

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



Savoring Moments, Nourishing Souls

As a young girl, I remember walking down to the store hand-in-hand with my mother and grandmother. I remember wandering down the aisles, carefully picking out the produce I would later help wash and prepare in our family's kitchen. I remember the smells and sounds of our collective cooking. And most of all, I remember the stories and lessons passed down to me through the love we poured into every meal.

We associate so many of our happiest memories with food. From intimate meals with friends to birthday dinners with loved ones to those special occasions that we capture in photographs and look back on years later, food plays an essential part in our lives, happiness and well-being.

Without food, without farmers and chefs, food scientists and restaurateurs, sommeliers, and supply chain experts, our lives would simply be less joyful. Our homes, less happy. Our birthdays, less celebratory.

I, along with the entire Cal Poly Pomona community, understand the importance of food and hospitality and we look forward to sharing these stories with you in this issue of CPP Magazine. Our students, graduates and members of the Cal Poly Pomona family not only feed our state and nation, but unite us in making memories that last a lifetime.

Thank you all for being a part of our flourishing Cal Poly Pomona family.

Sincerely,
Soraya M. Coley

Soraya M. Coley, Ph.D.
President

CALIFORNIA TASTEMAKERS

Broncos Elevate Food & Beverage Culture



SingleThread
HEALDSBURG



Roche Winery
SONOMA



Gentleman Farmer
NAPA



Longevity Wines
LIVERMORE



Din Tai Fung
ARCADIA



Plant Based Paradise
SAN DIMAS



Sycamore Vineyard & Winery
CRESTLINE



Scoops on Tap
COVINA



Beyond Meat
EL SEGUNDO



Al Pastor Taquería
MONTCLAIR



Klatch Coffee
RANCHO CUCAMONGA

Whether it be wine, fine dining, coffee or ice cream, Cal Poly Pomona alumni and students have long served as tastemakers in the world of California food and drink.

A sibling duo operates a family-owned taqueria in Montclair, while a pair of sisters is growing a Southern California coffee chain. In downtown Napa, an alumni couple combine their love of winemaking and food to create an unforgettable "studio" experience.

Bronco tastemakers use their education and career experiences in business, hospitality and dining to make an impact on global restaurant brands, such as Din Tai Fung, as well as home-grown startups. They are blending their talents, new ideas and desire to serve others to create the perfect recipe for success.

KLATCH COFFEE



Sisters Heather, left, and Holly Perry are growing the family business, Klatch Coffee, and will have nearly 200 employees this year.

Big Things are Brewing as Heather and Holly Perry Grow Klatch Coffee



By CLAY FOWLER

As college students, Heather and Holly Perry were both equally certain of one thing: Their career plans did not include a stop at Klatch Coffee, the family business.

Heather graduated from Cal Poly Pomona in 2004, unwaveringly on course to become a lawyer.

Younger sister Holly transferred to CPP a few years later as a marketing student intent on starting her own business.

But 20 years later, Heather ('04, international business and marketing) is the CEO of Klatch Coffee, overseeing one of the fastest growing brands in the coffee industry. Holly ('12, hospitality management) is the company's director of retail, overseeing the regional chain's growing number of cafes. The duo is sprouting their family business' artisan roots into thriving branches that include wholesale, e-commerce and retail cafes.

Their parents Mike and Cindy Perry opened Klatch Coffee's first cafe in Rancho Cucamonga in 1993, meant to be a temporary venture until their father "got a real job," Heather recalls. The Perrys opened a second cafe in 1997 and began roasting beans on a small scale in their new San Dimas location.

Klatch has grown from 30 employees in 1997 to nearly 200 in 2024. Earlier this year, the company opened a 16,000 square foot roastery in Upland to expand its capacity to use the beans they meticulously source from partners around the world.

GROWING THE FAMILY BUSINESS

As kids and through college, Heather and Holly worked for the family business in various capacities, never intending to transition to the roles they occupy now.

They both couldn't be happier to be wrong.

"I never actually decided I was going to work in the coffee business," Heather says. "I just never went to law school."

Says Holly: "I always knew I wanted to do my own thing, own my own business, because that's what my parents demonstrated to us. It wasn't until a couple of years ago that I finally let that go because I was having so much fun working for my family business."

Holly, who is overseeing Klatch's expansion into Sprouts Farmer's Markets – Sprouts will sell bags of Klatch coffee on grocery shelves and have Klatch cafes inside five of their stores by the end of 2024 – is living out her passion for the customer experience.

Her affinity for hospitality was born when her parents opened their first Klatch cafe in Rancho Cucamonga, giving their 5-year-old her first taste of the customer service experience.

Fast forward to her time as a college student at CPP's The Restaurant at Kellogg Ranch (RKR). Holly had her full-circle moment when she managed the RKR's front-of-house operations.

"I love it when a customer comes in open minded and doesn't know what they want. That's when I get to help them find their perfect meal that they never would have ordered for themselves," Holly says. "That's what I love doing at Klatch. The RKR is where I discovered that's for sure what I love to do."

When she graduated from CPP, Heather's coffee prowess combined with her business education put her on a trajectory to be the ideal CEO of a coffee company.

Heather applied her business acumen as she ascended from member to board member to president of the Specialty Coffee Association (SCA), which merged the U.S.-based organization with its counterpart in Europe during her tenure. Networking with coffee industry titans around the world through the SCA, trade shows and barista competitions allowed Heather to build Klatch into an internationally known company.

"Yes, there are stressful days, but I love what we get to do, love our team members, love the people we meet through our business," says Heather, who won the 2003 and 2007 U.S. Barista Championships. "It's a good thing I didn't become a lawyer."

DIN TAI FUNG

Collins Alumnus
Brings Passion
and Palate
to Global
Restaurant
Brand



Corporate Chef James Fu has mastered every dish and created a new one at Din Tai Fung.



By MELANIE JOHNSON



A key ingredient in the recipe of James Fu's success in the restaurant industry was early advice from a mentor to find and follow his passion.

Fu ('18, hospitality management) was deep into STEM classes at Pasadena City College and planning to pursue a degree in engineering when a physics professor observed that Fu had the ability to do the coursework, but he didn't feel Fu's love for it.

"He asked me, 'How would you feel if you didn't have the passion for it? Would you be OK?'" Fu says.

Fu, who was already working in the restaurant business at the time – he was a server at a hot pot restaurant and later ran a popular boba shop – realized that becoming an engineer was more about pleasing his parents than pursuing his purpose.

What Fu loved was working in restaurants.

"I have always had a passion for serving guests. That's what makes me fulfilled," he says. "It is something you can see directly because you interact with the guests. You can see if they are satisfied. Guest satisfaction is something I really care about."

COOKING UP COMFORT

Fu, who was born in Oakland and raised in Taiwan and Belize, has been working at the popular dumpling chain **Din Tai Fung** for the past 10 years, putting his guest satisfaction skills to the test. He started as a busser and was promoted to server in a couple of months. The job helped him pay his way through Cal Poly Pomona's hospitality management program. After earning his degree, Fu advanced to manager, general manager, regional manager and most recently the company's corporate chef in 2022.

His role involves visiting various locations, mostly in California and the Pacific Northwest, to audit the food and ensure the taste and quality is the same and meets the company's high standards. He assists with the opening of new restaurants, helps train staff and makes sure the recipes are clear and easy to follow.

Din Tai Fung, which got its start in Taiwan 50 years ago, is now global with more than 170 locations around the world. The United States has 14 locations, with restaurants in Arcadia, Santa Clara and Las Vegas, as well as additional restaurants coming to Downtown Disney and New York in 2024.

Although not a classically trained chef, Fu spent time in his grandma's teppanyaki restaurant and has learned every aspect of running the restaurant,

including the art of crafting Din Tai Fung's iconic xiao long bao or soup dumpling. Recently, he added a new item to the menu – a chicken soup dumpling inspired by the ultimate comfort dish, chicken noodle soup.

Fu developed and tested 30 to 40 recipes before coming up with the final version, even letting his mom test taste it before it was finalized. Din Tai Fung is known for its pork soup dumplings, but it wanted a recipe that was more in line with what customers in the United States prefer.

"For the American market, pork is not the top choice. Chicken is a better option. That's why we had the goal to create chicken soup dumplings," Fu says. "It's something we had to build from scratch. And it gives you that comfort feeling because you can really taste the chicken noodle soup."

DEDICATED TO SERVICE

That desire to give comfort to others is who Fu is, says **Margie Jones**, dean of The Collins College of Hospitality Management. His hospitable nature and desire to make others happy is something that Jones observed when Fu worked at **The Restaurant at Kellogg Ranch (RKR)**, where he was a student assistant to the instructor.

"It's an honor to be a student assistant in the restaurant. It shows that you have demonstrated in the course that you have the skillset and ability to lead your peers," Jones says. "He was wonderful and made the students feel comfortable."

In Jones' Wines of the World advanced course, Fu also served as a teaching assistant, preparing food that would pair well with the wines the students were tasting.

"He came with a foundational understanding of cooking," she says. "If I was doing a French wine and wanted to have roast chicken with it, he knew how to do it. It was second nature for him to take it to a place where it could be easily eaten. It was nicely seasoned. He has a good palate."

Fu still gives back to CPP, participating in career fairs and volunteering to serve as Professor for a Day. He credits the hospitality program, particularly his time at The Restaurant at Kellogg Ranch with helping him get to his current level of success.

"I loved RKR so much," he said. "At RKR, I started as front of the house, but I needed to challenge myself. I told the professor I wanted to go to the back of the house, to do food preparation. I still implement a lot of the knowledge I learned at Collins today."

GENTLEMAN FARMER

Alumni Pour Hospitality Love into New Business Venture

BY MELANIE JOHNSON



On a spring morning in downtown Napa, music flows out of the open windows and doors of a midnight blue 1926 craftsman bungalow.

Inside, sunlight floods an open kitchen as **Joey Wolosz** ('93, hospitality management) rolls out the dough for pierogis, Polish dumplings filled with potatoes and cheese, while **Jeff Durham** ('89, hospitality management) pulls out samples of his homemade take on the snack Cracker Jacks and wine gummies.

The couple opened the doors of their **Gentleman Farmer Bungalow** in December, dubbing it a "Studio for Gustatory Well-Being."

"We wanted to have a social space where we can host people and have them experience our wines and have that in the context of food," Durham says.

Before they opened the doors to the Napa house, Wolosz and Durham hosted a similar tasting experience in their Yountville home, where they would serve meals of six or seven courses along with their own **Gentleman Farmer Wines**.

A trip to France in 2017 served as the inspiration for the venture. Wolosz recalls that a friend made a wine tasting reservation at a chateau in Bordeaux. When they arrived, the host asked if they "will have had lunch?" The food was an unexpected treat, Wolosz says.

"I thought it was such an interesting and lovely way to experience wines," he says.



Vintners Jeff Durham, left, and Joey Wolosz offer food and wine in their Napa bungalow.

THE EARLY YEARS

Wolosz and Durham started making wine together in 1999 out of a garage. They launched Gentleman Farmer Wines in 2005 with the guidance of a local wine maker, beginning with about 80 cases. Their operation remains small, at less than 1,800 cases a year. Their wine is made at a cooperative where they share space with 19 other wineries, sourcing fruit from local farmers. They are responsible for everything from field sampling to lab analysis to choosing when to harvest their own rows. Their catalog includes a Pinot Noir, Chardonnay, Cabernet Sauvignon, Rosé, a red wine that is a blend of Bordeaux varietals and an Almanac, also a blend of wines.

"We are really present with the grapes every step of the way," Wolosz says.

A few months before they started making wine, they met in a bar in San Francisco. The couple married in 2017. Their lives had many parallels. Both graduated high school in 1985, attended a community college before transferring to Cal Poly Pomona in their sophomore years and both shared the same major. Although their time at Cal Poly Pomona overlapped, they didn't know each other as college students. Through a concurrent enrollment program, Wolosz took classes at both Cal Poly Pomona and Cal Poly San Luis Obispo, where he grew up, taking his time to complete his

studies. Durham, a Napa native, went straight through the program at CPP.

After Durham graduated from Cal Poly Pomona, he worked in hospitality at the Four Seasons Hotel in San Francisco.

"What I learned is that it is not enough to just meet expectations for guests," he says. "You need to exceed their expectations. So that's always been with me since 1989."

For both Durham and Wolosz, their upbringing helped prepare them for what they are doing now.

In the early 1980s, Durham's family began farming grapes in the Oak Knoll region of Napa Valley, 22 acres total. Durham and his siblings worked at the vineyard after school, on weekends and during vacations. He learned vineyard management, trellising, pruning and harvesting. The family sold the

vineyard around the time Durham headed to Cal Poly Pomona.

Wolosz grew up in the hospitality industry. When he was 5, his parents bought two motels on California's central coast – El Patio Motel and The Wayside Motel.

Durham and Wolosz also owned and operated their own hotel – The Redwood River Walk Hotel – in Humboldt County for 18 years before selling it in April 2023.

The 2017 Distinguished Alumni recipients credit their upbringing, CPP's hands-on learning opportunities and exposure to faculty with industry experience for helping them navigate the path to career success.

"The hospitality program was exactly what I had hoped for," Durham says. "It is what got me into the industry and kept me in it. I graduated in four years because I knew I wanted to be a part of it, and everything I have done since I graduated has been hospitality based."

Wolosz says he originally wanted to be an architect, but his family encouraged him to study hotel management. He was in the cooking program at CPP and fell in love with wine, running home for the summer to work at a vineyard.

A TASTE OF HOME

That love flowed into Gentleman Farmer Wines, a name Wolosz picked.

"A gentleman's farm is a farm for his satisfaction and pleasure, not necessarily for profit," he says.

Gentleman Farmer Wines, recognized by the National Gay and Lesbian Chamber of Commerce as Napa Valley's only LGBTQ-certified winery, donates a portion of its profits in June to LGBTQIA+ organizations as a way of giving back. They also put their love into each glass of wine poured and every meal prepared, making most of what they serve, from breads to cream, from scratch.

"When I am doing this, I am not checking emails. I am not invoicing anybody, talking to bookkeepers or running spreadsheets," Wolosz says. "I am doing what I love to do, which is hanging out in the kitchen and visiting with people."

The bungalow's guests are there to enjoy their time away from work and daily life, and Wolosz and Durham want to help them make the most of that time.

"Everybody in front of me is on vacation," Wolosz says. "They are here to enjoy themselves. I also don't feel like I am working. So, it started to come to me that Jeff and I, our lives are a vacation. We are on everybody's vacation."

The aim is to make the guests feel at home when they enter the doors of the bungalow. Their family history plays a big part in the experience.

Chandeliers hanging from the ceiling come from a Wolosz family home in Arroyo Grande. Durham uses his grandmother's Christmas flatware when serving the Chardonnay course. There is a piano and an accordion at the ready that Wolosz plays for guests and a clarinet that Durham uses to accompany him.

"We want you to feel like you're coming into our home and not into some sort of business that's going to be transactional," Durham says. "It's all about relationships."

That's why, during business hours, the public is welcome to drop in and say hello.

"Every single day we're here, our doors are open, whether we're just greeting a neighbor who wants to see what the place looks like, because we've been under construction for three years, or welcoming someone who made a reservation for a three-hour lunch," Durham says. "It is our job to exceed their expectations on hospitality. Hospitality is in everything we do, whether it be the hotel or whether it be this business."

SINGLETHREAD



Alumnus Keeps Hospitality the Focus at 3 Michelin Star Restaurant

BY MELANIE JOHNSON



SingleThread is an apt name for the Sonoma County farm, restaurant and inn where every element, from the food to the wine to the room décor, are stitched together with one common goal in mind – to give guests an unforgettable experience.

The food and wine may be the headliner at the three Michelin star restaurant, but the staff who serve patrons of the farm-to-table establishment play just as important of a role.

Among them is **Akeel Shah** ('11, hospitality management), SingleThread's director of hospitality. Shah joined the staff more than seven years ago, coming in as a captain and working his way up to service director and restaurant director before taking on his current role.

"It's fun to see SingleThread grow from what it was at the start to where it is now," Shah says. "The farm was just getting developed at that time. It had been growing a year prior to the restaurant and inn opening."

SingleThread includes a 24-acre farm, a 52-seat restaurant and a five-room inn in Healdsburg.

As the director of hospitality, Shah oversees all operations for the business, which has 127 employees, and ensures that the high standards set for service are maintained. It's also an opportunity to mentor.

"With many businesses, a lot of people don't really focus on the people working for them," Shah says. "We are here to help people grow. Everybody is here for a purpose. For some, here is where they start their careers. We are helping them along the way so that they can use their experience here as a stepping stone."

Shah credits the mentorship that he received as a student as his motivation to pass on the same type of encouragement and support to the staff at SingleThread.

FOOD AND FAMILY

Food always has been at the center of Shah's life. Growing up in Virginia and San Diego, he came from a family that cooked together. Those moments in the kitchen fueled his own passion for cooking and food.

As a teen, Shah worked as a line cook at a few restaurants and debated whether to train as a chef at the Culinary Institute of America in New York or go the business route at Cal Poly Pomona. He chose CPP.

"I loved cooking and still cook all the time, but I think my idea of a career in the culinary world shifted while I was at The Collins College from being a chef to taking on more of a managerial role," says Shah, who particularly enjoys cooking Indian and Ethiopian food.

Shah attributes a lot of what he learned about hospitality and running a restaurant to his experiences at Cal Poly Pomona, especially as a student chef at **The Restaurant at Kellogg Ranch**.

"It's one of the best experiences that I have had in my life," he says. "It was the hands-on approach, but also the feeling of the campus and the experience of the professors. They cared about us and wanted us to succeed. I feel like I got a well-rounded education, not just in the culinary arts."

Mentor and Collins Lecturer Emeritus **Barbara Jean Bruin** ('85, hospitality management) remembers Shah as a kind, diligent and hardworking team player.

As the production manager in the restaurant class, he was tasked with supervising the student chefs and making sure they didn't run out of needed supplies. "He was outstanding," Bruin says. "He really had a good eye for detail."

Her students were required to write "love notes" or training notes for the next person in their position. After being in charge of the beverage station, Shah left notes that included photos of what the lemon slices should look like, a diagram of where the sugar carriers and slicer should be placed, and tips on how often to wash the containers for the creamer.

Bruin says she is overjoyed to see Shah's success. "I am happy as a lark,"

she says of Shah's accomplishments. "I'm a proud mama to see where my students go and what they do. I have seen them when they start out and drop trays, and then they end up being general managers or running hotels and restaurants."

RECIPE FOR SUCCESS

After graduation, Shah was selected for the management training program at the **JW Marriott** in San Francisco. From there, he became the assistant food and beverage manager for the hotel. He was at Marriott for a little over a year, trying to figure out if he wanted to remain in hotels or switch to stand-alone restaurants. He accepted a position with the **Michael Mina Restaurant Group**, a San Francisco-based restaurant company founded by Mina, an award-winning chef.

Shah held various management positions at several of the group's establishments in San Francisco, including **Aqua**, **Bourbon Steak and Clock Bar**, a high-end lounge serving specialty cocktails and gourmet bar food.

"It was good for me because I was young and needed a swift kick," he says of his three years with the Mina Group. "I learned a lot about spirits, craft cocktails and fine dining."

Shah worked a stint at **RN74**, a Burgundian-style French bistro for a while before deciding to team up with fellow Cal Poly Pomona alumnus and chef **Matt Cruz** ('13, hospitality management). He and Cruz helped open **Lazy Bear**, a modern American restaurant in San Francisco's Mission District that earned two Michelin stars.

It was at a party at Lazy Bear when Shah met one of the investors of SingleThread. That chance meeting led to a job offer to help husband and wife team **Kyle and Katina Connaughton** – the executive chef and the culinary garden/farm manager respectively – open their new venture in Sonoma County. He initially started as a captain, which in the hospitality industry is a supervisory role.

Shah also found love at SingleThread. His wife, **Marley Brown**, is the head chef, and the couple is expecting their first child in June.

SingleThread's dinner menu is an 11-course tasting that features fish and vegetarian options. The Japanese-influenced dishes change daily and revolve largely around what is harvested at the 5-acre farm nearby in the San Lorenzo vineyard area. The restaurant is ranked No. 46 in the world, and SingleThread is just one of 13 in the United States to have earned three Michelin stars.

"To be able to be a part of opening one of the leading restaurants in the United States makes me feel very lucky and fortunate," Shah says. "A lot of my success is attributed to what I learned at Cal Poly Pomona."

Siblings Joseph Haro and Brenda Haro, right, manage a new restaurant inspired by the flavors of Mexico City.



AL PASTOR TAQUERÍA

Haro Siblings Serve Traditional Mexican Cuisine with Modern Flavors

By ANAIS HERNANDEZ



When you walk into **Al Pastor Taquería** in Montclair, the aroma of seasoned meats and the warmth of handmade tortillas transport you straight to the heart of Mexico City.

It's not just the food that makes this taqueria a neighborhood favorite, but it's the Cal Poly Pomona sibling duo behind it – **Joseph and Brenda Haro** – who are blending family tradition with distinctive flavors.

Joseph, a business student studying computer information systems at CPP, grew up in his father's restaurant, **El Rancho** in Claremont, where he learned the art of Mexican cuisine from the ground up. His sister, Brenda, is a 2017 Cal Poly Pomona alumna with a degree in management and human resources. Inspired by their family's roots in the restaurant industry and driven by their shared passion for food,

they are managing a growing business that serves authentic Mexican food with a modern twist.

"Having stepped into the commercial kitchen as a porter to now running a kitchen has definitely been a highlight in my career. I have been able to learn the front and back of house duties," he says.

In developing the concept for **Al Pastor Taquería**, Joseph wanted to combine fine dining techniques with the comfort of casual street food. In 2022, Joseph and Brenda traveled to Mexico City to learn from renowned Mexican Michelin star chef **Jorje Vallejo** and then researched the culture and flavors behind successful taquerias.

"We met with different chefs and visited numerous taco spots. Joseph created various recipes until we narrowed it down to the recipe that took us down the streets of Mexico with every bite," Brenda says.

Staying true to their name, the restaurant's most popular menu item is the al pastor tacos made with Mexico City-style al pastor meat and pieces of pineapple on a warm handmade nixtamal tortilla, garnished with cilantro, onion and a creamy cilantro salsa.

Joseph ensures that every dish reflects Mexico's rich heritage,

starting with the most important ingredient, maiz. Each morning, "masa" is made from scratch, following the traditional process of nixtamalization, which involves treating ground corn with calcium hydroxide. The overnight process is elaborate but ensures the authentic taste and texture of Mexican tortillas.

"Every single item is made with passion. I want people to enjoy my food and feel the same emotion I had when I created the dish," says Joseph, who is the CEO of **Al Pastor Taquería**.

Entrepreneurship by Doing

While Joseph spends most of his time in the kitchen, he chose to major in computer information systems when he applied at Cal Poly Pomona, so he could learn about information security. With the skills learned through his major, he set up the restaurant's network and applied operations management knowledge to track and analyze inventory.

Brenda's path into the family business was slightly different. During college, she worked at the Mexican chain restaurant **El Torito** and helped with administrative tasks at her father's restaurant, **El Rancho**. She also interned in the human resources department at a Marriott hotel in Ontario, where she learned about the hospitality industry.

Her degree in management and human resources gave her the skills to oversee the administrative, operational and marketing aspects. She serves as the restaurant's human resources and marketing director.

Brenda and Joseph credit their parents as their mentors and role models. They learned about hard work and dedication to quality from their father **Jose**, while their mother **Leticia's** nurturing spirit shaped the way they communicate with customers. **Al Pastor Taquería** recently became a member of Montclair's Chamber of Commerce and hopes to expand in the future.



Richard and Elizabeth Krumwiede, right, make and serve award-winning wines at their mountain ranch.

Richard Krumwiede

'84, Landscape Architecture
Owner, Sycamore Ranch Vineyard & Winery

After launching a successful landscape architecture business, which recently celebrated its 33rd anniversary, **Richard Krumwiede** decided to explore another one of his life's passions. In 2007, he planted a wine vineyard at his mountain home. A few years later, he embarked on a wine co-operative with friends and then launched **Sycamore Ranch Vineyard & Winery** in Crestline in 2015.

Both landscape architecture and winemaking feed his creative muse.

"In landscape architecture, the reward is seeing our idea come to life in the built environment and enhancing people's lives. In winemaking, I enjoy taking a raw ingredient, grapes, and transforming them into inspired, award-winning wines," he says.

In 2019, Sycamore Ranch won first in Sunset Magazine's International Wine Competition and the top spot at the Orange County Fair's Commercial Wine competition in 2021.

"Cal Poly Pomona's motto 'learn by doing' has been a big part of my success," Krumwiede says.

Mara Caitlin Roche

'06, Communication
Owner, Aunt Momo's
Partner, Roche Winery

After graduating college, **Mara Caitlin Roche** returned home to Sonoma and did direct-to-consumer sales at **Roche Winery**. Occasionally, she helped the head chef in the kitchen during large events. Soon, she stepped into the kitchen full-time and launched her catering company, **Aunt Momo's**, in 2019. She's particularly known for her cheese cookies – "Yep, a cookie made out of cheese."

"My talent is being able to feed large groups, so I try to help out nonprofits with their events or food programs. I helped a local senior center launch their weekly soup and super program, where local seniors can have a home-cooked meal and dine with other local seniors," Roche says.

"During the 2017 wildfires, I helped with the logistics of distributing over 4,000 meals a day to displaced locals and first-responders; all the meals were donated by Bay Area businesses."



Sam Howland, left, and Bryan Marasco developed the idea for Scoops on Tap during the Bronco Startup Challenge and won third place.

SCOOPS ON TAP

College Roommates Blend Friendship and Sweet Success



By SAM HOWLAND
'15, HOSPITALITY MANAGEMENT

As a kid, my introduction to homemade ice cream was from my next-door neighbor. Every Fourth of July, he would pull out an old-school hand crank ice cream maker and make ice cream for all the kids in the neighborhood. I was blown away by how good ice cream could taste when made with simple ingredients. It was an experience I will never forget and one that ultimately has shaped my passion for it.

As a teenager, I started to try out recipes on my friends and family and fell in love with the ice cream-making process, from producing the perfect custard base to creating new and exciting recipes.

The idea of starting an ice cream business clicked while I was a student in The Collins College of Hospitality Management at Cal Poly Pomona. As a requirement of the program, I landed an internship at Dale Bros. Brewing in Upland. One of the benefits of working at a brewery was getting to take home the occasional extra beer after a shift. That's when I started experimenting with adding beer to my ice cream recipes. While it seemed like a crazy idea, I found that I could elevate the ice creams to a whole new level with craft beer.

My roommate Bryan Marasco ('16, marketing management), who was studying business at CPP, also became invested in the idea of creating Scoops on Tap.

During our time at CPP, we participated in the Bronco Startup Challenge and took third place!

The challenge required us to find a mentor to help us develop our business plan, leading us to work with Robert Small, former dean of The Collins College – better known as Dr. Bob of Dr. Bob's Ice Cream. Bob was in the ice cream business for years and taught us all he knew. He gave us the opportunity to produce ice cream in his facility and inspired us to take Scoops on Tap to new heights.

In 2015, Bryan and I bought a mobile ice cream freezer and sold our ice cream at street fairs, festivals and farmers markets. By 2017, we decided to take the leap and leave our day jobs to devote all our time to Scoops on Tap. We worked every event, from L.A. to San Diego, with the goal of funding a full-fledged production kitchen in Montclair.

Unfortunately, we finished construction of our production kitchen at the height of the pandemic and were forced to pivot our operations online. Selling our pints out of our Montclair warehouse nationwide kept us afloat during the worst years of the pandemic – and we were proud to bring a bit of joy to our customers during tough times.

In July 2022, our dream of opening a physical location came to life. Our first scoop shop in the city of Covina – where Bryan and I had lived as roommates while attending Cal Poly Pomona – landed on Yelp's Top 100 ice cream shops in the nation.

Today, three of our most popular ice cream flavors are available in all 28 Pavilion grocery locations in Southern California. Our ice cream can also be found across CPP's campus stores and dining areas.

It feels full circle to have the ice cream we conceptualized at CPP being served on campus and across SoCal. Being able to see our dreams come true feels surreal and has been one of the most incredible experiences of my life.



Miriam Abundez Guerra

'19, Food Science and Technology
Food Technologist, Beyond Meat

Working in research and development, Miriam Abundez Guerra's job is to make new plant-based products and flavors for Beyond Meat. A typical day includes following up on experiments, making and testing batches of products, collaborating with suppliers and meeting with customers. The company recently launched a seared beef tips substitute, a product that Abundez Guerra briefly worked on in flavor development.

As an undergraduate in the food science and technology program, Abundez Guerra learned how to combine her interests in chemistry, cooking, baking and discovering new flavors. Now, at Beyond Meat, she gets to break new ground through research and play with food.

"I meet a lot of brilliant people here. We have people who are passionate about our mission," she says. "I really enjoy my job. It's fun, and I have a lot of autonomy too. I am getting paid to cook and pursue my passions."



Husna Ridha

'21, Nutrition - Dietetics
Plant Based Paradise

In college, Husna Ridha started a dessert business and evolved it to focus on plant-based and allergy-friendly options. Her Plant Tarts, plant-based and allergy-friendly hand pies filled with flavors like strawberry, yuzu or apple cinnamon, are a hit with customers and on Instagram.

"Studying nutrition was imperative to the success of my business. The food service classes helped me build a strong foundation for my kitchen skills, the experimental food science classes allowed me to explore alternative ingredients, and the plant-based food and nutrition classes for my minor emphasized the benefits of plant-based options and the plant-based lifestyle overall."



Phil Long

'83, Architecture
Owner, Longevity Wines

In 2002, Phil Long and his wife relocated to Northern California and began to make wine in the garage for fun. They opened Longevity Wines in 2008, and Long has become one of the most recognized African American winemakers in the world.

"One of the most rewarding aspects of my work is being able to mentor and guide a new generation of young persons of color in an industry where we make up less than 1 percent of the industry's population," Long says.

Materials from their winery are archived in University Library's Special Collections Unit.

"The creative spirit that CPP helped cultivate is applied to everything I do, from making our wines to designing new packaging and marketing," Long says.

Ron Essex