

Faculty members and trustees offer congratulations



PHOTOS BY WILLIAM VASTR

## CLASS OF 2007

### BY THE NUMBERS

149 men

135 women

284 total Class of 2007 degrees awarded

## Salvation Classi MMVII

Armed with their new diplomas and words of wisdom from Los Angeles Mayor Antonio R. Villaraigosa, 284 students transitioned into the ranks of CMC alumni at the 60th annual Commencement ceremonies on May 12.

Faculty marshal Robert Valenza, the Dengler-Dykema Professor of Mathematics and the Humanities and recipient of the Glenn R. Huntoon Award for Superior Teaching, and student marshal Jonathan Strahl '07, valedictorian and Fulbright scholar, led the procession onto Pritzlaff Field. President Pamela Gann, who presided over the exercises and addressed the graduates, presented Mayor Villaraigosa, who delivered the commencement address, with an honorary doctor of laws degree, sponsored by Trustee Ray Remy '59 and Myra E. Moss, professor of philosophy/religious studies and government.

Villaraigosa urged the graduating class to be “leaders, achievers, dreamers, and also patriots, in the truest sense of the word,” in their lives beyond CMC.

Commencing into an era of “gargantuan consequences,” Villaraigosa recounted the graduates as a generation that came of age post Sept. 11—an era, described the mayor, marked by a divided political landscape, war in Iraq, escalating violence in the Sudanese region of Darfur, and concerns of climate change.

“An obligation we share,” Villaraigosa challenged, “is to create a better world—a moral responsibility for the condition of planet Earth.”

Senior class president Alexis Martin Piazza compared the graduating class to superheroes, with words of wisdom gleaned from Spider-Man: “The choice to lead an ordinary life is no longer an option. With great power comes great responsibility.”

Harry McMahon '75 P'08 '09, chair

86 received honors (30 percent of class)

6 *Summa Cum Laude* (with highest honors)

18 *Magna Cum Laude* (with high honors)

62 *Cum Laude* (with honors)

## CLASS OF 2007 HONORS



Villaraigosa

of the Board of Trustees, and Gregory Hess, vice president for academic affairs and dean of the faculty, participated in the ceremonies for the first time in their new leadership roles.

The ceremonies ended with the traditional charge to the graduating class by President Gann who invited the students to “always remember the best of one another. And know that as you leave you take with you our affection, pride, and genuinely best wishes.”



McMahon and Villaraigosa

CLASS OF  
2007

DEGREES IN TOP SEVEN  
ACADEMIC MAJORS  
(including dual and double majors)

- 82** Government (27 single, 44 dual, 11 double)
- 61** Economics (28 single, 26 dual, 7 double)
- 35** Psychology (15 single, 18 dual, 2 double)
- 28** Economics-Accounting (20 single, 6 dual, 2 double)
- 24** History (7 single, 14 dual, 3 double)
- 24** International Relations (13 single, 9 dual, 2 double)
- 15** Literature (6 single, 7 dual, 2 double)



## NIMH Grant Opens Door for Cultural Competency Research

A five-year National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH) grant will establish a new Asian American Center on Disparities Research at the University of California, Davis. The award to UC Davis totals \$3.9 million which includes a subcontract with Claremont McKenna College. The principal investigator and director of the Center is Nolan Zane.

The Center will conduct and facilitate research specific to Asian American populations and their mental health treatment, including medication and psychotherapy evaluations. As a program leader in one of the Center's three projects, Assistant Professor of Psychology Wei-Chin Hwang will oversee a large project to determine whether therapist cultural competency is related to mental health treatment outcomes for ethnic minority clients. Over a five-year span, this project will track the treatment progress of thousands of patients being treated by hundreds of clinicians. Dr. Stanley Sue is the co-leader of the Therapist Factors Research program. Other projects included in the award are the Clinical Effectiveness Research Program and the Medication Research Adherence Program, led by Drs. Gordon Hall of the University of Oregon and Tonya Fancher of UC Davis, respectively.

Hwang says that while there is a current push for clinicians to be more culturally competent and sensitive in treating mental-health patients, there is no evidence to validate whether cultural competency has a positive, measurable impact on treatment outcomes. "Such evidence is necessary if we are to scientifically support the need to train healthcare practitioners to

be more culturally competent and effective," he says.

Recent reports by the National Institutes of Health and the Institute of Medicine indicate that ethnic health disparities do exist. In fact, ethnic minorities not only experience a disproportionate amount of illness burden, but they also are less likely to receive quality health and mental health services and experience worse treatment outcomes.

"The question is," Hwang says, noting the changing racial and ethnic composition in the United States, "whether our healthcare system is adequately prepared to meet the needs of America's diversifying population. One critical aspect of providing quality healthcare services is to properly train clinicians to be more culturally competent."



DAVID JOHNSTON

Hwang

Hwang joins nearly a dozen key participants from UC Davis and the University of Oregon in building the new center.

Hwang, whose editorial titled "Mental Illness, Racial Identity and the Virginia Tech Shooting" appeared in *The Seattle Times* in May, says training clinicians to be more culturally competent can be complicated because it requires therapists to not only understand the culture of others, but also understand their ethnic selves in relation to others. Not only will clients from different cultural backgrounds come in with different types of problems and expectations of therapy (for instance, the stigma associated with mental illness in many cultures), therapists also must be aware of cultural differences in communication and rapport-building, which may influence the client-therapist working relationship.



## Wit and Wisdom

After a remarkable 151 collective years at CMC, spring 2007 marked the retirement of four professors: Clark A. Kucheman, Myra E. Moss, John K. Roth, and Ronald K. Teeples. We asked the distinguished scholars to comment on their favorite course to teach and the most valuable lesson they learned at the College, and to share a few words of wisdom for continuing faculty.

WILLIAM VASTR

### Ron Teeples

Boswell Professor of Economics



**JOINED CMC:** 1969

**FAVORITE COURSE:** Following through on a promise to Founding President George C.S. Benson to organize an economics course dealing with ethics and management issues, I spent much time teaching myself the fundamentals of ethics and learning from professors Stephen Smith and Jay Martin. I not only learned different concepts of ethics from them, but also much about teaching by discussion techniques. By the end of my teaching career, I was using short essay assignments and discussion methods almost exclusively in Econ 190, Ethics and Management—enjoying teaching by a method that played little or no role in my other courses.

**MOST VALUABLE LESSON:** Stephen Tonsor, an illustrious professor emeritus of history at the University of Michigan, once asked if I would like to visit the St. Louis Art Museum with him. I learned more during that afternoon about German Expressionist and European modern abstract art than all the other museum trips I have taken in my life. What I learned was that the primary compensation for an academic career is the access to shared learning. Interacting with a teacher in possession of voluminous knowledge, when he or she freely dialogs from the perspective of a lifetime of pondering great questions, is one of the rarest luxuries in life.

**WORDS OF WISDOM:** Professor of Economics Procter Thomson stated in one of his laws: “All charity tends to corrupt.” That is, what is ethically uplifting to a caregiver may destroy recipient virtues, or visa versa. I believe that fairness and equity are not ordinarily achieved through philosophically derived rules for care giving. Fairness and equity are not found so much in outcomes as they are in the design, process, and procedures that both caregivers and recipients can agree are morally acceptable. To avoid extensive corruption, care giving has to be a just exchange.

### Clark Kucheman

Arthur V. Stoughton Professor of Christian Ethics



**JOINED CMC:** 1967

**FAVORITE COURSE:** Philosophy 131, Hegel and Marx. Because, while difficult to grasp, the thought of Hegel and Karl Marx is ideal not only for assisting students in their self-liberation but also for developing and expressing my own capacities for self-determination.

**MOST VALUABLE LESSON:** After returning our midterm exams in price theory, Nobel Prize-winning economist Milton Friedman warned us that the first thing we would learn when we began our own teaching careers was how little of what we said in class would get across to students. I have learned this to be true. Students come with vastly different preparations and with varying degrees of interest in the courses’ subject matters, with the consequence that it is virtually impossible to communicate effectively with all students simultaneously.

**WORDS OF WISDOM:** Borrowed from Hegel: “The final purpose of education is liberation and the struggle for a higher liberation still.” Students should develop and express their capacities as thinking beings by making decisions autonomously and rationally, and faculty members should have it as their primary purpose to assist students in their efforts to do so.

### John Roth

Edward J. Sexton Professor of Philosophy



**JOINED CMC:** 1966

**FAVORITE COURSE:** I enjoyed teaching every course. The seminars and tutorials in the PPE program were especially meaningful to me. Teaching about the Holocaust affected me as much as it did the students. The course I called Perspectives on the American Dream was always interesting because there were so many good books from the past and present that were applicable.

**MOST VALUABLE LESSON:** My years at CMC taught me to make efficient use of time. Day by day, steady and disciplined work can produce lots of satisfying results.

**WORDS OF WISDOM:** Advice? The key to great teaching is to find how passion about one’s subject matter and care about one’s students energize each other.

### Myra Moss

Professor of Government and Philosophy



**JOINED CMC:** 1975

**FAVORITE COURSE:** I didn’t have one—every course was a favorite because I enjoyed the readings and topics. In recent years I taught Theories of History. Examining the interrelations between philosophy and history has been an interest since graduate school. The course Philosophical Roots of European Fascism was rewarding; I recently published a book on the topic after 10 years of research. The courses Philosophy and Psychology and Theories of Personalities also were fascinating because I am very involved in the literature of both subjects.

**WORDS OF WISDOM:** I don’t have any advice; we all learn from our own experiences.



*“Struggling to make the exotic normal and the seemingly normal exciting in my class, I always look for an opportunity to continue the teaching in India,”*

– NITA KUMAR, BROWN FAMILY PROFESSOR OF SOUTH ASIAN HISTORY

## World Class

Led by Nita Kumar, the Brown Family Professor of South Asian History, and Lisa Cody, associate professor of history, 10 students toured India for 16 days this May, traveling more than 2,000 miles from Delhi across Uttar Pradesh and getting an up-close look at the diverse regions and growing economy of the world’s second most populous country.

According to Kumar, the trip enabled the students to understand that, despite vast differences, Indian civilization should not be viewed as mysterious or incomprehensible.

“Struggling to make the exotic normal and the seemingly normal exciting in my class, I always look for an opportunity to continue the teaching in India,” she says.

In Delhi, the group traversed the vibrant streets, shops, and bustling bazaars to explore one of the oldest continuously inhabited cities in the world. They then rode the rails to Varanasi, Lucknow, and Dehra Dun, where they navigated the waters of the Ganges and visited Sarnath. One sweltering morning they combed through the thick weeds and flowers to read the gravestones and ponder the ruins at the site of India’s first war of independence in 1857.

“There are so few historical places that are not packed with tourists,” says Cody. “To be somewhere that was so pivotal in complete silence and stillness was extremely powerful for all of us in conjuring up the specter of empire and individual lives.”

In addition to the historical sightseeing, the students interviewed villagers, educators, artisans, and social workers, gaining insight to the country’s rapid globalization and economic boom.

From the holy site where the Buddha first inspired a small group of monks, to the glittering domes of the Taj Mahal, to the rush of travelers hopping aboard one of the 300 trains that leave the New Delhi Railway Station daily, the students caught a glimpse of both ancient and modern India.

“The students were superb ambassadors for the College and for the United States,” says Cody. “Their kindness and enthusiasm made me proud and also hopeful about what this generation of young adults will be able to accomplish in the world.”



Clockwise from top left: Kumar with a local woman in a Himalayan village; Kristin Follmer '09 with children in a village outside of Varanasi; ghats, stairs leading to the Ganges River, in Varanasi; a cobbler crafting a pair of sandals in Mussoorie; part of the Bara Imambara, built in Lucknow in 1784

## Bowling Strikes CMS

While more than 30 CMS intramural sports, from soccer to Scrabble, offer students an opportunity to come together for spirited, fun, and oftentimes rowdy competition, intramural bowling is by far the most popular. With more than 40 teams and 190 participants, the league often occupied every lane at the Brunswick bowling center in neighboring Upland during weekly outings. According to Landis Richardson, director of intramurals, rivalry is determined by the bowlers and which teams are present. "The league is very competitive on some nights, and very social on others," he says.



PHOTOS BY WILLIAM WASTA



## ¡Viva Mariachi!

It had all the elements of a classic college road trip: a diverse group of students endure a long drive, a broken-down car, and the usual discomforts to get to a music festival. And not just any music festival—at the end of the drive, the members of Mariachi Serrano de Claremont attended the Viva el Mariachi Festival in Fresno this March along with more than 8,000 others.

In addition to sessions on mariachi and its history, the two-day event culminated in showcase performances where students performed with instructors.

Maciel Hernández '08 first attended the festival when she was in the third grade. Interest in the tumultuous sounds of mariachi bands stuck with her through high school, when she began taking lessons with the Mariachi Heritage Foundation and became part of a group. Arriving at CMC, Hernández, a violinist, missed mariachi and decided to start a performing group of her own.

"Planning it was really hard," says Hernández, "but once we had our first meeting, I really knew that it was going to happen." Mariachi Serrano de Claremont was soon a reality, attracting students with different levels of musical experience and diverse cultural backgrounds.

Classically trained soprano Carey Tan '07 felt the pull of mariachi, and became part of the group this year. "I'm always looking for new things to add to my repertoire," she says, "and this style of singing is deeper and gutsier than I'm used to. When I'm singing an opera, it's very precise. But with the group, I can dance and interact with others. It's very liberating."

The group, which includes 16 members from CMC, Pomona, and Pitzer colleges, initially knew just three

songs. At their first performance, before the third song, Hernández announced to the crowd: “We are only going to play one more song, because we only know one more.”

Now, their repertoire has expanded to provide plenty of material for encores. At a recent show on the Frary steps at Pomona, Mariachi Serrano de Claremont opened with *La Negra*, a song they had never performed live before. “People were nervous,” says Tan, “but it went very well.”

The term *mariachi* refers to a type of musical group whose instruments typically include violins, trumpets, guitars, a *guitarrón*, and a *vibuela*. Mariachi Serrano de Claremont has also added a flute to their mix. Most people recognize mariachis by their charro outfits, which include wide-brimmed hats and plenty of silver. After a year of improvising on the uniform front, Mariachi Serrano de Claremont received *charros* of their own, thanks to a donation from Vicente Lopez '76 and his wife, Scripps alumna Tina Lopez, parents of Vicente Lopez '07 and Christopher Lopez '08.

“Getting our outfits was a real booster,” says Tan. “I thought: ‘When I put this on, I have to really perform!’”

The group plays at campus events and weddings, and has logged more than 30 performances this year. One big event was *Noche de Amor*, for Valentine’s Day. The group sold serenades as prizes and gifts, and then spent the evening walking around the five colleges singing songs to lucky students. “It was very romantic,” says Olivia Bevacqua '09.

The trip to the Fresno festival inspired the group.

“It was really mind-blowing, and on par with some of the best concerts I’ve seen at Disney Hall,” says Tan. “The musicianship was very complex, and for me, it was like listening to a Beethoven symphony—I paid attention to the phrasing and textures.”

**W**hat motivated more than 900 alumni to volunteer their time and energies this past year to help students, the Alumni Association, and the College? Why did almost 4,200 alumni make a financial donation to support CMC and its students?

I’ve been asking myself these important questions as we wrap up the 2006/2007 academic year and make plans for the future.

The numbers are astounding when you consider that we have not yet reached the threshold of 10,000 active alumni. We are a young college and quite small compared to our collegiate sisters: Williams, for example, was founded in 1873 and has more than 21,000 alumni.

Our alumni network is small, but unbelievably potent and remarkably dedicated. Why?

- 1** We know that a CMC education is special. We feel privileged to have been a part of something unique. We know that it takes a continued commitment by alumni to preserve and enhance this opportunity for future generations of students.
- 2** By giving back, we enhance both the College’s reputation and the value of our own degrees. Thank goodness I am no longer asked why I chose to attend Claremont Mechanics College. The graduates of 2007 will do more to burnish my diploma than I ever could.
- 3** It makes us feel good to stay connected. Some of my favorite people on Earth are friends I made at CMC. When my friend Wendy Dickstein Verba '86 organized the recent Work/Family Challenge Conference, it gave us an excuse to work on a project together. Phonenite is an opportunity to call friends around the country. Serving as a Mentor Café volunteer reminds us what it was like to have our whole lives in front of us, and reveals how much we’ve learned since graduation.
- 4** CMC graduates are interesting, curious, smart, accomplished, ethical people. They are really fun to meet and hang out with.
- 5** Have you chatted with a CMC student lately? My goodness, they are impressive. Every time I host a new student party or attend an event with current students, I am astounded by their poise and intelligence. They search for meaningful ways to make a difference in the world. They accept nothing less than excellence.
- 6** We can all feel, I think, that Claremont McKenna College has reached a pivotal moment in its history. We are on the verge of greatness. We know that we cannot rest on our laurels, but must instead lift our wonderful alma mater to new heights. As Ulysses reminds Achilles in Shakespeare’s *Troilus and Cressida*:

Time hath, my lord, a wallet at his back,  
Wherein he puts alms for oblivion,  
A great-sized monster of ingratitude:  
Those scraps are good deeds past; which are devour’d  
As fast as they are made, forgot as soon  
As done: perseverance, dear my lord,  
Keeps honour bright. . .

I am so grateful to the thousands of CMC alumni who gave of their time and resources this year to keep CMC’s honor bright. With your continued support, the future looks even brighter.

Keep in touch,

**Laura (May) Grisolano '86**

lgrisola@mac.com  
CMCAA President



## CMCAA Alumni



Grisolano presided with the Board of Trustees during the 60th annual Commencement ceremonies.

WILLIAM VASIA