Ph.D. Fellows in the Spotlight

New knowledge emanates from Berkeley through the original research of our faculty and doctoral students. The Graduate Division oversees graduate student admission to Berkeley, fellowship funding, academic progress and degree completion. Our students further benefit from the Division’s professional development and graduate student life initiatives. The iconic seal of the University of California includes our motto, “Fiat Lux,” translated from Latin as “Let There Be Light.” Below we shine a spotlight on a few students whose research holds promise to further illuminate our world.

HELLMAN GRADUATE AWARD RECIPIENT

My research focuses on how the political character of urban life is shaped by the design and organization of metropolitan space. I’m currently exploring the shifting terrain of urban government in the San Francisco Bay Area and hope my work may one day inform the construction of a more egalitarian way of living in the city.

— John Elrick
Geography

ROSE HILLS FOUNDATION FELLOW

Integrated circuits are central to everything from cell phones to NASA spacecrafts. The high upfront costs and time needed to create specialized ICs deter innovation. At Berkeley, we’re applying agile development methodologies toward an ecosystem that would make primary hardware technologies more accessible to people who need it. My research on custom DSP generators enables innovation in areas I am passionate about, like medical devices and radios.

— Angie Wang
Electrical Engineering and Computer Sciences

ARCS FOUNDATION FELLOW

Much of the research in tooth development is done in mice, but mice don’t replace their teeth like we do. Instead, we study fish which undergo tooth replacement throughout their lifetime. By examining the signaling factors of this process, our work could be applied to induce human tooth replacements in adults someday. Imagine going to a dentist and injecting a mix of signaling factors to induce a new tooth where one has fallen out. Basic research here at Berkeley can begin to address what factors would be in that mix.

— Nick Ellis
Environmental Science, Policy, and Management

MPH Alumna Shines

Graduates from Berkeley’s professional programs make incomparable contributions to society. Dr. Laura Stachel, who received her Master’s of Public Health at Berkeley in 2006, was recently awarded the first ever $1M United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA) Energy Grant to expand and enhance the use of a “Solar Suitcase” pioneered by the non-profit she founded: We Care Solar. The device generates simple-to-deliver, affordable and accessible solar power to developing countries, providing electricity for childbirth and related medical procedures to reduce sometimes life-threatening complications for children and mothers.

Stachel, with Solar Suitcase, was a CNN Hero in 2013.
Dean's Update Program

Berkeley graduate students and postdocs now have a place to go for help with exploring how their studies can prepare them for career paths, both within and beyond academia.

The new Graduate Professional Services Center, in 309 Sproul Hall, offers a collaborate for offering campus among initiatives to develop student services and approaches that will help advanced degree holders succeed in whatever careers they choose.

A Graduate Division survey of PhD alumni spanning 40 years showed that many students, particularly those in sciences and engineering, have for many years continued outside of academia. GPS will help students recognize potential career paths, and set and achieve professional development goals, and build skills critical to careers in education, industry, government, and more. GPS works with the following partners to pursue these aims:
The Graduate Assembly, Career Visitors, and Postdoc Affairs, and Graduate Division’s own Graduate Writing Center and Graduate Student Instructor Teaching & Resource Center.

Learn more and see the new online tool to help students self-assess their professional development needs at grad.berkeley.edu/GPS.

Doctoral students share their own discoveries, catalyze faculty-led research, and inspire and mentor undergraduates. We know that their talent yields incredible results. To support these students -- while curating and recognizing their support -- and elevating their career prospects from our private peers — Berkeley has launched a program with the potential to significantly raise both the number and amount of fellowships we can offer. Berkeley Excels to Attract and Retain Graduate Students (BEAR Grad) aims to create $1 million dollar fellowship endowments by pairing private gifts of $500,000 with $500,000 in matching funds. The first five matches were made possible through the bequest of Helene I. Cantor ’35. Efforts are underway to expand the program in 2016.

Li-chiang Chu ’14a, M.S. ’17, who studied nutritional sciences as a master’s student, established the first BEAR Grad fellowship. “It was an honor for me to say thank you,” says Chu, a sure supporter and UC Berkeley Foundation trustee.

Learn more about BEAR Grads at grad.berkeley.edu/give.

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