



The Breeze
University Section Club, Inc., Berkeley, CA
Winter 2023

Website: <https://www.sectionclub.org>

Editor: Mary-Ellis Adams



President Laurie Wu McClain

President's Message

Like many of you, I joined the Section Club for opportunities to meet new people and participate in a variety of activities. I started out with Bon Appétit and eventually joined the Book Discussion Section. Frankly, I had little understanding of the Section Club as a whole, and it took some time for me to appreciate what the Club does that benefits the Berkeley campus of the University of California. Now as President of the Club, I cannot help but admire what our earlier members did to link the Club with an enduring support of Cal students.

One of our fundraising efforts during the 1990s and early 2000s went toward endowing two impressive scholarships—one for needy undergraduates and the other for international scholars living at Berkeley's International House. These scholarships are not the only way the Club benefits students, for throughout the year, we have been giving emergency grants to Cal students. Through the Student Grants program chaired by Sonja Marken-Vélez and Denise Melis, the Section Club awards grants based on merit, usually to students close to graduation. Our S.O.S. (Services Offered Students) program led by Dorothy Kaplan and Trish Hare manages the Sylvia Elberg Memorial Fund dedicated to helping students who face unexpected, non-recurring medical, financial, or other emergencies. All grants must be approved by committees of Section Club members.

We heard from one of our International House scholarship recipients last September during our Fall Reception. Our current undergraduate recipient, Seohyeong Lee, sent us a beautifully written, lengthy "thank you," quoted in part below:

"I want to say a big thank you for supporting me financially throughout this journey. It has definitely been tough for the past few years, especially with my dad's business. My mother had to start working part-time as a waitress even though she had recently gone through major heart surgery. As their only daughter, I didn't know where and how to support my family. This aid has relieved so much burden off of my shoulders while studying here at Berkeley. This scholarship means that I could truly study what I am passionate about without being pressured by financial problems. It has made me a happier student and daughter. Thank you so much for your help."

One of our members was so moved by the heartfelt gratitude expressed in Seohyeong Lee's letter that the member told me how proud she was that it was our Club which had provided Ms. Lee with the financial basis to attend Berkeley.

We can perpetuate the Section Club's funding of Cal students with support of the **Beehive, our two-part fundraiser**. There will be an **online silent auction in February** where members will have a chance to bid on vacation home rentals and experiences such as special dinners, tickets to concerts, or garden tours. My husband and I purchased tickets for a delicious Italian lunch and a very enjoyable concert through the online auction last year. On **Tuesday, February 28**, the Beehive will bring us together *in-person* for lunch, raffles, and sales of quality items at the Unitarian Universalist Church of Berkeley. All proceeds from sales will be divided between Student Grants and S.O.S. **I appreciate all of the hard work that Beehive Co-Chairs Holly Hartley and Dorothy Kaplan and their committee have done to ensure that our members have a wonderful time at this event. Many thanks to all on the Beehive Committee!**

With best wishes to you and your families,

Laurie



Club-wide Events 2022-2023

Beehive Luncheon & Auction! Tue., Feb. 28, 11 – 2:00 pm at Unitarian Church, Kensington. More info on page 8.

Intercampus Open House, Tues., Mar. 28, UC Merced Campus. More info on page 5.

S.O.S. Spring Meeting, Wed., April 26, 10 – 12 pm on Zoom. 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.

Student Philanthropies

Services Offered Students (S.O.S.) and Elberg Grants - Trish Hare and Dorothy Kaplan, Co-Chairs

At our Fall meeting on Zoom, we heard from two staff members in the **Underground Scholars Program**. This program creates a pathway for incarcerated and formerly incarcerated individuals into higher education. Executive Director Azadeh Zohrabi, JD, has been with the program for two years. She has a law degree and has extensive experience in public policy, leadership development, community organizing, and management. Azadeh was incarcerated in an Immigrant Detention Center after fleeing Iran with her family. Besides being the program director, she is also the Statewide Coordinator for Underground Scholars, which recently received \$4 million in state funding to provide full-time staff and support to replicate the Underground Scholars program at all U.C. campuses.

Associate Director Daniela Medina earned both her MSW (Masters of Social Work) and BA in Social Welfare from UC Berkeley. Daniela was released from incarceration in 2014 and was in the first cohort of approximately 10 students that transferred and created the program at UC Berkeley. Daniela also hosts the Underground Scholars podcast: On the Tier, which gave Dorothy and Trish an even closer view of the excellent work of Azadeh and Daniela.

The program was originally started as a grassroots group of Cal students who were previously incarcerated. They designed a strong program that was based on recruitment, retention, and advocacy. They have won the Chancellor's Award for Public Service several times for building the prison-to-school pipeline. There are currently approximately 100 Underground Scholars at Berkeley. Of all the Underground Scholars accepted into the UC system, 95% graduate and 50% of those attend graduate programs.

Dorothy, Sonja, Denise, and Trish visited their campus space and were extremely impressed with the comfortable and inviting community they have built.

Both speakers stated how helpful and beneficial the Elberg Grants are as they do not impact the students' campus support. The Section Club has provided medical and dental emergency funding to students in the program for situations that are not covered by student health services.

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,

or pay electronically through Cheddar Up <https://section-club-annual-dues-and-donations.cheddarup.com>

If you have questions, please contact Treasurer Julia Wenk,

Elberg Fund Update

The Elberg Fund awarded \$17,750 in grants from July 1st through December 31st. Most of the student requests are for our maximum of \$1,000, showing that students' emergency needs are rising as the recession hits everyone.

A special thanks to our membership for your continued support and donations. The Elberg Fund received nearly \$8,000 in donations from our members included with dues. Even Sylvia Elberg's son, Graeme, sent a donation! Often our grants are the lifeline between keeping the student enrolled or dropping out. Please continue to keep Section Club in mind when making your charitable contributions. If you require information or an address, please contact our Treasurer Julia Wenk.

S.O.S. Spring Business Meeting

The S.O.S. Spring Business Meeting will be on **Wednesday, April 26, 10 to 12 noon on Zoom**. At this meeting we will vote on proposals from our campus programs. Annually, these programs seek grants to fund special equipment or to start a new project. This meeting is open to all Section Club members and we urge you to attend in order to become better acquainted with the philanthropic side of the Club. If you are interested in becoming involved in the S.O.S. program, please contact either of the co-chairs: Trish Hare and Dorothy Kaplan.

Student Grants – *Denise Melis and Sonja Marken-Vélez, Co-Chairs*

Since our last report we have given out four more grants: Three for \$1,500 and one for \$1,200 for a total of \$5,700. One is a first-generation sophomore with a strong 3.49 GPA pursuing a major in Business. The student is the oldest of eight, comes from a low-income background, and has experienced housing insecurity in the last few months.

Another grantee is a senior economics and journalism student with a 3.1 GPA who will be in her fifth year. She successfully completed the first three years until she suffered from health problems that made her unable to continue. She was forced to postpone her college career, and without financial aid, she was worried she wouldn't be able to re-register. She was struggling to find ways to return to Cal and finish her last handful of classes.

The third one is a U.S. citizen but was born and grew up in Ukraine where her family still lives. She is a first-generation, low-income, senior transfer student with a 3.49 GPA. Her academic journey has been filled with obstacles over the past year. In the Spring 2022 semester when the war in Ukraine began, she was unable to finish some courses. However, she has finished retaking those courses or is close to finishing, and she is on track to do very well in each course.

The fourth student is a transfer student with a 3.44 GPA. He is disabled and a student parent majoring in Molecular and Cell Biology. He has been accepted to Johns Hopkins University to continue his education and receive his Master's degree.

Here is the thank-you note from the Ukrainian student:

I am deeply grateful to have been approved for this grant. I truly appreciate the opportunities like this grant which provide relief and hope to students with an immediate need. With this funding, I will be able to stay on track with rent, feel more at ease about paying for food, and rebuild my savings for the upcoming months. Thank you for providing such direct support to the student community!

The Student Grants Committee is very grateful to all of you who made donations. We *do* make a difference in the lives of these students!

**Intercampus Open House at UC Merced,
Tuesday, March 28.**

Enjoy speakers, campus tours, and lunch with people from other UC support groups like ours. Sign-up at The Beehive or you may contact Andrea Lanzafame Campos. You will be given a list of others who plan to attend and may arrange transportation among yourselves.



In Memoriam



- ❖ **Nina (Antonina) Carpenter** died in October. She was a longtime member of Italian Section.
- ❖ Our condolences go out to Margie Sauer on the death of her husband, **Ken Sauer**, in November.

If you would like to make a donation in honor or memory of a Section Club member, the information is on page 3.

Section Reports

Bon Appétit

In the pictures below, Bon Appétit members enjoy a delicious Moroccan meal at Mary Heller's home. Want to enjoy great conversation while eating delicious home cooked food? Come join us. *Contact Mary Heller for more information.*



Italian

At the invitation of member Terry De Luca Schooler, the Italian Section celebrated Christmas at the Town and Gown Club. The program was the sharing of holiday memories by several of our Italian-born members, as well as the telling of the story of La Befana (the kitchen witch who brings children treats on the morning of the Epiphany). A sumptuous lunch was provided by Section members.



Sew and So

Sew and So has been meeting successfully in members' homes. Although we are a small group, getting together once a month is an enjoyable, restful two hours spent gossiping, picking up old or new projects, or just checking in with each other. We share a cup of tea and cookies. In December we met at the Richards' home and it was all decked out with holiday cheer.

If you would like to experience a low-key section, even if you don't have a project to work on, we invite you to visit. ~ *Dorothy Kaplan*.

Tennis & Pickleball

Tennis vs. Pickleball? Is that up for discussion? Tennis Section has been successfully meeting during the fall at the Channing courts which UC Rec Sports reserves for us. We are serious about our tennis, but sometimes we take time out for a birthday celebration.

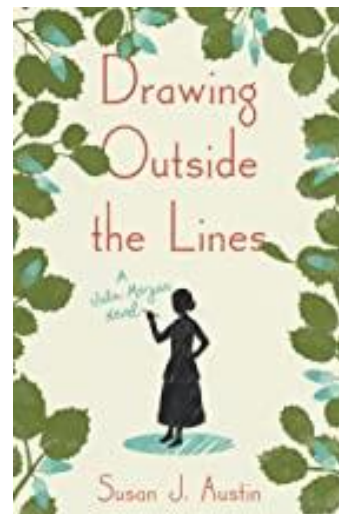
The newest Section, Pickleball, is meeting once a week on the City of Berkeley's courts. All of us were new to the sport, but with patience and encouragement members are improving each time. Pickleball is different from tennis as one plays on a small court with a paddle and a plastic ball with holes. It is more like playing ping-pong. We invite you to give Pickleball a try and decide for yourself! ~ *Dorothy Kaplan*.



Writers' Workshop

With anywhere from 12 to 20 members in attendance, members of the Writers' Workshop have met in person every month since October to share, discuss, and enjoy our members' array of writing projects, ranging from poems, responses to writing prompts, or chapters from books-in-progress. Our two subgroups composed of fiction and non-fiction writers have also continued to meet for more in-depth reading and discussion of current work. *(Continued on next page)*

Writers' Workshop also had the privilege of celebrating the publication of Susan Austin's latest book, *Drawing Outside the Lines: A Julia Morgan Novel*. [Editor's note: *I read the book over the holidays and it is a complete delight! You can find it on Amazon.*]



The Beehive is coming, the Beehive is coming!

Last experienced in-person in 2020, the Beehive will be back in February 2023! We'll kickstart it on **February 10 and 11 with an online Silent Auction** of specially chosen items: vacation homes, shared experiences, and gift certificates.

The **in-person Beehive will take place on February 28** at the Unitarian Universalist Church, Kensington. Expect camaraderie, a delicious lunch, wine, raffle baskets, jewelry, homemade goodies, treasures, and more silent auction items. The luncheon registration form will be sent by email in January.

Mark Your Calendars!

February 10 and 11 - Online Silent Auction

February 28 - In-person Beehive

Holly Hartley and Dorothy Kaplan, Co-chairs