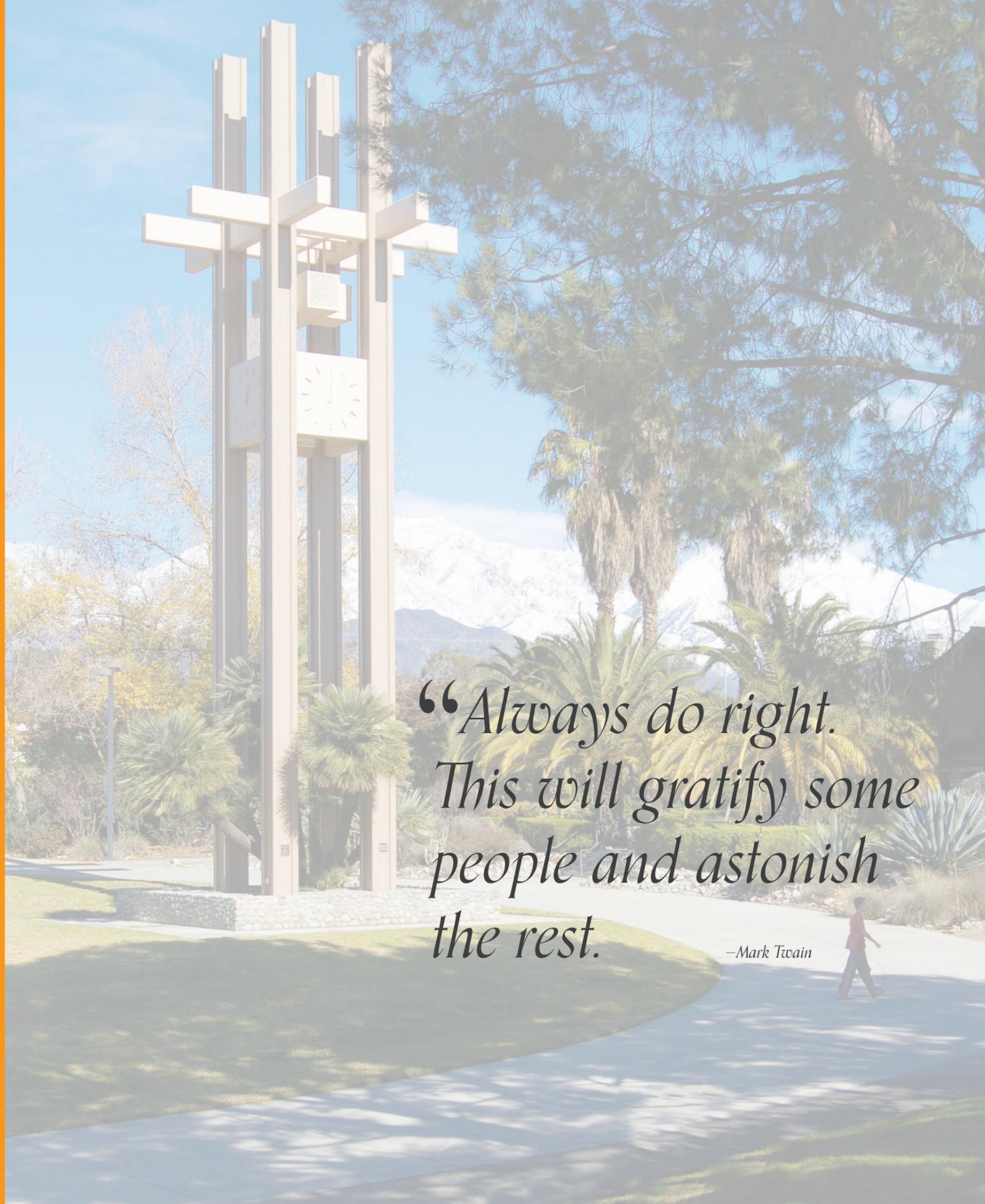


# PITZER COLLEGE

# The Participant

Special Spring/Summer Edition 2015 Vol. 48 No. 2





*“Always do right.  
This will gratify some  
people and astonish  
the rest.”*

*—Mark Twain*

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“ Presidential valedictories are appropriately institution-centric occasions. Metrics, data points and reputational indices represent a balance sheet of accomplishment that testify to a president’s devotion, stamina, resilience and, in Laura Trombley’s case, a courageous eye for the power of words.

At a time when presidential prose has been reduced to self-promotion, Laura has never forgotten that words have consequences. She has used her scholarship and commitment to liberal education to remind us that language, thought and creativity can transform the quality of our public life.

President Kennedy once asked, what good is a private college unless it serves a great national purpose? During the Trombley years, the extended Pitzer College community has affirmatively answered that question by demonstrating that its students and faculty’s qualities of mind and character still matter, that leadership, morality and idealism are not mutually exclusive, and that outstanding college presidents make a profound difference and leave a lasting legacy. ”

—Eugene M. Tobin,  
senior program officer, The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation

Editorial content and design by the Pitzer College Office of Communications. Photographs by members of the Pitzer community as well as professional photographers.

**On the Cover**  
Laura Skandera Trombley’s inauguration, February 15, 2003. Photograph by Professor Halford H. Fairchild.



## Laura Skandera Trombley

### A Leading, Learning Life

**I**N ONE OF her first columns for *The Participant*, Laura Skandera Trombley described a letter that Professor Emeritus Carl Hertel sent her after she was named Pitzer's fifth president. She recounted Hertel's observation that most experimental colleges born in the 1960s, like Pitzer, were meteor-like, bursting "brilliantly across the academic skies" before disappearing forever.

"After 40 years," Trombley wrote, "it is clear that we are more a comet and less a meteor. We reappear over and over again as light and direction are needed."

During her 13 years as president of Pitzer College, Trombley has provided both light and leadership and, on special occasions, an impressive Mark Twain impersonation. She arrived shortly before the College's 40th anniversary, and her departure—to become the president of the Huntington Library, Art Collections, and Botanical Gardens—comes a year after Pitzer's half-century celebrations.

From the beginning, Pitzer and its new president shared a fundamental faith in the promise of education's insatiable search for knowledge and understanding.

"We must always keep our deeper purpose foremost in our hearts and minds: to educate young people to see their world, in all its beauty and tragedy, in all its prejudices and judgments, in all its joy and promise," she said in her 2003 inauguration speech.

Both of Trombley's parents were educators. Her mother was an elementary school principal, one of only two female principals in her district at the time. Her father grew up in an orphanage on Long Island and found a path out of poverty by excelling academically, earning a scholarship to Pepperdine University and later a graduate degree at the University of Southern California. He taught the second grade for 30 years.



“Laura was my student at USC, and I have been proud to have been associated with her nearly from the first day I taught her. She has done everything right, and her new venture at the Huntington is another perfect choice. I confidently await the next venture after this, and the next and the next, to see all the wonderful things she will do!”

—Jay Martin, Leo S. Bing Professor Emeritus, USC

Like her parents, Trombley made a career in education (although her first official job was playing Raggedy Ann in Santa's Village in Lake Arrowhead). The girl who would grow up to earn early tenure didn't dawdle, enrolling at Pepperdine when she was 16. She received a BA in English and humanities and graduated summa cum laude with an MA in English. Pepperdine named her an Accomplished Alumni in 2002 and awarded her an honorary doctorate in 2013.

While pursuing a PhD in English at USC, Trombley discovered a stash of letters that shifted her scholarly interests from the shores of the English Channel to the banks of the Mississippi. She had been planning to write her dissertation on the British poet William Wordsworth when she investigated a report that a philatelist had a trove of 100 letters, signed by one S. L. Clemens. In those missives—written by Samuel Clemens, aka Mark Twain, and purchased for \$50—Trombley would find fascinating fodder not only for her dissertation, but for three books.

During grad school, Trombley taught American studies at the Catholic University of Eichstätt-Ingolstadt in Germany and received both the Lester and Irene Finkelstein Fellowship and the Virginia

Barbara Middleton Scholarship. She was tapped for early tenure as an English professor and delved into the administrative side of academia at State University of New York at Potsdam. In 1997, she took a position at Coe College in Cedar Rapids, Iowa, where she ultimately became dean of faculty and vice president of academic affairs.

Outside the classroom, she continued poring over the “crumbling letters and water-stained journals” of Mark Twain and his inner circle. Trombley soon established herself as a Twain scholar who revealed the complicated, contradictory character of the man known as “the Lincoln of our Literature.” The filmmaker Ken Burns

## Supporting Students

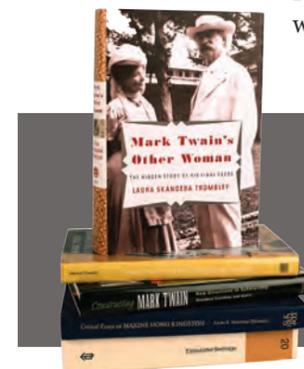
President Trombley's support of students with limited resources will continue long after her tenure at Pitzer. Both the **Laura Skandera Trombley Endowed Scholarship** and the **John Skandera Memorial Endowed Scholarship**—named after her father—provide funding for first-generation students with financial need. The **Laura Skandera Trombley Humanities and Arts Endowed Research and Internship Fund** helps Pitzer students pursue educational experiences outside the classroom. President Trombley, conquering her lifelong fear of roller coasters, recently raised \$2,050,217 for the fund by riding Knott's Berry Farm's 146-foot-high corkscrewing Silver Bullet for the “Roller Coaster Challenge.”



asked her to be in his 2002 documentary about Twain. “I had all the sad parts,” she said. “Whenever somebody died, I was on screen talking about it.”

Trombley was inaugurated as Pitzer's president on February 15, 2003. Under her leadership, Pitzer College grew, both figuratively and literally, rising dramatically in the national rankings, becoming the liberal arts leader in student Fulbright Fellows, tripling its endowment, shaving student debt, inaugurating innovative academic institutions, opening some of the greenest collegiate residential halls in the country and stretching its boundaries beyond Mills Avenue almost to the equator to encompass a 150-acre ecological preserve in Costa Rica.

Pitzer's longest-serving president has been recognized by numerous organizations. In 2008, Trombley won the CEO Leadership Award from the Council for Advancement and Support of Education District VII. She was named the first Thomas Nast Guest Professor at the University of Koblenz-Landau in Germany, and Pepperdine University gave her the Janet Z. Giele Award, which recognizes female leaders with a distinguished life course. In 2012, President Barack Obama appointed Trombley to the J. William Fulbright Foreign Scholarship Board. She was elected board vice chair in 2014.



## LST ISBN

President Trombley is the author of five books. Her most recent, *Mark Twain's Other Woman: The Hidden Story of His Final Years*, was published by Knopf in 2010 and issued in paperback by Vintage in 2011. Her other books are *Constructing Mark Twain: New Directions in Scholarship* (2001); *Critical Essays on Maxine Hong Kingston* (1998); *Mark Twain in the Company of Women* (1997); and *Epistemology: Turning Points in the History of Poetic Knowledge* (1986).



“During the past 13 years of living in Claremont, I’ve watched both my mom and Pitzer grow. It’s been an amazing experience to see the College evolve into an incredible institution and to see my mom really push to make Pitzer College the best it can be. Here’s hoping the Huntington realizes how lucky they are.

Proud of you, Mom!”

—Sparkey Trombley



In the midst of all of this, Trombley not only raised her son, Nelson “Sparkey” Trombley, she chiseled out hours—usually before 7 a.m. or after 10 p.m.—from a presidentially packed schedule to work on her fifth book, *Mark Twain’s Other Woman*. She co-taught a class on America’s Gilded Age, spoke around the country, wrote about the virtues of the liberal arts, served on countless committees and boards and traveled all over the world, from Belfast to Botswana, to talk about the Pitzer precedent. And she found time to prove a solid hitter in Pitzer’s seniors vs. faculty and staff softball games and waltz in at least one Dancing with the Claremont Stars competition.

During Pitzer’s 50th anniversary year, Trombley kicked off the celebration by hiking the John Muir Trail with Sparkey and members of the Pitzer community and summiting the highest peak in the continental US. She also oversaw the College’s largest fundraising campaign to date, which raised more than \$50 million.

On June 30, 2015, Laura Skandera Trombley leaves Pitzer College to become the first woman to head the Huntington Library. Since she arrived 13 years ago, Pitzer has morphed from a comet into a stable star in the constellation of the country’s top liberal arts schools, perfectly poised for the next chapter of its history.



Pitzer’s motto, *Provida Futuri*, with the earliest Pitzer students in mind, was composed to be read “A woman mindful of the future.” Over the ensuing years, Pitzer’s various executives, regardless of gender, were always appropriately *Providi Futuri*, but Laura Trombley was the first of them to become an *Auctor Futuri*: one who both enlarged and transformed Pitzer’s future. As such, she deserves to have this revised motto blazoned on her personal escutcheon.

—Stephen L. Glass  
Professor Emeritus of Classics



# ADDING UP

Pitzer by the numbers since academic year 2001–2002

## RANKINGS

Pitzer leads the nation in Fulbright Fellowship awardees per 1,000 students for 11 of the last 12 years



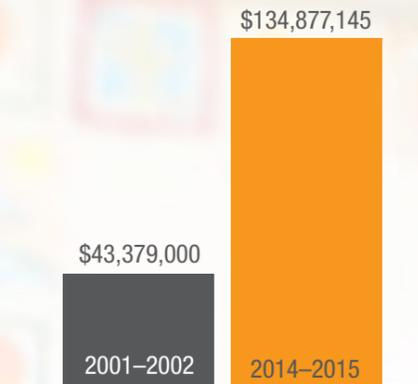
#1 in student Fulbrights for 5 straight years (2010–2014)

*U.S. News & World Report* rankings improve 50%, moving up 35 spots to #35 in 10 years

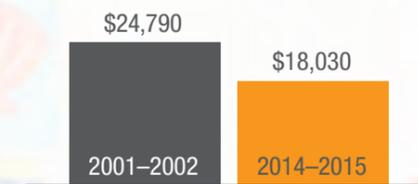
## FINANCIAL

**\$120 million** raised through completed campaigns

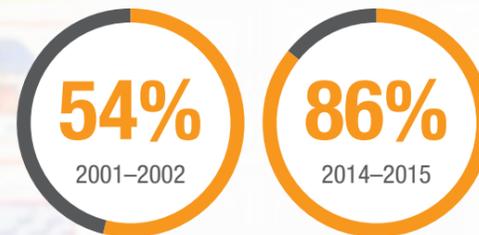
Moody's Investors Service increases Pitzer's financial rating to **A2 Stable** (the first A2 rating in Pitzer's history) at a time when it downgraded the entire US education sector to negative



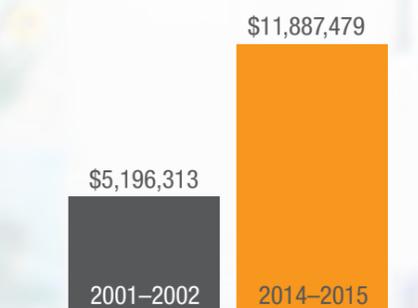
Endowment increases 211%



Pitzer graduate indebtedness decreases 27%



Overall institutional aid awarded grows from 54% to 86%



Amount of financial aid awarded increases 125%

## STUDENTS AND FACULTY



Entering student **GPA**s increase 11% (from 3.53 to 3.91)

Selectivity increases

**76%**

Admit rate shrinks from 54% to 13%



First-year student retention increases from just over 80% in 2002 to more than 95% in 2014



Student applications increase 88% (2,300 to 4,324)



Number of students studying abroad increases 34% to nearly 80%

Student/Faculty Ratio improves 29%



Size of the faculty increases 39%

## CAMPUS

Square footage of academic, residential and administrative buildings increases 30%

Pitzer's acreage increases 526%



- 34 Campus
- 150 Firestone Center for Restoration Ecology
- 12 North Campus
- 17 East Campus



Sustainable practices reduce water usage on campus 50%, and green building practices garner LEED Platinum or LEED Gold certification

Sources include the Office of Institutional Research & Assessment, the Office of the President and Campus Facilities

# Pitzer's 5<sup>th</sup> President

Following a nationwide search, noted Mark Twain scholar  
Laura Skandera Trombley takes office on July 1, 2002



“Laura impressed all of us with her confidence, energy, keen intelligence and deep commitment to the values of a liberal arts education.”

—Susan Pritzker P'93, chair, Pitzer College Board of Trustees, 2002

“Much like the philosopher Wittgenstein's metaphorical rope, I envision institutional success as the way the many individual strands combine to form a unified whole, and recognize that not a single strand runs through from beginning to end. Instead, it is the work of all the members of the Pitzer community.”

—Pitzer President Laura Skandera Trombley

## Dwelling in Possibility

In the story of Pitzer College, one strand with a red-headed hue runs from July 2002 to June 2015. Milestones from President Trombley's 13-year tenure show the overlapping threads—short, long, Pitzer-orange and otherwise—that form the College's continuity of community and its ongoing purpose and promise.



# 1st and 39th

President Trombley addresses her first class of graduating seniors in May 2003, during the College's 39th Commencement.

*“As president of Pitzer College, I give you your charge: learn all that you can every day you draw breath.”*

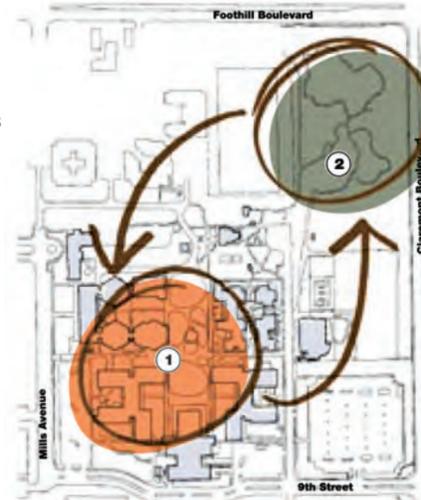


## A New Attitude about Aptitude

Pitzer makes headlines when it makes the SAT optional.

## Green Blueprints

The Pitzer College Housing Master Plan is finalized in May 2003 after six months of collaborative planning that involved more than 200 community participants.



*“Pitzer College was founded as a unique learning environment, and so it is today. However, Laura’s 13 years of leadership must be credited for Pitzer’s outstanding national rankings, highly recognized and emulated innovative programs and its solid financial base. Laura, for your energy, dedication, total commitment, wit and charm—thank you!”*

*—Deborah Deutsch Smith '68, trustee emerita*

*“Laura Skandera Trombley is a breath of fresh air in higher education and in her service to others. She is one whom we admire and always will. Personally, I am delighted her next role will find her still in Southern California, close to her many friends and those who hold her dear.”*

*—Andrew K. Benton, president, Pepperdine University*

## Navigating Mutual Understanding

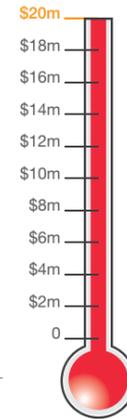
In 2003, Pitzer students win six Fulbright Fellowships, the most per capita of any undergraduate college in country—a feat students and alumni will repeat 11 times over the next dozen years.



# \$20 Million

## Dorm Raising

Pitzer raises more than \$20,000,000 for the Residential Life Project.



Residential Life Project Phase I official groundbreaking



## Community Works

Pitzer appears on the debut of the President's Higher Education Community Service Honor Roll in 2007. One hundred percent of Pitzer students engage in service learning before graduation.



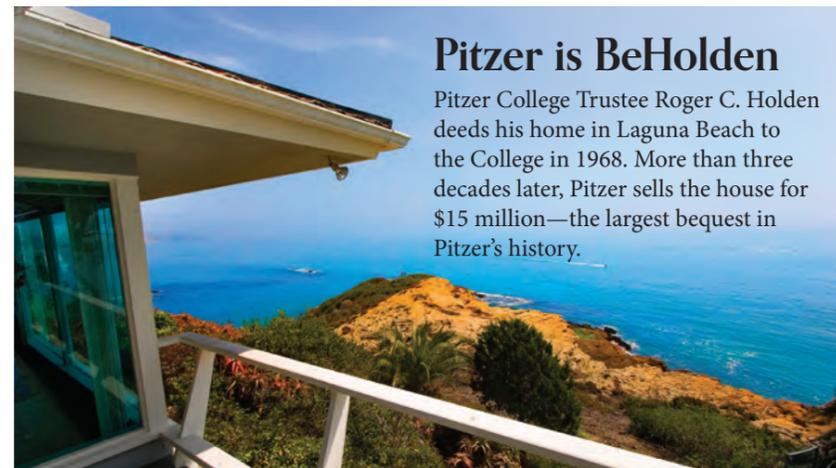
## YouUniversity

Professor of Media Studies Alexandra Juhasz launches Learning from YouTube, an innovative online course that captures national attention.



## Restoring Rainforest

Philanthropist Diane Firestone donates her 150-acre farm in Costa Rica to Pitzer in 2005. Today, the College's Firestone Center for Restoration Ecology is a biological reserve and base for undergraduate research.



## Pitzer is BeHolden

Pitzer College Trustee Roger C. Holden deeds his home in Laguna Beach to the College in 1968. More than three decades later, Pitzer sells the house for \$15 million—the largest bequest in Pitzer's history.

“Intelligence, fortitude, focus, keen leadership skills, an inspiration to all around her. These are just some of the descriptors I would apply to Laura. She turned Pitzer into a world-class institution of higher learning that teaches students to strive not just for the best they can be, but for doing what will make the world around them the best that it can be. She is one of the greatest assets Pitzer College has ever had.”

—Mary Beth Garber '68, EVP, Katz Radio Group

My wife, Edye,  
and I have been impressed  
with Laura Trombley's leadership  
of Pitzer College over the past 13 years.  
She has transformed Pitzer, dramatically  
raising its national profile in the *U.S. News*  
ranking, tripling the College's endowment  
and leading an ambitious capital improvement  
campaign. We thank her for her many  
accomplishments, which will serve Pitzer well  
in the coming years, and we wish her great  
success in her new position as president of  
the Huntington Library.

—Eli Broad P'78  
Trustee Emeritus

## Getting Gold for Going Green

In fall 2007, environmentalists Robert Redford and Ed Begley Jr. help dedicate Phase I of the Residential Life Project. The buildings become the first college student housing project to earn the US Green Building Council's LEED Gold certification.



## Innovative Inoculation

Under the direction of Visiting Professor of Biology Larry Grill, Pitzer establishes the Ferré/Marquet Vaccine Research Center in 2008 to develop cost-effective vaccine production techniques to fight diseases in southern Africa.

## Ditching Dining Hall Trays

To save water and reduce food waste, Pitzer removes trays from the dining hall, making the College one of the first in the nation to go trayless.

## For Inquiring Minds

In honor of founding faculty members Lee and Ruth Hagberg Munroe, Pitzer creates the Munroe Center for Social Inquiry (MCSI). Jean Pitzer Professor of Anthropology and Professor of History Daniel Segal is MCSI's inaugural director.

“ Besides all those other things I can claim to be—Laura's colleague, a faculty member under her presidency and her friend—I have been Laura's closest neighbor for the past decade. She has been ideal, especially in times of personal crisis and loss. ”

—Lee Munroe,  
founding faculty member  
and research professor of anthropology



## A CASE for Leadership

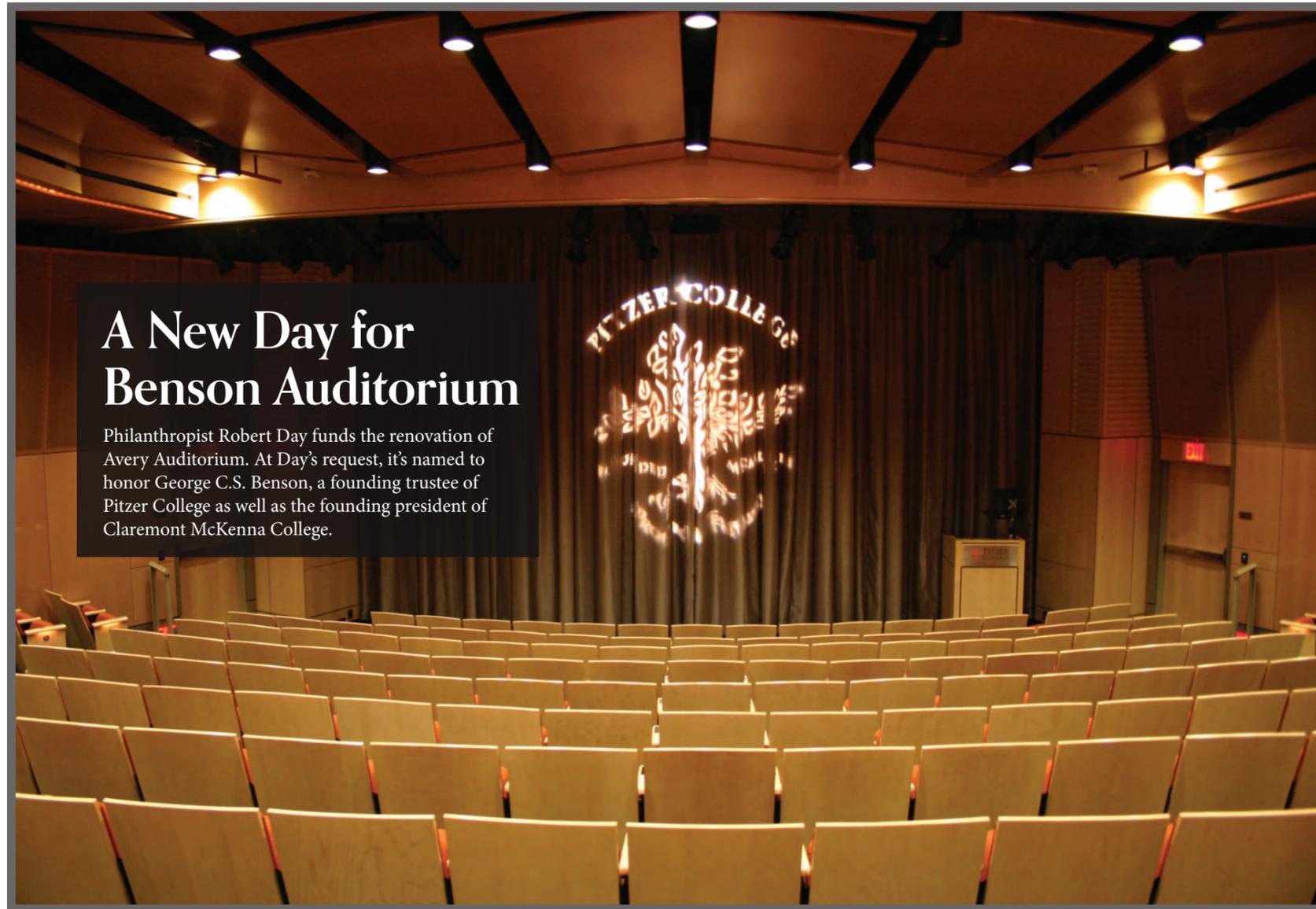
In 2008, the Council for Advancement and Support of Education recognizes President Trombley with its CEO leadership award.

“Congratulations—and very sincere thanks for waiting as long as you did to start your next chapter.”

—Randy White P'14

## Intercollegiate, Interdisciplinary, Inter-iguing

The Claremont Colleges increase cross-campus programs, creating Environmental Analysis at the Claremont Colleges, Intercollegiate Media Studies and the W.M. Keck Science Department's neuroscience program.



## A New Day for Benson Auditorium

Philanthropist Robert Day funds the renovation of Avery Auditorium. At Day's request, it's named to honor George C.S. Benson, a founding trustee of Pitzer College as well as the founding president of Claremont McKenna College.



## A Lotta Lattes

The Pit-Stop Café opens in Bernard Hall in 2009.

“It has been wonderful working with Laura on the Council of Presidents for the past nine years. With great leadership and collegiality, she transformed Pitzer and had a huge impact on The Claremont Colleges.”

—Maria Klawe, president, Harvey Mudd College



## So Long, Lawn

Pitzer replaces Scott Hall and Broad Center's thirsty lawns with low-water gardens as part of the Arboretum Reclamation Project. Joe Clements, a former curator of the Huntington Gardens, oversees the project.

“...the most sophisticated and artfully presented collection of succulents, desert plants and Mediterranean-climate plants outside of a botanical garden...”

—Pacific Horticulture magazine

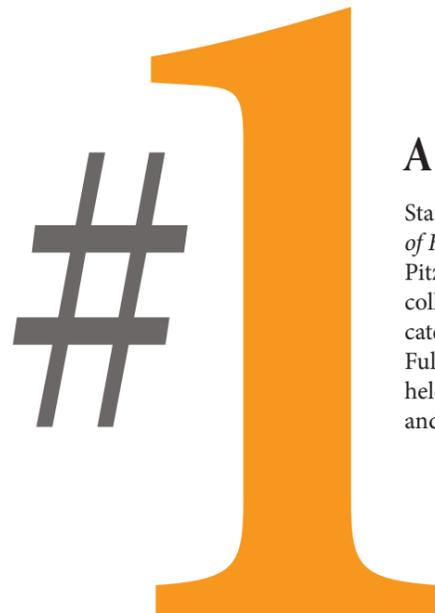


“Your tenure at Pitzer College has been both distinguished and extraordinary. I wish you continued success as president of the Huntington Library.”

—C. L. Max Nikias, president, University of Southern California

## A Fulbright Force

Starting in 2010, *The Chronicle of Higher Education* ranks Pitzer #1 among all US colleges in the undergraduate category for producing student Fulbright Fellows. Pitzer has held this position for five years and counting.



“President Trombley’s value-driven accomplishments shine as a beacon for all of higher education. Her critical insights, keen wit and strong values have both driven and reflected the remarkable success of the Pitzer College community and contributed immeasurably to the singular achievements of The Claremont Colleges.”

—Hiram E. Chodosh, president, Claremont McKenna College



### Framing in the Future

Construction on Phase II of the Residential Life Project gets underway in spring 2011.

### Culinary Kudos

Pitzer’s dining hall is routinely ranked one of the healthiest and tastiest in the US.

### Studying the Secular

In 2011, Professor of Sociology Phil Zuckerman launches Pitzer’s secular studies program—the first of its kind in the country.

### Stewarding Scholarship

Students in Restoring Nature, a class led by Professor of Environmental Analysis Paul Faulstich ’79, P’15 learn preservation and restoration techniques in the College’s Outback Preserve.



“Laura has worked hard to strengthen the Pomona-Pitzer relationship in athletics and many other areas. Her leadership at Pitzer in the area of sustainability has set an example for all of us in Claremont.”

—David Oxtoby, president, Pomona College

### Pitzer Perfect

Pitzer scores the only perfect 10 in College Prowler’s ranking of the greenest colleges in the country.

### Media is the Message

The Mosbacher/Gartrell Center for Media Experimentation and Activism opens in 2012.



Far too often, we know leadership by its absence. So when it is vibrantly present, this is beautiful, exceptional. Rippling! Laura, thank you for your intellect, heart and humor in lifting and propelling Pitzer into its next 50 years of preparing students for global citizenship and with tools to repair the world.

—Robin M. Kramer '75  
Trustee



When Laura and I hiked the John Muir Trail to celebrate the College's 50th anniversary, I had just graduated from Pitzer and was terrified of my future. Tromb-Bomb's biting humor and ceaselessly positive attitude during that journey brought stability to that beautiful, unforgiving trail and continue to inform my outlook on life. Everything's going to be all right.

—Alyssa Solis '13

**"...break clear away, once in a while, and climb a mountain..."** —John Muir

Pitzer's 50th anniversary celebration scales new heights with a trek on the John Muir Trail. Students, alumni, faculty, family and President Trombley summit Mt. Whitney in summer 2013.



“Most striking memory: Laura and I standing on top of Mt. Whitney—highest point in the continental US at 14,505 feet. That she raised some money for Pitzer scholarships in the process was just the icing on the cake.”

—Brian Keeley, professor of philosophy

### Super Selective

Pitzer is named the 20th most selective higher education institution in the country by *Business Insider*.

### Fulbright Heads West

The J. William Fulbright Foreign Scholarship Board's first meeting in Southern California takes place at Pitzer in November 2013.



### Expanding the Field

From 2002-15, Pitzer hired 14 new professors in field groups including art, environmental analysis, mathematics, media studies and philosophy.

14

“In addition to her engaging leadership, the president inspired my research by offering many constructive insights, sharing her personal publishing experience and supporting my visiting fellowship to Cambridge University.”

—Ahmed Alwishah, associate professor of philosophy

\$51,269,469

**50 Million  
for 50Forward**

7,413 donors + 25,706 gifts and pledges = \$51,269,469, making the 50Forward campaign the most successful fundraising campaign in Pitzer's history.



**50 & Fabulous!**

Pitzer's yearlong 50th birthday celebration culminates with the Orange & White Ball, full of fun and festivities as Earth, Wind & Fire turns campus into a "Boogie Wonderland."

“I remember the dress that Kathy Kile '97 made Laura for the 50th Anniversary Orange & White Ball. I had contributed some of the plastic bags that it was made out of, as had others from the Pitzer community. I hope Laura takes the dress with her, thus bringing a part the Pitzer community to her new life.”

—Ming-Yuen S. Ma,  
professor of media studies



**Residence Renewed**

Pitzer remedies structural problems in its nearly 100-year-old President's Residence while preserving the home's historic integrity and increasing accessibility and sustainability. The house is the first single-family residence in Claremont to earn LEED for Homes certification from the US Green Building Council.



“Come join the party. It's so much fun to do the right thing.” —President Trombly

**Investing in  
Divesting**

Pitzer's Fossil Fuel Divestment-Climate Action Model calls for divesting the endowment of fossil fuel stocks. Pitzer is the first college in Southern California to divest.

“I continue to marvel at Pitzer College's ability to take risks that pay off and go where many other educational institutions dare not go.”

—Robert Redford, trustee



**A Transformative Tenure**

In December 2014, President Trombly announces that she has accepted the presidency of The Huntington Library, Art Collections, and Botanical Gardens, becoming the first woman to lead the institution.

# An Open Letter to President Trombley

## A Very Pitzer President

“We’re not in Cedar Rapids anymore” could be a line from President Laura Skandera Trombley’s inaugural address in 2003. She came to Pitzer from Coe College in Iowa as a first-time president, eager to make an impact on the institution in its adolescent years, just as she was evolving and fine-tuning her own leadership skills and style.

She brought energy and vision to the College, rallying, cajoling, convincing, motivating, recruiting and supporting new ideas and bold moves—how very “Pitzer” she was right out of the gate. That passion convinced me to join the Board of Trustees in her second year, and it has been a tremendously rewarding journey working alongside her and an amazing group of trustees to implement much of that vision.

As she transitions to her next chapter, the Pitzer College Board of Trustees thanks her for transforming the physical footprint of the College while maintaining a financially sound balance sheet; building new programs to extend Pitzer’s mission, in both its global reach and environmental leadership; expanding the depth in faculty to achieve the highest level of engagement between students and teachers; and building a national brand that is synonymous with Pitzer’s core values.

Laura, with the utmost respect and admiration for your leadership these past 13 years, we wish you the very best in your new role.

—Shahan Soghikian '80, chair, Pitzer College Board of Trustees



President Trombley,

My name is Fernando Calderón Jr., and I am an alumnus from the Class of 2009; to give you a better idea of who I am, I’m the alumnus who has the College motto, “Provida Futuri,” tattooed on his left forearm.

My relationship with Pitzer College began long before I was a student. After being a self-employed housekeeper for more than 20 years, my mother took a job as a member of the Pitzer facilities crew. Her duties included cleaning and maintaining classrooms and administrative buildings, and while her position may seem like just any other job to some, for my family it was a job that would forever change our lives.

For the first time in her life, my mother had access to medical benefits, paid vacation days and a

schedule that allowed her to pick up her kids from school. More importantly, it gave my mother a work environment where she was not seen nor treated as the invisible help; she always beamed when she described students holding open doors for her and her work cart and smiling at her and making conversation as they walked to class. The Pitzer community treated my mother as an equal, and it was for that reason that she took me to campus with her one day when I was 15. This simple act made me fall in love with this beautiful campus that was less than

**L**AURA SKANDERA TROMBLEY shared scholarly reflections and the personal side of being presidential in essays published in *The Chronicle of Higher Education* between 2002 and 2015.

**2002**

After working on Ken Burns' documentary *Mark Twain*, Trombley recounts the great raconteur's foibles. "If only Twain had sung in a rock group, he'd be a ripe subject for one of VH1's *Behind the Music* exposés," she writes in "Where the Twains Meet."

**2003**

She grapples with "the gender-based pressure on me to demonstrate at every turn that motherhood would not 'interfere' with my professionalism" in "The Facts of Life for an Administrator and a Mother."

**2008**

In "The Night I Almost Died," she describes the 4 a.m. flurry of phone calls she made from an emergency room after developing blood clots in both lungs. "Faced with the prospect of my impending mortality, I switched to automatic pilot and began to administrate."

**2010**

She urged college leaders to do everything they can to create an "America where education for all is treasured, protected and supported" in "Huck Finn is Everywhere."

**2014**

In "What's in a Name?," Trombley talks about an adoptee's search for self. "For the adopted, coming to terms with one's identity is a lifelong struggle."

**2015**

"13 Years of a College Presidency," Trombley's last essay as Pitzer's president, reveals the challenges of leadership in higher education.



a 10-minute drive from my hometown of Pomona and made me want to attend more than anything else.

Fast-forward to my time at the College as a first-generation college student. Not only was my mind decolonized from the social constructs of mainstream society through the amazing education I received, but the College quickly became my home. It was a place where I felt safe and comfortable enough to come out of the closet and embrace the person I really am; it was the place where I made friends who were completely different than I was; and it was the place that encouraged me to use my voice to speak out against all of the social, cultural and ethical inequalities that were happening in the world around me. I was able to make a positive change in my community and have my voice heard through my three-year involvement as a resident assistant and my participation in numerous clubs and organizations. To this day, the best memories I have of my life are of my experiences as a student, and I am always proud to tell people that I didn't just "go to college"...rather, I tell them that I had the Pitzer College experience, an experience that completely changed the trajectory of my life.

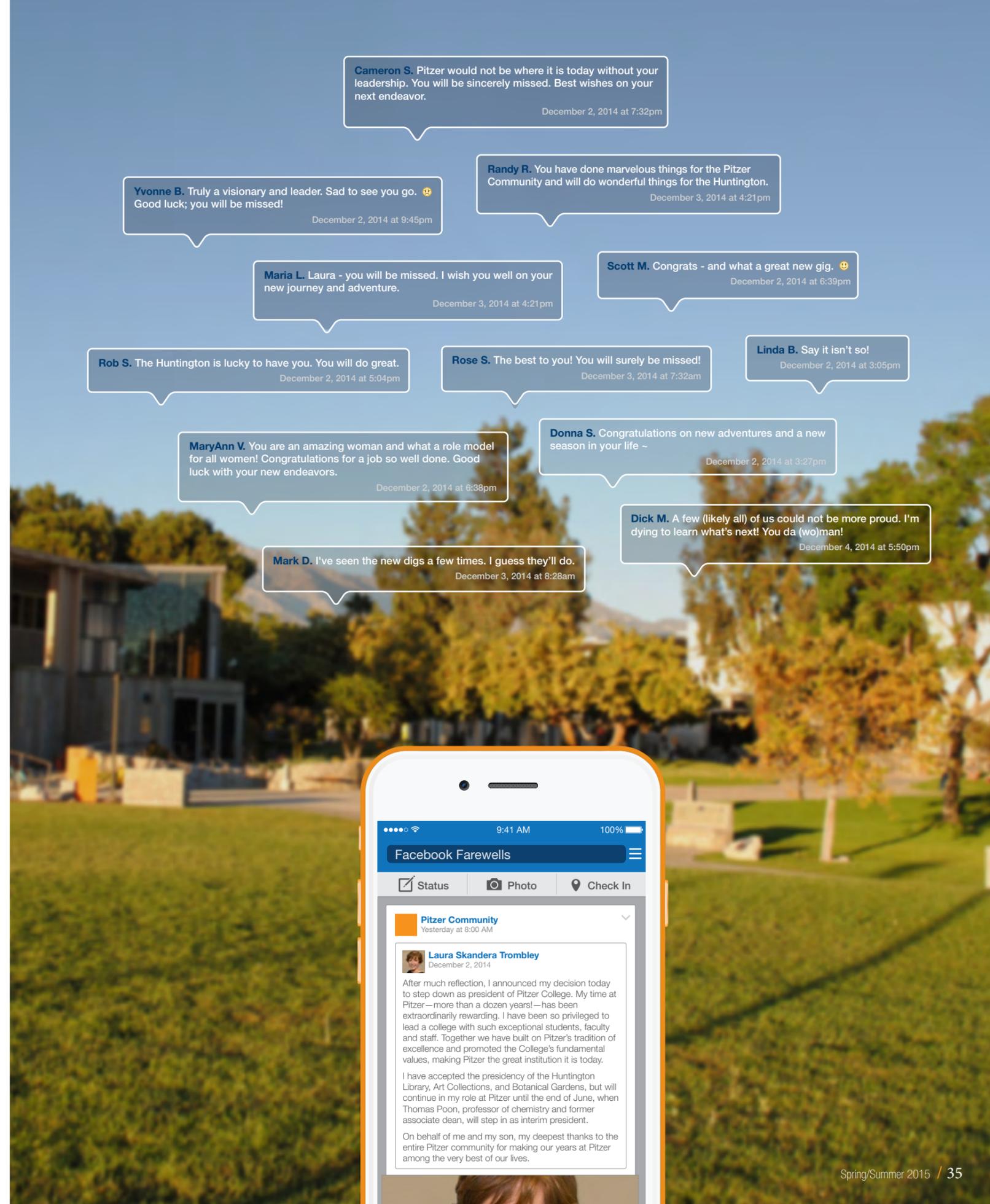
When I graduated in 2009, I was fortunate to secure a job working for the Pitzer Office of Admission as a part-time counselor while I pursued my master's degree at the graduate school down the street. Once the son of a facilities worker, I was now traveling to high schools on behalf of the College to recruit students for the next entering class. As a staff member, I saw how unique and special the College was when it came to the administration, and how most of that was because of the leadership you provided. I admired how involved you were when it came to every office and department on campus, and often wondered how you did it all and still kept yourself sane. After reading the piece you wrote for *The Chronicle of Higher Education* on your 13 years of presidency, I now see just how strong you are.

I say all of this to build up to the immensely large expression of gratitude I have for you, and everything you've done for the College. I thank you for helping to oversee and maintain a community where everyone, from the students to the facilities workers, feel that they belong; I thank you for staying true to yourself and the mission statement of the College during challenging times; and most importantly, I thank you for taking the time out of your very busy schedule to maintain relationships with the student body, a privilege that not every college student has these days.

“I am always proud to tell people that I didn't just 'go to college'...rather, I tell them that I had the Pitzer College experience...”

The college you oversaw for the past 13 years not only changed my mother's life, it changed my life forever as well, in ways that you cannot imagine. From the bottom of my heart, thank you so very much for all of the years of service you have dedicated to the College, and for helping to keep the spirit of Pitzer alive and true to its core philosophy and beliefs. You have earned the eternal gratitude and respect of this Pitzer alumnus, and I wish you the absolute very best in your future endeavors.

Respectfully,  
Fernando Calderón Jr. '09



**Cameron S.** Pitzer would not be where it is today without your leadership. You will be sincerely missed. Best wishes on your next endeavor.  
December 2, 2014 at 7:32pm

**Yvonne B.** Truly a visionary and leader. Sad to see you go. 😞  
Good luck; you will be missed!  
December 2, 2014 at 9:45pm

**Randy R.** You have done marvelous things for the Pitzer Community and will do wonderful things for the Huntington.  
December 3, 2014 at 4:21pm

**Maria L.** Laura - you will be missed. I wish you well on your new journey and adventure.  
December 3, 2014 at 4:21pm

**Scott M.** Congrats - and what a great new gig. 😊  
December 2, 2014 at 6:39pm

**Rob S.** The Huntington is lucky to have you. You will do great.  
December 2, 2014 at 5:04pm

**Rose S.** The best to you! You will surely be missed!  
December 3, 2014 at 7:32am

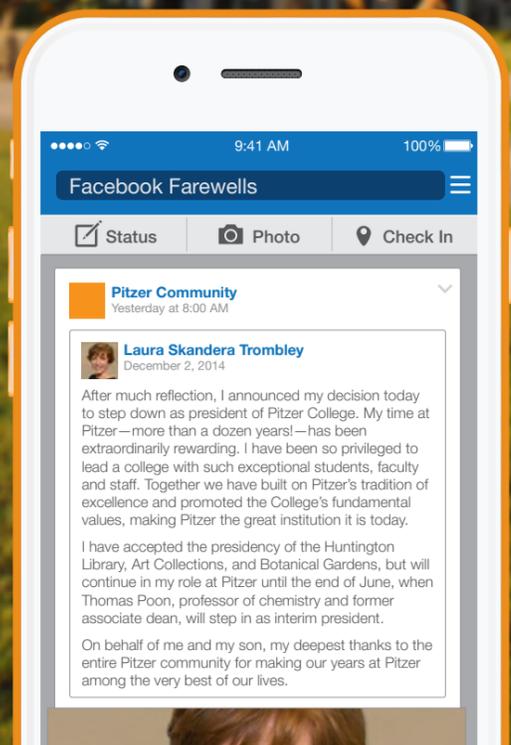
**Linda B.** Say it isn't so!  
December 2, 2014 at 3:05pm

**MaryAnn V.** You are an amazing woman and what a role model for all women! Congratulations for a job so well done. Good luck with your new endeavors.  
December 2, 2014 at 6:38pm

**Donna S.** Congratulations on new adventures and a new season in your life ~  
December 2, 2014 at 3:27pm

**Mark D.** I've seen the new digs a few times. I guess they'll do.  
December 3, 2014 at 8:28am

**Dick M.** A few (likely all) of us could not be more proud. I'm dying to learn what's next! You da (wo)man!  
December 4, 2014 at 5:50pm



# Photo Finish

“We’re leaving Pitzer together to travel down unfamiliar roads and to experience new adventures.”

—Laura Skandera Trombley to the Class of 2015

Pitzer’s longest-serving president spent the last semester of her 13 years at the College ever in motion and ever mindful of Pitzer’s future. She saw far-flung friends of the College and raised funds for students during her 2015 Farewell Tour, traveling across the country and across the Pacific to Hong Kong. At Family Weekend, Alumni Reunion and Commencement, President Trombley and the Pitzer community celebrated shared accomplishments, mutual memories and new adventures.



“Laura, you have been a tremendous leader at Pitzer. You have helped make Pitzer a truly great institution and one of the finest liberal arts colleges in the US. The Huntington Library is very fortunate to have you at its helm. May all the years ahead bring you great joy.”

—Ron Burkle, P’98



“You have inspired and influenced our entire community with your intellect, energy, drive and passion, and we will miss you and your matching *Provida Futuri* hair! I will forever treasure our experiences of scary monkeys in Kathmandu, racing cars in Arizona, boogie-ing at the 50th and Twain Cocktails in Toluca Lake.”

—Bridget Baker '82, trustee





*“Life should not be a journey to the grave with the intention of arriving safely in a pretty and well-preserved body, but rather to skid in broadside in a cloud of smoke, thoroughly used up, totally worn out and loudly proclaiming, ‘Wow! What a ride!’”*

*—Laura Skandera Trombley, quoting a line attributed to Hunter S. Thompson, during her last commencement as Pitzer’s president*



# PITZER COLLEGE

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