?

You might remember this engineering student for his service on the Board of Control. Or perhaps you recall the lounge machine he built—an ad-blocker ahead of its time—or how he and a friend broke into Greg Thompson's room on Ditch Day and "indulged their artistic bents by welding a room-filling free-form sculpture inside."

See inside for more.



CLASS OF
'70

TECHNIQUES

office of gift planning

volume XXI, issue 1 | spring 2016

This newsletter is intended for educational purposes only and is not offered and should not be taken as legal, tax, or other professional advice. Always consult an attorney, accountant, or other professional adviser before making any material decisions based on any data presented herein. To ensure compliance with certain IRS requirements, we disclose to you that the information contained in this newsletter is not intended or written to be used, and may not be used, for the purpose of avoiding tax-related penalties.