



**The Breeze**  
University Section Club, Inc., Berkeley, CA  
Fall 2022  
Website: <https://www.sectionclub.org>



## President's Message

I have to admit that when I woke up on Wednesday, September 21, and saw a rain forecast for the morning, I felt somewhat depressed. I expected that few members and guests would show up for our Fall Reception at the Brazilian Room because of the anticipated rain. As it turned out, our members and guests were not deterred by the rain forecast. They wanted to come, and, in fact, many people arrived very early. Miracle of miracles, we had partly cloudy weather that turned into sunshine.

The **Fall Reception** was a fantastic success with about 150 members and guests arriving for food, chatting, sign-ups, and meeting our **special guests from I-House and the YWCA**. We had a team of about 35 people who brought food, helped us to set up chairs and tables, greeted our members and guests, signed members for Activity sections, and helped with clean-up. The team included the husbands or friends of members, several of whom worked all day to ensure the success of the event. The Board undertook much of the behind-the-scenes responsibilities—planning the layout of chairs and tables, checking lists of members and newcomers for accuracy, accounting for dues and donations made, and recruiting hostesses to greet everyone. I could not have coordinated this team without the heavy lifting done by **our marvelous Lucia Falcone** who took care of everything pertaining to food. I give a special thanks to her.

In addition to the busy Sections publicizing their amazing array of activities and signing up members during the event, the Fall Reception will be remembered for its focus on the Club's philanthropy. Back in 1996 a number of forward-looking members decided to start an endowment at International House to provide scholarships to graduate students at UC Berkeley. The endowment steadily grew with the help of donations from Section Club members and excellent investments made first by the University and then I-House. Each year I-House chooses a student recipient supported by our endowment.

Our scholarship recipient this year, **Prashant Sharma**, joined us for the Fall Reception. During a Question-and-Answer period, a highlight of the luncheon, he thanked us for all of our support for his education. He told us about coming from a small town in Nepal where both of his parents are public school teachers. Receiving need-based financial aid after high school, he studied for his B.A. degree at New York University which has a campus in Abu Dhabi. He is now at Berkeley working on a Master's degree in Information Management and Systems with an emphasis on Data Science. We wish him well during his time at Cal.

This is only one of many examples of the Club's dedication to students. This past summer, the Club fulfilled many requests for Student Grants and monetary help from the Elberg Fund. The Club's endowment for undergraduate students continues to grow.

I have received many kind and supportive emails from you. Thank you all.

With best wishes to you and your families,  
**Laurie Wu McClain**



*I-House scholarship recipient Prashant Sharma, and Section Club President Laurie Wu McClain.*



**Thank you note to Section Club from Prashant Sharma, I-House Scholarship recipient:** *"I am writing to express my sincere gratitude to you for making the I-House scholarship possible. I am a graduate student at the School of Information. The financial assistance you provided will be of great help to me in paying my educational expenses, and it will allow me to focus on studying. Thank you again for your kindness and generosity. I would like to promise you that I will make best use of resources available here at Berkeley and will give back to others to pay it forward."*

**Pictures from the Fall Reception and Section Sign-up at the Brazilian Room in Tilden Park, Sept. 21, 2022**



## Student Philanthropies

### Student Grants – Merit Awards

~ Sonja Marken Vélez and Denise Melis, Co-Directors at Large

Last year grants up to \$1,500 were awarded for a total of \$18,600. This year, from August 1st to now, five grants for a total of \$7,000 were approved by the Student Grants Committee. To be considered, students must be in good academic standing, with a medical or financial emergency or facing unexpected expenses to complete their degrees. We want to thank the Section Club members for their kind donations that make these grants possible.

The following is a thank-you note from one of our grant recipients:

*I am writing to thank you for your generous \$1,500 grant. I was very happy and appreciative to learn that this grant had been approved. This grant has brought me immense relief as it will help ease my financial situation with medical and academic expenses.*

*I am a first-gen, 4th-year transfer from South Los Angeles. I am part of the campus Latinx, DSP, EOP and LGBTQ communities. I am pursuing a B.A. in American Studies with a minor in Education. I am currently a College Corps Fellow in the K-12 education cohort.*

*Thank you for your generosity and commitment to assisting students like me to pursue their academic goals at Cal. By awarding me this grant, you have lightened my financial burden, which allows me to focus more on my academic journey this Fall. Your generosity has inspired me to help others and give back to the community. I hope one day I will be able to help students achieve their goals just as you have helped me.*

**Donations to our student philanthropies** (Student Grants - Merit Awards; SOS - Services Offered Students Projects Fund or Sylvia Elberg Memorial Fund Emergency Grants; I-House Scholarship Endowment or Endowment for Undergraduate Scholarships) are always gratefully accepted. You may make your tax deductible donation payable to University Section Club, Inc. and mail to:

Julia Wenk, Treasurer,  
University Section Club, or  
pay electronically through  
Cheddar Up  
<https://section-club-annual-dues-and-donations.cheddarup.com>

If you have questions,  
please contact Treasurer  
Julia Wenk,

### Services Offered Students (S.O.S.)

~ Trish Hare and Dorothy Kaplan, Co-Directors at Large

**S.O.S.** manages the **Sylvia Elberg Memorial Fund** which provides grants of up to \$1,000 to aid a student having an unanticipated, non-recurring financial emergency. This fund was established many years ago with a donation from Professor Sanford Elberg, Dean of the Graduate Division, to honor the memory of his wife Sylvia Elberg who was devoted to helping UCB students. To this day, her son, Graeme, continues to send support to the fund and often writes, "Remembered with great love and missed every day."

**During the 2021-22 academic year we awarded 23 grants totaling \$22,000.** Many requests this term went to undocumented students needing funds at the end of the school year and through the summer.

One student wrote: *"Being undocumented made it more difficult to secure financial aid, despite generous state laws. This grant will ensure that I do not have to skip meals during the Holiday Break and that I won't be homeless in the New Year, having previously experienced those realities."*



Another wrote: *"I am humbled to be deemed deserving of such aid. Your assistance will greatly ease the financial burden on my family. Emergency medical problems can devastate a family, but organizations like yours are a lifeline."*



The **S.O.S. Fall Business Meeting** will be on Wednesday, October 26, 2022, at 10 a.m. on Zoom. Our speakers are from the **Underground Scholars Program**. Azadeh Zohrabi, Executive Director, pictured on the left, and Daniella Medina, Associate Director, pictured on the right, will give us an overview of what is involved in creating a pathway for incarcerated, formerly incarcerated, and system-impacted individuals into higher education and how they are building a prison-to-school pipeline through recruitment, retention,



and advocacy. For the first time, the state is providing funding to the program. *All Section Club members are invited to attend and a Zoom link will be sent out near the date.*

**At our spring meeting on April 11, 2023**, we will consider requests from our campus liaisons for a project or for equipment suitable for groups of students. Our liaisons are from The Centers for Educational Equity and Excellence (CE3), Disabled Students' Program, University Health Services, and University Village (Family Housing).

Thanks to everyone who made donations to **S.O.S.** and the **Elberg Memorial Fund** along with their dues this year!

### Membership Notes

~ *Geneviève Boissier-Dreyfus, Director at Large*

At the Fall Business meeting last month, I reported 111 dues paying members, and as of October 1<sup>st</sup> I can report 111 more for a total of **222** members! That's the biggest jump, from one meeting to another, I can remember since I have been Membership Chair, thanks to you!

Maybe it is because we feel like the pandemic is somewhat behind us and it is fun to meet again in person? Or, because you responded in great number to my call for you to invite your family, friends, and neighbors to join us? Whatever the reason, the numbers speak for themselves: we have now at least 24 Newcomers with more pending and several members rejoined. Thank you for your efforts!

### Club-wide Events 2022-2023

**S.O.S. Fall Meeting** via Zoom, Wed., Oct. 26, 10 am - 12 pm. All members are invited to learn how Cal students are helped through our grants and project funding.

**Beehive Luncheon & Auction!** Tue., Feb. 28, 11 – 2:30 pm at Unitarian Church, Kensington.

**Inter-campus Open House**, Thurs., Mar. 30. UC Merced Campus.

**S.O.S. Spring Meeting**, Tue., April 11, 10 -12 pm. We review project requests from campus groups and decide on funding. All members welcome.

**Annual Meeting**, Mon., May 8, 9:30 – 12 pm. Location TBD. Representatives from all the sections share highlights from the year. Members are invited to vote on the proposed 2023/2024 budget and slate of officers. We honor outgoing Board members and welcome the new.

On a lovely fall day, the Board and Section Chairs gathered to meet with **Brenda Drake**, the wife of UC President Michael Drake, at the Women's Faculty Club. We enjoyed a luncheon of roasted vegetables, chicken and lasagna. After lunch Section Club President Laurie Wu McClain engaged Mrs. Drake in a conversation which helped us learn more about Mrs. Drake's childhood in Berkeley, college years at Stanford where she met her future husband, law school at Berkeley, her career in law and with non-profit organizations, their two sons and their families, and even a recent bicycle trip in Italy! It was a convivial day all-around! *[Editor's note: no club funds were used to pay for the luncheon.]*





## More pictures from the Fall Reception and Section Sign-up



### *In Memoriam*



We extend our sympathy to **Heidi Hartman** on the death of her husband Ray, and to **Joyce Arnon** on the death of her husband Steve.

**Heidi Coffin** - was a member of German Section and she coordinated the Beehive luncheon one year. Traudel Prussin writes: "Heidi was a wonderful person and friend. Everybody loved and respected her. She had a positive outlook on life, was very upbeat even in difficult situations and she had a wonderful sense of humor. She was a dear friend and will be thoroughly missed by all." Heidi died in August 2022.

