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“This is a great vehicle for those with highly appreciated stock,” says Paul Sweeney, assistant manager of trusts and bequests. “With their generous commitment, the Breakstones are empowering those people to help them accomplish their goals.”

With their generous commitment, the Breakstones are empowering those people to help them accomplish their goals—and skiing.

NEWS FROM YOUR GIFT PLANNING TEAM

The Office of Gift Planning is pleased to announce that Michael Conover has recently joined our team as Assistant Manager of Trusts and Bequests. Mike comes to the Office of Gift Planning with a 13-year tenure in Caltech’s development records and gift administration department. Over the years, Mike has amassed a great deal of expertise working with the administration of planned and deferred gifts. In his new role, Mike will work with Natalie Piega to oversee and manage Caltech’s life income gift portfolio as well as to administer matured bequests and open estates.

Congratulations and welcome, Mike!

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 gifts, please contact:

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Evelyn 5’5” Allen (BS ’72) Breakstone

I owe a lot to Caltech,” Alan says. “It made a huge impression on me when I was young—and it has affected all aspects of my life in a positive way.”

Over the years, Alan and Evelyn have continued to carry forward the lessons learned at Caltech.

And travelers who are especially interested in educational trips, the Breakstones have explored volcanoes and the W. M. Keck Observatory in Hawaii, visited the giant tortoises of the Galapagos Islands, and hiked in the Canadian Rockies—all made possible through their membership in the Caltech Associates. (Alan sits on the board of the Associates’ Northern California chapter.) And whenever Institute professors venture to Northern California to share their research with alumni and friends, chances are Alan and Evelyn will be in attendance.

“I’m very impressed by the work that’s going on at Caltech and with the speakers who come to tell us about what they’re doing,” Evelyn says. “The research is extremely valuable, and the people are down to earth and really quite wonderful.”
Within minutes of joining a table of young Flems for a Reunion Weekend dinner, Thomas “Tom” Tebben (BS ’60) and his wife, Linda, were commiserating and laughing with the undergraduates about life as a Caltech student. “I think,” jokes Tom, “that those young men and women were glad to talk with us and were probably thinking, ‘Hey, this guy made it through Caltech, and he looks OK now!’”

The biggest concerns of today’s Techners are the same as they were 50 years ago, Tom observes. Namely: Am I going to get through this place? What comes next?

“I didn’t think I had a prayer of graduating,” laughs Tom. “But over time, I dared to think that it was somewhat conceivable that I might make it.”

Tom made it. He earned his bachelor’s in chemistry and even served as student body vice president along the way. After graduation—thanks in part to encouragement and a strong endorsement from Caltech’s then-dean of students, Paul Eaton—he attended the University of Chicago Graduate School of Business (now the University of Chicago Booth School of Business) for his MBA.

Through the long and fruitful career in analytics and consulting that followed, Tom found himself approaching life’s challenges with the scientific, analytical methodologies he had learned as an undergraduate. His appreciation for his time at Caltech and its rigorous coursework remained with him, building on a proud family tradition of supporting the Institute that began with Linda’s father, Raymond Peterson (BS ’31, PhD ’35), Tom and Linda have been members of the Caltech Associates for many years.

Tom says, “My sense of Caltech as being a place that makes things happen only grew over time. Then the thought came to me: If we throw some money in the pot, we can really be a part of that.”

Thus inspired, the Tebbens established a fund at Caltech to address a concern that increasingly affected their peers. “People were feeling less and less ready to give,” he explains. “Some people seemed to be saying ‘I’m not going to leave a bequest to college, because my family needs it more than the students.”

For their donation, the Tebbens established the Thomas and Linda Tebben Endowed Research Fund for Human Health, which is currently managing some $30 million to support innovative health research across academic divisions. Working with financial advisers and attorneys to help their clients achieve their goals.

Over time, their friendship evolved into something different. They were not just friends but family—a family of their choosing, without the labels of siblings or cousins. They spent holidays together, just as family members would, and traveled with Berube to Pasadena for seminar Day.

When he was diagnosed with cancer and given months to live, the boy from Boston reached out once again to his Caltech friend. He asked her to serve as executrix of his estate. Naturally, she said yes.

It was then that she discovered just how much Caltech meant to her friend. He donated his most cherished belongings—more than 6,000 books—to the library. He also bequeathed his house to the Institute.

“There were three times when he smiled and looked happy,” she said, referring to the period after his diagnosis. “The first time was after I had talked to Caltech and the library and they agreed to take his books. His face lit up. It was a pretty special moment.”

More than 40 years after they first met at Caltech, Richard “Rich” Ribble said goodbye to his friend and de facto sister Stephanie Charles, knowing his wishes had been fulfilled.
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This is a great vehicle for those with highly appreciated stock," Alan says, "because both the donor and Caltech benefit!"

Evelyn adds, "We see our investment as best used by people who have societal goals in mind and who are looking toward the future for the betterment of mankind. Caltech has exceptional students, professors, and administrators, and the Institute really stands behind those people to help them accomplish their goals."

With their generous commitment, the Breakstones are empowering those exceptional minds to continue learning—and doing.

CONTRIBUTIONS

According to Evelyn, "What you learn at Caltech is how to learn," says Alan Breakstone (BS ’72), "It’s not what you know but what you’re capable of learning and doing—quickly, efficiently, and while making as few mistakes as possible.”

As a student at Caltech, Alan learned about a lot of things—elementary particle physics, experimental high-energy physics, and, on Senior Ditch Day, the physics of a brute-force snack! “As part of our team, we pounded concrete and made my arm even more useless,” he remembers. “But the underclassmen found their way in, and unfortunately my room was practically uninvulneable for weeks after that.”

His Caltech experience also prepared Alan for further studies in physics and a career in academia, software engineering, and management. Sweetest of all, however, his Caltech connections led him to his wife, Evelyn. One of his undergraduate professors played a key role in helping Alan as a postdoc, during which time he worked at CERN (European Organization for Nuclear Research) in Geneva. There he attended a Fourth of July party hosted by Evelyn, who was in Switzerland to open the new world headquarters of accounting firm Arthur Andersen.

Over the years, Alan and Evelyn have continued to carry forward the lessons learned at Caltech.

And travelers who are especially interested in educational trips, the Breakstones have explored volcanoes and the W. M. Keck Observatory in Hawaii, visited the giant tortoises of the Galapagos Islands, and hiked in the Canadian Rockies—all made possible through their membership in the Caltech Associates. (Alan sits on the board of the Associates’ Northern California chapter) And whenever institute professors venture to Northern California to share their research with alumni and friends, chances are Alan and Evelyn will be in attendance.

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CALTECH LEGACIES

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