

# BERKELEY EMERITI TIMES

Volume 24, Number 4, January 2015



## JANUARY 24<sup>TH</sup> LUNCH WITH JAY KEASLING – ENGINEERING MICROBES TO PRODUCE OUR STUFF

Once again we are anticipating an interesting and innovative talk by a scholar who bridges disciplines – this time between chemical engineering and a branch of the biological sciences, that of biomolecular engineering.

Jay Keasling came to Cal in 1992, after completing his Ph.D. at Michigan and a post-doc at Stanford.

He has an impressive string of titles: Professor in the Department of Chemical and Biomolecular Engineering, the Hubbard Howe Jr. Distinguished Professor of Biochemical Engineering, Director of the Physical Biosciences at LBL and the Synthetic Biology Engineering Research Center, and CEO of the Joint BioEnergy Institute. He also has his own Keasling Laboratory that works on modifying microorganisms so that they can be used to break down substances that contaminate our environment. And, on a positive side, similar processes can be used to produce organisms that can in turn be used to build new, more environmentally friendly substances such as biodegradable polymers.

One of the interesting results of Jay's research and lab work – in collaboration with other private and public groups – is the production semi-synthetically of artemisinin, a substance that is used as the primary step in treating sufferers from malaria. After 13 years of work, the process permitted the shipping of 1.7 million doses of the drug to Liberia, the Congo, and other African countries in August of last year. The basic research was done here in Berkeley, while a Bill and Melinda Gates award helped to finance the production and distribution of the drug.

Whatever part of his ongoing work that he stresses, we look forward to a stimulating talk to launch our new year of lunch meetings.

*Phyllis Brooks Schafer*



## ELIZABETH COLSON – EMERITA OF THE YEAR

At the December meeting, we honored our Emerita of the Year, Elizabeth Colson.

Elizabeth has moved permanently to Zambia, where she has conducted her research for over sixty years, and could not be with us in person. Her colleague Dick Herr, however, presented her comments on the award.

The full text of her talk is too long for the format of the *Times*, but you may read the whole document at the UCBEA WEBSITE:

<http://retirement.berkeley.edu/ucbea-bet.shtml>  
after Monday January 12th.

We should like to stress that our award is made for work done and honors received *as an emerita*. In her text Elizabeth herself passed lightly over these. So we're summarizing a few of them here.

Since retiring in 1984, she has given many lectures and worked with many students over the years. She has published two books and fourteen book chapters. She has received honorary doctorates from Brown University, Syracuse University, and the University of Zambia. The Elizabeth Colson Lectureship in Forced Migration Studies, an endowed faculty position at Oxford, was created about 1984, and the annual Elizabeth Colson

Lecture in the Refugee Studies Programme at Oxford was initiated in 1989.

**SHORT TAKES: Emeriti Lunch Table, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Thursdays monthly at noon in the northwest corner of The Great Hall in The Faculty Club. Pick up a salad or sandwich, and find the table – usually near the fireplace end of the Hall – with our reservation sign. All are welcome to join in our informal discussions!**



## **DECEMBER 6<sup>TH</sup> LUNCH WITH MATIAS TARNOPOLSKY – THE CAL IN CAL PERFORMANCES**

Matias was introduced at the December lunch by Jack Kirsch, who cited his own appreciation of the growth of Cal Performances into a major presence on campus.

Matias himself stressed that the connection of Cal Performances with students was the most important.

In his remarks about the history of the program he cited the visit of the Theatre de la Ville from Paris as exemplifying what a troupe of performers can do as they work together for the arts. Sarah Bernhardt's Greek Theater 1906 performance in Racine's *Phèdre* was essentially the first Cal Performance. Thus an uncompromising commitment to quality was innate even before the formal birth of the program.

Today Cal Performances engages everyone in the community – students, faculty, the wider community. But why and how are students involved?

Undergraduates entering Berkeley may never have been to a live performance of classical music, theater, or dance. Every new student should come to at least one performance. This introduction to great art and artists continues. Rather than arranging on single performances, the program includes artistic residencies

over enough time to provide insight into many cultural and historical topics.

Taking the Vienna Philharmonic's visits as an example, he showed how students, through freshman seminars, have learned of the importance of the listening to artists as they study their historic context. (Matias himself, when learning the importance of World War I in school in England, had to study the war poets along with music of the time.) Why was this war seen as more important in Europe than in the U.S.? This led to a freshman seminar organized in 2011 (to continue through 2017) built around a series of Vienna Philharmonic concerts along with a two-day symposium on arts and culture shedding light on the lessons of history. Students even heard the conductor of the orchestra discuss the behavior and role of the orchestra since WW I, including some collaboration with the Nazi regime – sensitive topics that came out during their three-day residence.

Other artists on our stage connect with regular courses given in the English department, and the schools of Music and Journalism. Several of these courses are offered with support from the Mellon Foundation. Nick Matthews, for example, teaches a full course on "Vienna: 1900 to today." Students go to *ten* performances and meet the performers in rehearsals. Their questions run the gamut from "How long do you practice?" to queries about details of performance.

The faculty Committee on Arts and Letters sponsors such cross-over programs. For example, the great cellist Yoyo Ma has given more performances at Cal Performances than anywhere else in the Bay Area. He has talked on the subject of cultural citizenship, and the next morning has given master classes with students. Students can say, "Only in Berkeley could I have a chance to do that!"

To keep all this going, Cal Performances receives only 3% of their monetary support from campus funds. The rest comes from ticket sales and fund raising. Matias therefore ended his presentation with a plea to us all to keep up our attendance and donations to these wonderful programs.

*Phyllis Brooks Schafer*



## INTERVIEW WITH CARY SWEENEY – John Swartzberg and S. Davis

Cary Sweeney is the Director of the UC Berkeley Retirement Center. A native of southern Virginia, she holds a Master of Gerontology from Virginia Commonwealth University where she focused on adult Education. She has managed educational programs in geriatrics and gerontology for 14+ years. Cary recently worked at UCSF as Project Director of the Hartford Center of Gerontological Nursing Excellence, and Program Manager of the NorCal Geriatric Education Center, Division of Geriatrics, UCSF School of Medicine.

Q. What are the most prominent issues facing emeriti faculty?

A. Retirees are healthier and living longer than previous generations, resulting in longer periods of retirement. Consequently many want to remain engaged and a number are interested in contributing to society and have the time and energy to do so. There are obstacles: Often the problem is that emeriti are unaware of the options and possibilities. Also, they like other elders in our society, confront a culture that doesn't fit with aging and retirement. Retirement is an opportunity for deep thinking and reflection – while our society is centered around rapid industrial production.

Q. What ideas do you have for addressing this issue?

A. The best approach is to develop connections between retirees with particular skills and interests, and those in the community who can benefit from their talents. Retirees have experience and wisdom to impart, but we live in a fast-paced world and taking the time to listen and learn from them is a diminishing part of our culture.

We need to create a space and infrastructure for those who want to participate. Web-based sites are helpful, but people still need to find them and have easy access to them.

Our faculty needs to plan for their retirement with the same energy that they prepared for their career. At our retirement center we try and start a dialog earlier with faculty approaching retirement- encouraging them to

take pause, reflect and consider “what’s next.” But, we often run into the “I’ll think about this tomorrow” attitude. In life we have multiple opportunities to consider the next phase in our life- high school, college, marriage, children... all along the way these moments give us pause. Retirement or “re-engagement” is another moment in life where we can pause and consider – “what do I want to do with the next 10, 15, 20 years of my life?”

Q. How does one plan a retirement?

A. There is no single answer to this. We might create techniques similar to those of financial planners. They assess needs, ask questions about goals, risk tolerance, and resources before making a plan. A non-financial retirement plan would start by suggesting themes of interests. It is important to start a process and know that it will not happen overnight. University of Southern California has tried to do this with their “retirement navigator-” a program designed to help walk faculty through the retirement maze. This could serve as a possible model for UCB.

Q. There is a movement toward “aging in place.” One aspect of this movement allows seniors to remain in their current home where they may have been for decades. How does this work?

A. Ashby Village in Berkeley is a good example of this. This is a community-based network of members who can access various services most of which are carried out by volunteers. There are two components: a group with certain needs, and a network of those to service those needs. The unifying theme is that it’s for people who desire to remain in their own homes as they get older. It acknowledges and addresses the fact that as we age we increasingly need assistance and support.

Q. Is this model suitable for all?

A. It is a very affordable option for many and is particularly a good fit for those who want to stay in their home as long as possible. Often seniors have paid off their homes and their living costs are low, particularly when compared to assisted living facilities. Nevertheless, those using this system need to be generally independent without major disabilities. The system works well for those who need occasional assistance with home repairs, a ride to an event or appointment, or perhaps computer consultation or

repair. It also has an important sociological advantage of establishing and nurturing a community.

Q. How do you see the evolution of the Retirement Center's role with the Emeriti Association over the next decade?

A. I see a closer alignment between the Emeriti Association and the retirement center; it makes sense to join forces as much as we can to increase awareness of possibilities in retirement. The Emeriti Association is a wonderful example of the many ways Emeriti can pick and choose where they put their energy and offer valuable time and resources to the campus and community

**SHORT TAKES: Remember John Swartzberg's warning on the danger to us all during flu and pneumonia season. Two new pneumonia vaccines are available and taking both is recommended! First, Prevnar 13, and then Pneumovax 23 (6 to 12 months later). See the November 2014 *Emeriti Times* for more details.**

## **VOLUNTEER ACTIVITY IN COURSE DEVELOPMENT AND TEACHING FOR A FREE UNIVERSITY**

Shai Reshef, Founder and President of University of the People, spoke with members of UCBEA late this fall regarding how interested Emeriti might engage with the world's first non-profit, tuition-free, accredited, online academic institution. Active faculty and emeriti from several schools and governmental agencies have already engaged with U. of the People to create and teach online courses that result in Associate and Bachelor's degrees in Business Administration and Computer Science. The University was founded in 2009 with the goal of allowing students all over the world to have access to an education that would allow them to enter into the workforce at a skilled level.

President Reshef had heard of UCBEA and its active Emeriti, and he invited Emeriti to consider being involved in course development, or teaching, courses in a new undergraduate area of Health Sciences or in a new graduate Master in Business Administration

Program or in the General Education area in Arts and Sciences. These are volunteer activities. At least two ways to learn more: (1) the website at [uopeople.edu](http://uopeople.edu), or (2) meeting with President Reshef on his next visit to the Berkeley Campus in February (contact us at [emeriti@berkeley.edu](mailto:emeriti@berkeley.edu)).

Our own Chancellor Nicholas Dirks is on the President's Council for University of the People as an advisor. This University is accredited by the Accreditation Commission of the Distance Education Accrediting Commission (DEAC), a U.S. Department of Education authorized accrediting agency.



**Caroline Kane**

### **PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE**

**Greetings colleagues,**

Happy New Year everyone! Let us hope and work toward a healthy 2015 with collegiality in our governmental halls (I can dream, can't I?) and with a rainy winter and spring to ameliorate our enduring drought.

We start the New Year with a squabble among healthcare and health insurance providers that pits Sutter Health against Blue Shield, but that usually resolves prior to any fallout from the showdown. Your Board and the Faculty Welfare Committee on campus and system wide are following this issue closely. Please let me know if your own healthcare providers send you alerts or are wringing their hands on your behalf. You will receive more information as we hear it. Otherwise, all seems stable on the health insurance front from the University except the continuing reduction in University contribution (by another 3% this year) for premiums for retirees, and of course, the continued increase in healthcare costs and thus premiums in and of themselves.

On a much happier note, UCBEA continues to work with others on the Retirement Center Policy Board to expand the Transforming Retirement effort. In this vein, the Vice Provost for Faculty and her Office for Faculty Equity and Welfare has a new online site specifically for Emeriti and for those soon-to-be Emeriti. This site

includes information on a Pathway to Retirement Option that allows faculty thinking about retirement to plan the last 1-2 active years in a way that works for them and for their departments. It also allows a more predictable transition into the next phase of one's career after retiring from Berkeley. See the site for more information, and share it with your colleagues:

<http://ofew-retirement.berkeley.edu/retirement/pathway-retirement-option>

I hope to see many of you at our first lunch of the year on January 24<sup>th</sup> at the Faculty Club. Our speaker will be Berkeley's Chemical Engineering Professor Jay Keasling, a pioneer in "systems biology" who also has been a leader in developing alternative methods for producing malaria-battling drugs for the less developed world. His talk is certain to be both provocative and entertaining.

Best,

Caroline, President UCBEA

## RETIREMENT CENTER UPDATE

Check the Center's website [retirement.berkeley.edu](http://retirement.berkeley.edu).

### Remember the New Retirement Center Location and Walk-In Hours

The UCB Retirement Center now in 101 University Hall, on the ground floor of the tall building located at the corner of University Avenue and Oxford Street. Drop-in hours are still Monday-Friday, 1pm-4pm.

See John Swartzberg and Sam Davis's interview with Cary Sweeney, the recently appointed director of the Center, in this issue of the EAT.

### UCBRC Publication *Center Piece*

For details of upcoming activities you may also consult the current issue of the Retirement Center's publication *Center Piece* at <http://retirement.berkeley.edu/pdf/CPfa14.pdf>.

EMERITI TIMES: Published before each meeting of the UC Berkeley Emeriti Association to give all our members information about meetings, Board actions, and pertinent campus news and policies, along with interviews and items of general interest. Editor-Writer: Phyllis Brooks Schafer.

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UC BERKELEY EMERITI ASSOCIATION  
LUNCHEON

SATURDAY, JANUARY 24<sup>TH</sup>, 2015

SOCIAL HOUR AT 11:00 A.M. – LUNCH AT NOON – SPEAKER AT 1:00 P.M.

THE FACULTY CLUB

**Jay Keasling**

**Professor of Biochemical Engineering**

*Engineering Microbes to Produce our Stuff*

To guarantee your main course choice, your reservation must be received **eight** days prior to the event. All lunch options are \$22. Payment may be made by faxing this form to 510/540-6204 [indicate Faculty Club Account # \_\_\_\_\_ to charge], or by mailing this form [with a check made payable to The Faculty Club] to the UCB Emeriti Association, The Faculty Club #6050, Berkeley, CA 94720-6050. You may also reserve by e-mail to Christyl Sturrock. Include all details asked for on this sheet, and send to her at **events@berkeleyfacultyclub.com**. For more information, call the Club at 510-540-5678, ext. 2-224.

**Main course menu items:** **Salad:** Mediterranean Salad (with chicken); **Hot Entrée:** Tandoori Chicken Breast; **Vegetarian:** Portabella Mushroom Ravioli.

**Please note:** Unless a cancellation is received by **seven days** before the event, there will be **no refunds to no-shows**.

<i>Please fill in attendee(s):</i>	<i>Please indicate a preferred main course for each registrant:</i>
Member Name:	<input type="checkbox"/> Luncheon Salad <input type="checkbox"/> Hot Entrée <input type="checkbox"/> Vegetarian
Spouse/Partner/Guest Name:	<input type="checkbox"/> Luncheon Salad <input type="checkbox"/> Hot Entrée <input type="checkbox"/> Vegetarian
Guest Name:	<input type="checkbox"/> Luncheon Salad <input type="checkbox"/> Hot Entrée <input type="checkbox"/> Vegetarian