

The California Tech

Volume CVI, Number 26 Pasadena, California May 9, 2005

Hollywood Hit Again

Hollywood had not been hit since May of 1987. That was when, for Hollywood's 100th anniversary, Caltech students altered the Hollywood sign to read "Caltech" instead of "Hollywood."

Since then, the Arclight Dome, the Capitol Records building and other prime targets to the West have sung their siren song to pranksters, some of whom have even thought up and started various plans but never executed them. Years ago, one party attempted to bring a hot-dog cart and excavate underneath it, but that plan fell through.

In planning this new caper we discarded several ideas despite their initial appeal: we thought about trying to prank the Oscars but realized that it would be easier to clean out Fort Knox than to smuggle a disposable camera into the Oscars; we considered fixing up the "City of South Pasadena" sign but realized that changing a couple of rocks by a freeway insufficiently epic.

Similarly, when we were looking for a senior prank to pull, we too thought about Hollywood, specifically about the stars, not J. Lo, Sean Connery or even Johnny Depp, but the pretty red-whitepink stars with gold lettering on Hollywood Boulevard.

We started by crafting about 600 pieces of adhesive paper about the size and shape of bumper stickers. We color-matched them as best we could to the stars and wrote on them names of famous scientists: old dead folks like Galileo and Van der Walls, Caltech faculty like Baltimore and Thorne and people who fit both categories like Feynman. We even included a couple living worthies from outside Caltech, though we censored all MIT faculty from he list.

The final turnout, 20 drivers and about 80 Techers, blew my mind. We had people from all eight houses, every class, every division and, as we learned later, ages seventeen and upward. After a Herculean logistical effort, we all headed out promptly at 2:22 AM, Wednesday morning to hit the Boulevard.

On our way, we congratulated ourselves on our organization and prophesied that all would go well and no one would get arrested. Then Joe Wasem and I got a distressing call from one of our pranksters, informing us that they the keep-Hollywood-beautiful-street-cleaning-patrol were cleaning the stars with power-

Photo by Bob Paz A pedestrian ambles over Feynman's new star on the Hollywood walk of fame

washers, which would obliterate our poor, beautiful, intentionally easy to remove stickers. Reponding quickly, we called the other groups to tell them to wait for half an hour. As eighty Techers innocently milled around Hollywood Boulevard from 3:00 to 3:30, no one suspected what was about to happen. Probably the only people who noticed us were the bums and prostitutes who, in general, are not in a state of mind to pay attention or care.

3:30 was green light time, and everyone went. Everything was beautiful. When we wandered around at 4am, we found incredibly few holes in large part thanks to Abe's scouting earlier in the day, which saved us a nightmare and a half. We touched up the multi-liners by adding an extra Caltech sticker. We observed with joy little Beaver stickers, Caltech emblems and revered faculty members's names. Techers trotted gaily up and down the walk,

photographing themselves with stars. Non-Techers exclaimed loudly enough to be heard from a block away, "What The Hell?!" All was beautiful and right in the world. The prank had gone amazingly well.

And then we got the call, the "uh, so, some kids are sort of, uh, getting arrested" call. The placement of the last sticker to be put down, one rescued from the firehydrant powered super-washers, drew the notice of one of LA's fin-

est. And this officer, in his black unmarked police-mobile, decided to arrest our folks. We got another seven calls as we walked the two blocks to find a group of four police officers standing there on the corner of Hollywood and Highland and a group of four Techers, handcuffed with faces pressed against a grate.

Upon arrival, we explained to Mr. Officer, Sir, how we had carefully designed the stickers for ease of removal, how we intended them as a good natured joke, how we did not plan on cleaning them up ourselves, how they just blow off under the pressure jets, as we had noticed much to our chagrin just an hour earlier, how we had watched the street sweeper come and sweep them just moments later. But Mr. Sergeant, Sir, did not appreciate our explanation, instead preferring to give us a lecture on what a prank was, to which we obediently listened while periodically turning to look over at our poor friends who were having an affair with the grate of the third window down on the Southwest corner of Hollywood and Highland. We would soon get to have a similar affair with the grate of the second window down while we got detained and nearly arrested. The arresting officer was quite amenable and said he would try to get them off without charges. Officer Adkans, if you are reading this, we love you.

He proved true to his word when the city filed no vandalism charges and only one person, Mike Inadomi, 17, got charged with staying outdoors just a couple minutes past the 10pm curfew. Apparently, his folks took it pretty well: his mom picked him up at 6:00 in the morning, bringing the police officers donuts and a video camera. After all, she wanted to catch her son's first words, first birthday, first date and first arrest.

So, it went pretty well. We intentionally avoided media coverage for fear it might turn into a fiasco while the kids were still in jail. the whole Billy Cottrell affair is still a vivid memory. I think the vast majority of the people involved had a good time and took a bunch of amusing pictures, which I plan to post on a website within the next week or two. For completeness, if you took pictures and put them on a website instead of sending them to me, send the website to me.

And, to the planners of the next prank, perhaps MIT might like that eye-sore trailer near Throop Pond.

Writers to Gather, Natter at Words Matter

By CHRISTINE CHANG

Often, one of the most difficult tasks for scientists is to communicate their research to the general public in a comprehensible manner, an issue they meet each year to address at the Science Writing Symposium sponsored by Words Matter. The Third Annual Science Writing Symposium will occur on Monday May 16 at 8 PM in Sharp Auditorium in 155 Arms Laboratory.

"It is important for people to

understand the potential of science and appreciate what people are doing," said Steve Youra, Director of the Hixon Writing Center and Chair of the Words Matter Program.

The Third Appual Science

The Third Annual Science Writing Symposium will feature a panel consisting of Professor Christof Koch, author Leonard Mlodinow, and Margaret Wertheim.

Koch, a Caltech Professor of

Cognitive and Behavioral Biology and Executive Officer for Computation and Neural Systems, has authored numerous scientific papers and several books. During the symposium, he will speak of his experience as a scientist writing for the general public who does not need to write books for a living.

"I hope that it will inspire at least some students to take up the important role of public communicator, to explain why doing science is so enjoyable," said Koch.

Mlodinow, a former Caltech faculty member, has written various books including Euclid's Window and Feynman's Rainbow, which is about his time at Caltech and his interaction with Feynman. Working with Stephen Hawking, Mlodinow has coauthored the upcoming book A Briefer History of Time. In addition to books, Mlodinow has also written for

television, including scripts of Star Trek: The Next Generation, and has helped develop computer games.

Wertheim has written pieces for such notable publications as The New York Times, The Guardian, Wired and Vogue, along with television documentaries and three books. Her "Quark Soup" column appears in every issue of in the LA Weekly. She even founded the Institute for Figuring, which works on creatively presenting science to the public audience.

Starting three years ago, the symposium has exposed students to the challenge and to methods

Continued on Page 4, Column 1

Scurves Piss on, Honor Grand Old Hovse Tradition

By ADAM CRAIG

05/09/05-The Dabney Hovse courtyard erupted in song this Sunday night, a little after 2200 hours. A band of swaggering, swaying, snarling, warbling scurves belted out hoary old Ricketts favorites like "Sing a Song of Sixty-Nine" and "Oh Say Tan You See." Dabnebian extremist cells attacked the boistrous expedition with garden hoses and spare fire extinguishers, but the Scurves rallied, counterattacked, commandeered their enemies' weapons and kept singing all the while. Thus passed the opening skirmish of Polish Constitution Day Eve, a celebration of the independence of the independence of one of Europe's most dependent nations. Scurves will travel to other houses throughout the week, spreading joy and reverse paristalsis wherever they go. The Ricketts social team has prepared a tentative schedule that will include

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I think that phrase might be losing its cachet...

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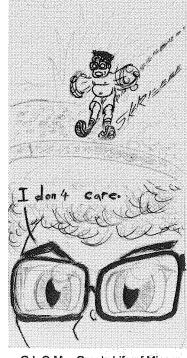
Page, Measuring Ruddock's Windows, Counting Flems, Bowling with Lloydies, Whack-A-Mole, the Saturday Polack Contest and a special surprise for Avery's PCDE as a hovse.

Why Issac Does Not Illustrate His Own Comics by Issac Garcia Munoz INCODEMAYO IVIVA MEXICO

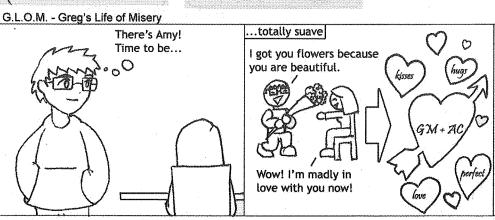
To celebrate Cinco de Mayo (when the Mexicans defeated the French at Puebla) Mexicans and gringos now drink cheap Mexican beer until it defeates their livers.

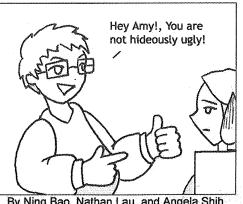












By Ning Bao, Nathan Lau, and Angela Shih

Sleep Deprivation

By JEFFREY PHILLIPS

A common tool of unsavory military regimes for torture and brainwashing, sleep deprivation is a fixture of Tech. When forced to choose between work, play and sleep, students jettison the last first. Many profs do their best to accommodate our sun-shunning by scheduling review sessions late in the evenings. This term I am going to classes at nine in the morning for the first time in over less than six hours of sleep in a given weeknight, and the consequences of our nocturnal remis-

sion deserves consideration. As any kid on a sleepover can vouch, the initial stages of sleep deprivation are salutary. As focus loosens, so do some creative restraints. Jokes are funnier; ideas are wilder; the world takes on a rosy hue. The eyes dry out but no matter. This is the sweet spot of recreational sleep deprivation typical to Techers. The student in Blacker House plugging a diode into a the wall at 4:00AM, has probably not slept in a while and is loving it.

Prolonged sleep deprivation results in less enjoyable effects. If you have stayed up an entire night after a long day of classes to finish up a homework set and are now struggling through the last few problems so you can rush to turn it in, in place of that bouncy feeling from being a little tired is a pounding head, blurring vision,

dropping core temperature.

The morning sun shines on a numbed world. You have gone hours without eating. If you crash, you will stay down for hours. For the sake of your waking stomach, grab some breakfast from the Red Door. If you hate CDS food like I do, do yourself a favor and walk to Winchel's or McDonald's for a box of doughnuts or a McGrid-

There is little any one of us, the administration included, to combat our collective insomnia. That is not necessarily a bad

thing, though. Sleep deprivation for fun and profit is an integral part of the Techer way of life, and most of the time it is our own fault by choice or consequence of poor planning. It is a lesson in time management as well as training for all those sleepless nights guaranteed in our lives as scientists or as professionals and especially as



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...dead chicks can't say no.

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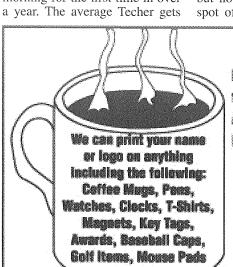
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The Sweeter Side of Cell Signaling: O-GlcNAc Glycosylation in the Brain

The third and final 2004-2005 Everhart Lecture, "The Sweeter Side of Cell Signaling: O-GlcNAc Glycosylation in the Brain," will be given by Nelly Khidekel, a Caltech graduate student in Chemistry. The lecture will be held in 101 Guggenheim (Lees-Kubota Lecture Hall) on Thursday, May 5 at 4 p.m. Refreshments will be served at 3:45 p.m. For more information on the lectures, see www.its.caltech.edu/ ~els. Sponsored by the Graduate Student Council, the Graduate Office, Campus Life, and Graduate Housing.

Abstract:

Fewer than 30,000 genes orchestrate the workings of human cells. These genes encode the proteins which conduct the myriad activities necessary for life.

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Chemical modifications of these proteins play a critical role in regulating their cellular functions. We study one such modification, known as O-GlcNAc glycosylation. The addition of this single sugar, beta-N-acetylglucosamine (GlcNAc), to proteins has been linked to nutrient sensing and gene expression. Moreover, the enzyme that transfers the sugar is abundant in the brain, and the modification has been linked to neurodegenerative disease. Understanding this dynamic modification has been hampered by the difficulty in detecting it. To address this challenge, we developed a strategy which incorporates a mutant enzyme and unnatural substrate for rapid and sensitive detection of O-GlcNAc-modified proteins. Coupling our approach to mass spectrometry yielded the first direct, wide-scale identification of O-GlcNAc proteins in the brain. Our studies have identified O-GlcNAc on proteins associated with neurotransmitter release and the formation of nerve cell structures important for learning and memory. Currently, we are investigating the dynamic regulation of O-GlcNAc in the brain in an attempt to understand its role in nerve cell function and neurodegeneration.

PACIFIC SERENADES WORLD **PREMIERES NEW WORK BY** MIGUEL DEL **AGUILA**

Noted Chamber Music Ensemble Also Performs Mozart and Poulenc in Final Program of 19th Season

Saturday, May 21, 8 p.m., private home, Brentwood Sunday, May 22, 4 p.m., Neighborhood Church in Pasadena Tuesday, May 24, 8 p.m., UCLA Faculty Center, Westwood

The world premiere of Miguel del Aquila's Latin Love, a new work for wind quintet and piano, is presented by Pacific Serenades in the final series of its 19th season beginning Saturday, May 21, 8 p.m., at the Brentwood home of Bonnie MacBird and Alan Kay. The program, which also includes Mozart's Quintet in Eb major, K. 452 for oboe, clarinet, bassoon, horn and piano and Poulenc's

Sextet for wind quintet and piano, will be repeated on Sunday, May 22, 4 p.m., at the Neighborhood Church in Pasadena and on Tuesday, May 24, 8 p.m., at the UCLA Faculty Center in Westwood. Titled "Music, when soft voices die, vibrates in the memory" (Percy Bysshe Shelley), the series features Pacific Serenades Founder/ Artistic Director Mark Carlson, flute, Allan Vogel, oboe, Gary Gray, clarinet, Judith Farmer, bassoon, Brian O' Connor, horn, and Ayke Agus, piano.

"Miguel del Aguila's lively new work is based on Latin American dance rhythms reminiscent of his native land, Uruguay," says Carlson. "We have teamed it with one of Mozart's greatest works and Poulenc's most charming piece, making this program one of the season's most exciting.'

LOCATIONS/ **CONCERT** TICKET INFORMATION

Pacific Serenades concerts are supported in part by the Los Angeles County Arts Commission. Additional support comes from The Ahmanson Foundation, the Argosy Foundation, ASCAP, the California Arts Council, the Clarence E. Heller Foundation and Yamaha. The UCLA Faculty Center is located at 405 N. Hilgard Ave. (at Hilgard and Westholme), Westwood. The Pasadena Neighborhood Church is located at 301 N. Orange Grove Blvd., Pasa-

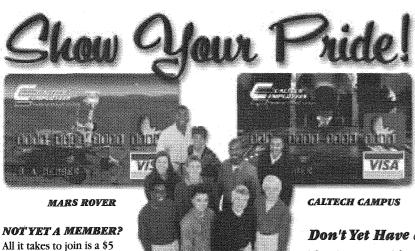
Tickets are \$29 for the Neighborhood Church and UCLA Faculty Center concerts and \$50 for the private home concerts. Student tickets are available (with valid I.D.) at the Neighborhood Church and UCLA concerts for \$5. All concerts are open to the public. For tickets and general information, call (213) 534-3434. www.pacser.org

Blitz Chess

The Caltech Chess Club will host its third annual blitz chess championship in the Page House Dining Hall from 8-10:45 PM on Friday, May 20. Participation is free and open to players of all skill levels in the Caltech community. There will be a \$400 guaranteed prize fund: \$200, \$100, \$50, and special prizes for novices (\$35, \$15). To play in the tournament, please contact club president Patrick Hummel (hummel@its. caltech.edu) or arrive 15 minutes early for the event.

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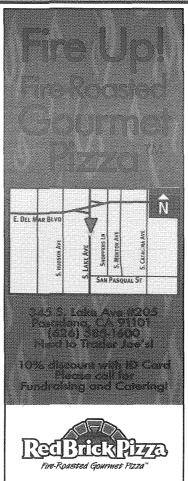
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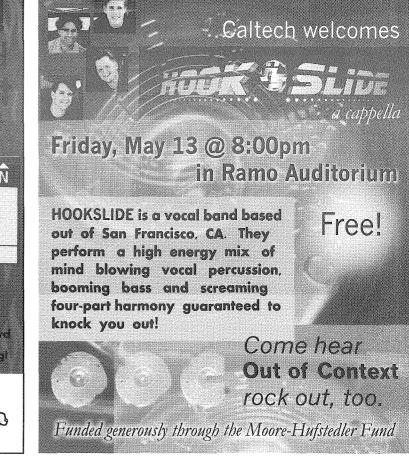
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Your Mail Follows All Possible Paths to Destination with New Feynmann Stamp

By DEBORAH WILLIAMS-HEDGES

Widely regarded as one of the most influential physicists of the 20th Century, Nobel laureate and Caltech professor Richard P. Feynman will be honored on a 2005 U.S. postage commemorative stamp. The stamp will be unveiled locally at a celebration on Friday, May 20, at 5 p.m. in Ramo Auditorium on the California Institute of Technology campus. The public is invited to attend this free event. Caltech will offer a limited-edition special commemorative envelope bearing the four stamps that compose the American Scientists series, and a special cancellation stamp from the Feynman Station at Caltech. Stamps and cachets, as well as Feynman books and memorabilia, will be available for purchase.

At 4 p.m. there will be a screening of the classic documentary featuring Feynman, The Pleasure of Finding Things Out, also in Ramo Auditorium. The program at 5 p.m. will highlight guest speakers, including Caltech physicists, the Pasadena postmaster, and Michelle Feynman, the daughter of Richard Feynman and editor of Perfectly Reasonable Deviations from the Beaten Track: The Letters of Richard P. Feynman.

The American Scientist series features the likenesses of four scientists: Nobel Prize-winning

Words, Schmords

Continued from Page 1, Column 1

of communicating technical information to the public. Previous symposia have included Caltech faculty Professor Kip Thorne and Vice Provost David Goodstein. This year's will consist of opening remarks from each of the panelists, followed by a debate session on issues raised in the opening remarks. Then, the audience will be able to ask questions. At the end, the audience will have time for refreshments and interaction with the speakers.

"Writing is one of the most critical abilities of the technical field and allows the public to understand possibilities and make sensible judgements," said Youra.

Words Matter, a committee President Baltimore formed to communicate the importance of writing, holds the symposium each year in order to provide a forum for discussions on science writing. Throughout the year, Words Matter brings notable writers, cartoonists and other personalities to campus to interact with students and faculty. The committee consists of Vice Provost David Goodstein, Associate Professor Kevin Gilmartin, Professor Jenijoy La Belle, Lecturer Judith Hall, Director Denise Nelson Nash and students Diana Lin and Nicholas Rupprecht.

Youra expects that the audience will enjoy this symposium as much as audiences in previous years have: "I hope that we have a good turnout, particularly of students, who may even be inspired by what they hear."

geneticist and 1930s Caltech postdoctoral scholar Barbara Mc-Clintock, mathematician John von Neumann, and thermodynamicist Josiah Willard Gibbs, along with Feynman. The American Scientist series will be issued this month.

"U.S. commemorative stamps portray individuals, subjects, and events that are instrumental to the American experience," says David Failor, executive director of stamp services for the U.S. Postal Service. For each stamp in this series of four, artist Victor Stabin has created a collage featuring a portrait of the scientist along with drawings that are associated with major contributions made by the scientist. Text on the back of the stamps highlights their achievements. The Feynman text says, "Richard P. Feynman (1918-1988) developed a new formulation of quantum theory based, in part, on diagrams he invented to help him visualize the dynamics of atomic particles. In 1965, this noted theoretical physicist, enthusiastic educator and amateur artist was awarded the Nobel Prize in Physics." The Feynman diagrams featured on the stamp represent the interaction between certain subatomic particles. Feynman diagrams, which helped to simplify calculations, are a fundamental of modern physics and are still in common use today.

Feynman's academic career at Caltech spanned almost 30 years. Friend and colleague Barry Barish, the Linde Professor of Physics and director of Caltech's Laser Interferometer Gravitational-Wave Observatory, who worked with Feynman for approximately 25

http://www.usps.com/communications/news/stamps/2004/sr04_076.htm

years at Caltech, says, "After Einstein, Dick Feynman was, perhaps, the smartest man of the 20th Century. He helped to reshape and reinvent methods of modern particle physics. His contributions to science were extremely significant and essential."

Perhaps Feynman's greatest legacy at Caltech was not only his pioneering research, but also his passion for teaching; Feynman was revered as a professor. He had an extraordinary ability to inspire and motivate his students, and to share his excitement about science and physics. His lively personality and fun-loving sense of humor were almost as renowned as his research. Feynman was an avid drummer, artist, and actor, and he had a great affinity for languages, even teaching himself Japanese, Portuguese, and Mayan. He was legendary for his colorful yet brilliant character.

In 1965 Feynman won the Nobel Prize in Physics for his work in the field of quantum electrodynamics. Feynman made major contributions to the development of the atomic bomb while at the Los Alamos National laboratory during his 20s. In 1986, at the request of President Reagan, he served on the committee to investigate the explosion of the space shuttle Challenger.

In February 1988, at the age of 69, Feynman died of cancer.

Vice-President Spreads Knowledge of Honor Code to All

Recently elected ASCIT Vice-President/BoC Chair, Michelle Wyatt is diving head first into her duties [no ending on prepositions]. She ran for the position because she believes a student with experience, a former BoC-rep, like herself, can run the BoC best. As BoC Chair, Michelle's current agenda entails rewriting the ASCIT by-laws with other BoD members, making professors, TAs and even undergraduates more aware of the Caltech Honor Code, and establishing a policy of [The physical act of communication is already possible with current modes of communication.] communication between the Graduate Review Board and the BoC.

The BoD met to rewrite bylaws on Friday May 6, 2005. Many of the expected by-law revisions serve to incorporate Avery as a house under the honor code with a BoC rep. Though Michelle believes Avery is too large an entity not to have rights, she does not believe Avery should become a house in the same way as the other houses. Part of the purpose of Avery was to provide housing without affiliation, a purpose that making it a completely exclusive house would defeat. Yet, she does feel that the many undergrads living in Avery deserve a BoC rep and other representatives in all facets of student government.

Michelle also believes students [The honor code itself is an abstract concept. It experiences neither benefits nor harm.] would

By MAYRA H. SHEIKH

benefit if professors were more aware of the honor code and its implications. Most Caltech professors understand what the honor code is and what its purpose is but not how to implement it. One problem is that professors often delineate collaboration policies too vaguely, a problem Michelle plans to solve by providing professors with a worksheet consisting of a series of questions about what the professor will allow: internet, math software, previous exams, previous textbooks, etc. In most cases, a professor can define a clear policy by going through the worksheet and allowing or disallowing each item. [If it is obvious enough that you can rightly say "clearly," it is too obvious to include.] By making policies explicit, BoC cases resulting from miscommunications will decrease. Also, undergrads and graduate students will benefit from having specific guidelines, because they will have a more consistent standard than their own varying senses of fairness.

Along with professors, graduate students must learn more about the honor code. Graduate students generally learn of the honor code at the end of grad orientation, by which time many grad students no longer attend the orientation meetings. To circumvent this problem, earlier orientation meetings can cover the honor code. Also, professors could require their TAs to attend the equivalent of freshman BoC

talks to prepare them for their positions of authority.

Cooperation between the GRB and the BoC could also help inform grad students. Though the bylaws have provisions for joint BoC and GRB cases involving both grad students and undergrads, they are weak and hazy enough that a student could make a statement to the GRB and a contradictory one to the BoC without getting caught. The ability to verify testimony will be one benefit of the communication channel between the GRB and BoC that Michelle has set out to forge.

Michelle also holds undergrads responsible for the implementation of the honor code. Though all undergrads receive honor code handbooks and attend BoC talks as freshmen, many misapprehend the details of the honor code or the standard operational procedure of the BoC. Michelle will solve this by adding additional, optional upperclassmen BoC talks with snacks as an incentive to attend. In these informal talks, experienced BoC reps will help acquaint the general student populace with the proceedings of the BoC by answering questions from the attendees.

[The last paragraph flows into the last sentence more smoothly this way.]]

With so many improvements in progress and so much dedication to the Honor Code, Michelle is racing against the limits of her term to complete her plans.

Architect Chosen for Annenberg IST Center

By JILL PERRY

The California Institute of Technology has selected the partnership of the Office of Metropolitan Architects (OMA) and Gruen Associates to design the new Walter and Leonore Annenberg Center for Information Science and Technology. OMA will lead the project and design the building. Joshua Ramus, OMA partner and head of its New York office, will lead the design team. Gruen Associates, which is based in Los Angeles, will provide executive architecture services.

OMA, led by Pritzker rize-winning architect, Rem Koolhaas, has designed a number of critically acclaimed buildings. Ramus and Koolhaas recently worked together on the Seattle Public Library and the Dallas Performing Arts Center's Dee and Charles Wyly Theatre.

Ramus, the Annenberg Center's principal in charge, has led the development of most of OMA's U.S. projects. He was project director for the design of the Guggenheim Las Vegas and its sister project, the Guggenheim-Hermitage Museum, both of which opened in 2001.

"We are delighted to have a design partner of the highest caliber in OMA. The combined intellect

of Rem Koolhaas and Joshua Ramus will help us realize the full potential of the physical vision for IST," said David Baltimore, president of Caltech. "I am confident that they will design a building that will encourage the effective exchange of ideas across academic disciplines."

Peter Schroder, professor of computer science and chairman of the Annenberg Center building committee noted, "OMAs approach to the design of a building is as exacting and thorough as our approach to science and engineering. We have a real meeting of the minds."

Gruen Associates also has numerous well-known buildings to its credit, including such Los Angeles-area projects as the Museum of Contemporary Art, the Los Angeles Convention Center renovation, and the Pacific Design Center.

Caltech will be represented on the project by Bonnie Khang-Keating, the Institute's head architect and director of the architecture and engineering department on campus.

The Walter and Leonore Annenberg Center for Information Science and Technology will

serve as the interdisciplinary home for IST at Caltech. IST brings together people from different academic backgrounds to work on challenging problems that share a common theme of information. It is the first activity of its kind in the nation organized at an institutional level.

IST has launched four new research centers to answer the. questions: What are the theoretical foundations of information? What are the fundamental physical limits to information? How does nature compute and communicate information? And how does information shape social systems? Other important questions will be pursued as IST evolves. A new information-oriented curriculum is being developed. Proernment, industry and community members are also planned for the new center.

Founded in 1989 by Walter H. Annenberg, the Annenberg Foundation exists to advance the public well-being through improved communication. As the principal means of achieving its goal, the foundation encourages the development of more effective ways to share ideas and knowledge.

The California Tech Caltech 40-58 Pasadena, CA 91125