

## BCF Awards 27 New Scholarships

High Hopes Scholars Community Grows to 96 Students



**B**erkeley Community Fund (BCF) friends and families beamed with pride as we welcomed 27 new scholars at the 2015 High Hopes Scholarship Awards Ceremony on June 8, at the Berkeley City Club. All scholars, who were chosen among 100 applicants, were graduating seniors from Berkeley High School.

Keynote speaker Walter Robinson, Associate Vice Chancellor for Undergraduate Admis-

sions at UC Davis, returned to his former hometown to help congratulate the group. Reflecting on his own experience at Berkeley High, he noted BHS graduates “Go out and make a difference wherever we go.” Claiming he had the best job on the planet, he advised the scholars, “Don’t hold back. Be the wholeness of who you are... People don’t go to college intending to do what I do. They discover what to do.”

BCF is proud to help them embark on their own discovery as they head to the campuses of the University of California, several California State universities, and private colleges including Wesleyan University, Mount Holyoke College, St. Mary’s College of California and American University. Their intended majors include architecture, engineering, marketing, math and several fields of science.

### You Can Make A Difference

We set an ambitious goal last fall to raise \$2 million by 2016 for our High Hopes 100 initiative: Support 100 enrolled scholars and achieve a 100% graduation rate. As of June, we’ve raised \$1.014K and 90% of our scholars are on track to graduate. You Can Make a Difference.

100% of your donation goes directly to scholarships and

program support. By investing in a High Hopes Scholar, your generosity will help us create a more equitable society—starting right here in Berkeley.

**Invest in the Future** by making a donation to the Berkeley Community Fund. Contributions of any amount are welcome.



Visit [Berkfund.org](http://Berkfund.org)

### 2015 High Hopes Scholars

- Omar Aguilar Martinez**  
San Francisco State University
- Sandy Alegria Hernandez**  
UC Santa Cruz
- Solwazi Allah**  
UC Santa Cruz
- Norma Ambriz**  
UC Merced
- Abdulim A’omer**  
UC Davis
- Wessede Barrett**  
UC Santa Cruz
- Thafir Elzofri**  
Wesleyan University
- Ignacio Franco**  
UC Berkeley
- Cassandra Gonzalez**  
San Francisco State University
- Marco Gutierrez**  
San Jose State University
- Nia Hampton**  
American University
- Thai Hill**  
San Francisco State University
- Pablo Itzep Pastor**  
Wesleyan University
- Sequoia Johnson**  
Cal State East Bay
- Andrew Jones**  
UC Davis
- Kevin Lee**  
UC Santa Cruz
- Melissa Macias**  
San Diego State University
- Carlos Montano**  
UC Santa Cruz
- Alexis Ortega**  
St. Mary’s College
- Denia Parham**  
UC Merced
- Pamela Rodriguez**  
UC Berkeley
- Veronica Smith**  
Mt. Holyoke
- Melissa Sotelo**  
UC Santa Cruz
- Ocean Spikes**  
Cal State Long Beach
- Yilin Xu**  
Cal State Northridge
- Yingyin Yu**  
UC Riverside
- Hammad Zahid**  
UC Davis

# Save the Date

**THURSDAY, OCTOBER 8TH**

*H’s Lordships, Berkeley Marina*

## BCF Annual Dinner

*Honoring Archana Horsting*

**J**oin the Berkeley Community Fund on Thursday, October 8 as we honor Archana Horsting, co-founder and executive director of Kala Art Institute, with the 2015 Benjamin Ide Wheeler Award at our annual dinner.

The award recognizes Archana’s selfless and indefatigable 41-year (!) leadership of the internationally renowned nonprofit arts center. Through

her vision, inspired by Atelier 17 in Paris, Kala offers exhibitions, lectures, workshops and professional development for artists. It also brings art classes and workshops into our public schools and the community, serving about 25,000 individuals every year.

Sponsorship opportunities are available. Look for details in the mail or call us at 510.542-2126. All proceeds will support the High Hopes Scholarship Program.





# Persistence Pays Off

Recently, college persistence has become a focus. BCF is ahead of the curve.

Over the last 50 years, many programs have emerged in the United States to help first-generation and low-income students gain admission to four-year colleges. While college access has increased for these students, challenges arise when they matriculate. Some are not able to navigate the academic, social and cultural challenges they encounter, resulting in a dropout rate that is five times higher than the overall dropout rate. According to a study by the Pell Institute, just 11 percent of low-income students who are the first in their family to attend college graduate in six years.

In recent years, this reality has been acknowledged and is slowly being addressed. New findings have revealed that putting resources into helping these students reach college is just part of the equation. In order to increase college graduation rates—and as a result, the odds for first-generation college students to achieve post-college success and maximize lifetime earnings—creating programs that



Leticia Monroy and her son celebrating her 2015 graduation from UC Berkeley.

help them stay in college and graduate are equally critical.

College persistence and graduation is the focus of the Berkeley Community Fund (BCF). Not only does BCF provide each scholar with a \$4,000 annual scholarship (widely considered the gap between the typical financial aid package and the true cost of a year of college), it also supports its scholars in other ways. For example, a key component is the mentoring program. Each scholar is matched for all four years of college with a dedicated adult mentor who helps them navigate the college experience.

In addition, BCF provides other resources to help scholars thrive in college and graduate:

- Scholars receive support from our College Success Coordinator to help them overcome challenges.
  - Scholars are provided with peer support through a community of scholars and alumni.
  - Scholars are connected to internships and career opportunities.
  - BCF provides summer workshops on financial aid, budgeting, course selection, and career exploration.
- We are encouraged and gratified by the recent attention paid to the importance of focusing on college persistence. This validates our commitment to focus our resources on achieving this specific outcome for more of Berkeley's youth.

## BERKELEY COMMUNITY FUND

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# The Power of Mentoring

Mentoring can change a life. And who knows? It just may be your own.

Last year, when Juan Azuara, a Berkeley Community Fund (BCF) High Hopes Scholar, told his mom that he was thinking of transferring from San Francisco State to a community college and then on, hopefully, to UC Berkeley, she was hesitant.

"In her mind, I was going backwards," says Juan. "But then I talked to Kit about it, and he was encouraging, because he knew I had a bigger goal in mind—UC Berkeley. He told me 'follow your intuition and your dreams. It's a risk, but there is a great reward, and you need to do what feels best for you."

"That was really meaningful to me, to have someone back me up when making such a big decision."

And the decision paid off. Today, Juan, who graduated

from Berkeley High in 2012, is finishing up his first semester at UC Berkeley, majoring in economics. He's also considering applying for business school.

Kit Ratcliff is Juan's BCF mentor. Kit is one of more than 90 mentors, each paired with a High Hopes Scholar currently attending a four-year university. While each mentor and mentee communicates on a regular basis, each relationship is unique, as students have different needs, communication styles and time availability.

Juan and his family moved to United States when he was nine years old, from Mexico. At Berkeley High, even though he was an English Language Learner, he graduated with a 3.6 GPA and played varsity soccer. Juan, who says he would like to be a mentor



("very relaxing" Juan reports), other times they grab a cup of frozen yogurt and sit outside and talk for a couple hours. "When I applied for the BCF scholarship, to be honest, I was mainly thinking about the funding," says Juan. "I didn't know what to expect from the mentor relationship. I knew

someday, in a way already is — he volunteers as a tutor at METAS, a program in San Pablo that tutors K-12 Latino students in STEM subjects.

Juan and Kit have developed a tight bond. They see each other every month, and talk weekly. At the beginning, as they were developing the relationship, they talked a great deal about school. Now they talk about everything. Kit has met Juan's family, and Juan is a familiar presence in Kit's household. Sometimes they get together for a big outing, such as to the San Francisco Symphony

it was supposed to help me somehow get through college, but I wasn't sure how exactly. It's been great — Kit tries to understand my world just like I try to understand his. That's the beauty of the relationship, we learn from each other."

Kit says the mentoring experience is just as meaningful for him. "I get out of it as much as Juan does," he says. "The older you get, you realize it's not about you, it's about somebody else. If you can enable them to have a better experience or learn something new, you feel good."

## Meet a New Board Member

Jackie is the proprietor of Krentzman Communications, a communications and content strategy company. She is also the editor-in-chief of Diversity Woman, a national quarterly magazine distributed to women in leadership positions in Fortune 1000 companies. Previously, Jackie was the editorial director of DCP, the largest custom publisher in California. At the beginning of her career, she was a sportswriter, covering the San Francisco Giants, Oakland A's and Golden State Warriors.

In 2012 Jackie made a documentary film that aired on PBS



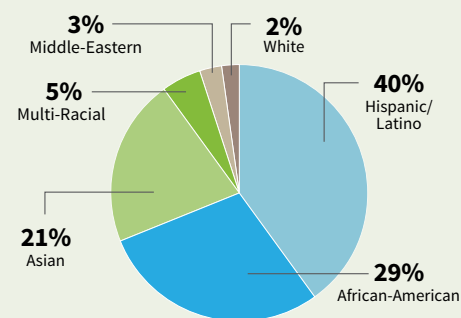
and at numerous film festivals, American Jerusalem, Jews and the Making of San Francisco.

Jackie has taught at the UC Berkeley Graduate School of Journalism and UC Berkeley Extension. She earned her Masters of

Journalism from UC Berkeley and a BA from the University of Michigan. Jackie lives in Berkeley with her husband Larry. Their son Josh graduated from Berkeley High and Howard University and now lives and works in Washington DC. She was previously on the board of EWIP, a national organization for women in publishing.

## BCF Scholars 2008–2015

BCF scholars come from a variety of backgrounds, reflecting Berkeley's diversity. Since 2008, BCF has awarded more than \$2.25 million to 141 High Hopes Scholars.



## Scholarships

- 96 active scholars (as of June 2015)
- 90% college graduation/persistence rate
- 73% of scholars from families earning less than \$50K annually
- 28% of scholars from families earning less than \$20K annually
- 90% first-generation college students

## CONGRATULATIONS!

### High Hopes Graduates

**Xochitl Bennett** (2011)  
Xavier University, Psychology  
**Itzel Duran** (2011)  
UC Berkeley, Public Health  
**Eric Jung** (2011)  
UC Berkeley, Integrative Biology  
**Muhammad Khan** (2011)  
UCLA, Linguistics  
**Fernanda Manriquez** (2011)  
UC Santa Cruz, Psychology

**Leticia Monroy** (2011)  
UC Berkeley, Social Welfare

**Evan Neff** (2011)  
UC Santa Cruz, Film & Digital Media

**Neha Pal** (2011)  
UC Davis, Biological Sciences

**Fatima Rodriguez Ortiz** (2010)  
UC Santa Cruz, Sociology and Latino & Latin American Studies

**Ilse Rueda** (2011)  
SF State, Child & Adolescent Development

**Luis Flores** (2010)  
UC Berkeley, Ethnic Studies

**Jasmin Sanchez** (2011)  
UC Irvine, Civil Engineering

