Dear Members of the Caltech Community,

The Caltech Postdoc Association (CPA) would like to take this opportunity to present its third Annual Report. This report details how the CPA has used the financial resources provided to us by the Office of the Provost to put forth various programs and activities over the past year. The report also lays out future programming possibilities for the next year and describes the funds necessary for achieving these programming goals.

The CPA has made significant progress in bettering the postdoctoral experience at Caltech and JPL. We have successfully lobbied to raise the minimum salary at Caltech after participating in a survey of postdoc benefits at several institutions across the country. With this salary increase, Caltech is now able to better compete financially with these comparable institutions, thus offering an attractive package consisting of salary and benefits that are more commensurate to our value to the Institute.

In addition, the CPA elected several new members to its Board this past spring. However we are always looking for additional help and hope to recruit new postdocs from among our population. Any amount of time and energy you could possibly spare would be greatly appreciated! Contact us at cpa-discussion@its.caltech.edu if you are interested.

Furthermore, the program schedule offered by the CPA was greatly expanded this past year to include many additional social, career-related, and outreach activities. These include organized trips to the theater, the career-based Personal Excellence series, and volunteering in local classrooms at McKinley elementary school here in Pasadena.

The CPA Board would like to take this opportunity to thank the many faculty, administrators, and staff who have provided new and continued support of our organization. In particular we would like to thank the Office of the Provost, who greatly facilitated the handling of our financial situation by centralizing our funding through their office. We also would like to thank our fellow postdocs, without whom our various programming and events would not be possible. I personally would like to thank the talented Board members with whom I have worked this past year, and I am looking forward to working with the current Board during my last year as CPA Chair.

On behalf of the Board, we will strive to offer a wide variety of superior programming for you in the future, working towards improving the quality of life, both personally and professionally, for postdocs at Caltech and JPL.

Best,

Lisa Taneyhill
CPA Chair 2004
MISSION STATEMENT

The Caltech Postdoc Association (CPA) seeks to foster a sense of community, provide resources for career and personal development, and to provide a framework for representation on campus and in the local community for postdoctoral scholars from all departments of the Institute.

MEMBERS OF THE CPA BOARD

Lisa Taneyhill, Chair
Chad A. Haynes, Treasurer
Timothy Canty, Social Chair
David Alderson, Career Chair
Dan Rizzuto, External Affairs Officer
Claudine Chen, Advocacy Co-Chair
Koby Scheuer, Advocacy Co-Chair
Jenny Patience, Outreach Chair
Ed Coles, Secretary
REPORTS FROM THE CPA COMMITTEES

CPA Social Committee

The goal of this committee is to provide social activities for postdocs and their families and to help new postdocs adjust to life at Caltech. We offer events that are of general interest to the postdoc community. We have continued events that were popular in the past and have started new ones. We also solicit input from the postdoc community to see what other types of events people would be interested in.

As in prior years, we held our **monthly social hours**. These events are a great way for new postdocs to meet their peers at Caltech and give them an opportunity to make some new friends. They are held at one of the recreation rooms at the Catalina apartments on the first Friday of every month. These are well attended events with an average of about 75 people. Food and drinks are provided.

We also hosted our **annual Fall BBQ on September 19, 2004 at Tournament Park**, as a means of welcoming new postdocs to Caltech, as well as providing a family event for postdocs with children. This event was catered by Mesquite BBQ. There was food, drinks, music, games, prizes, and piñatas. Roughly 150 postdocs and their families attended and had a wonderful time.

We recently started a new **theater program** that has become very popular. Once a month we arrange a trip for postdocs to attend local play. The CPA does not subsidize the cost of the tickets but we arrange for group discounts. Members have seen “The Matchmaker”, “The Nerd”, and “Beau Jest”.

We plan to continue these events and have discussed future activities. Many postdocs have asked that we reincarnate the ski trips that were popular in previous years. The CPA did not subsidize these trips but helped organize them. We have also discussed the possibility of a trip to Las Vegas. We hope to organize short hiking trips around local parks in the future, as well as museum outings.

**Budget:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Monthly Social Hours:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Food (Burger Continental)</td>
<td>$200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drinks</td>
<td>$300</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monthly Social Hours Total ($500x12)=$6000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall BBQ</td>
<td>$3000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miscellaneous events</td>
<td>$1000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Requested</td>
<td><strong>$10 000</strong></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
CPA Career Development Committee

The CPA Career Development Committee has put forth a variety of activities this past fiscal year to facilitate the career-related goals of postdocs. We have continued to hold our **monthly brown bag lunch seminar series** in which speakers from various scientific and non-scientific disciplines have talked informally about their professions with postdocs and grad students. The majority of these brown bag lunches have been videotaped, and the videotapes are available for viewing at the Caltech Career Development Center (CDC). To round out our career programming for 2003, we featured seminars that focused on developing public speaking skills, and highlighted careers in external affairs and chemistry.

We also sponsored several workshops in 2004, beginning with an **NSF grants workshop** in March 2004, followed by a workshop sponsored in conjunction with the **Caltech Project for Effective Teaching (CPET)** in May 2004. Each of those workshops were well-attended by the Caltech community. We then kicked off our **Summer Personal Excellence Series** in June with a Work/Life Balance workshop given by Amy Malak and Susan Cross. In July we held a workshop geared towards understanding various personalities and working styles using the Meyers Briggs Type Indicator, and August featured two workshops, a **Goalsetting workshop** and a **mock academic job search workshop**. Both events received much praise from the participants.

Finally, in September 2004, we co-sponsored the **Caltech Ph.D/Postdoc Career Conference**. This large-scale, Institute-wide event featured topics ranging from building a successful academic or industrial lab, searching for employment in academia, industry, and other careers such as patent law and consulting, and developing managing and mentoring skills.

Our programming and expenses for FY2005 are outlined below:

1. **Brown Bag Lunch series (Monthly):**
   Expenses
   - Airfare for speakers: $200 x 12 = $2400
   - Lunch for speakers and some participants: $100 x 12 = $1200
   - Refreshments: $20 x 12 = $240
   - Advertising: $300

2. **Ph.D./Postdoc Career Conference (September 2004)**
   Expenses
   - Refreshments: $1000

3. **Other workshops (speaker fees and accommodations):** $7500

4. **CPA Support for Caltech Biotechnology Club**
   Expenses: $500

Thus, we will require approximately **$13,200** to cover our programming for FY2005.

Career Development Committee
CPA Outreach Activities

2003-2004 Chair: Ashish Mahabal (aam@astro.caltech.edu)
2004-2005 Chair: Jenny Patience (patience@astro.caltech.edu)

2003-2004 Outreach Summary

During the 2003-2004 academic year, Caltech postdocs developed a program of science talks and experiments for a class at the nearby McKinley grade school in the Pasadena Unified School District. The class consisted of advanced 4th and 5th grade students and the aim was to expose the students to areas of science not covered in a typical curriculum. A different postdoc visited the school once each month from November to May and presented a short lecture followed by hands-on experiments for students to perform. The series of topics for the 2003-2004 year were:

- Nov: Lunar Phases/Eclipses and Formation of the Elements
- Dec: Light and Atoms
- Jan: Cells and DNA
- Feb: The Moon and Meteorites
- Mar: Minerals
- Apr: The Nervous System
- May: Earthquakes

In preparation for each visit, the students were given a short summary of the upcoming class and a set of questions to consider. The summaries and pre-visit questions are available online at [http://cpa.caltech.edu/outreach/gate_program.html](http://cpa.caltech.edu/outreach/gate_program.html) (separate link for each class).

The students were very receptive to the program, asked many questions, and were actively involved in the experiments. Examples of the activities designed by the postdocs for the students to perform include: making models of the Sun-Earth-Moon system to simulate lunar phases, observing eggs at various stages of development, and forming artificial craters to study some of the properties of lunar craters. The McKinley teacher was also very supportive of the efforts to bring additional science opportunities to the students. Example images of the students studying lunar phases and learning about the Moon are given below.
2003-2004 Budget

No funds were expended; however, the postdocs covered the incidental costs of supplies and handouts for the class. A small budget is requested for 2004-2005 to reimburse postdocs for these costs and to provide the students with a few items detailed below.

2004-2005 Outreach Plans

Because of the success of the McKinley school program, the CPA plans to organize another series of monthly visits to the school. Postdoc volunteers will again be solicited to plan and present one lecture. If there is enough support from the postdocs, then more frequent visits or a similar program at another school will be considered.

To plan for the coming school year, two postdocs attended a Pasadena science teacher training day to learn more about the needs of local grade school science teachers. Based on this meeting, several areas were identified in which postdocs may be able to contribute to local schools: participation at career days so that the students can learn about scientific jobs, visiting classes doing a science activity in an area related to the background of the postdoc, and judging at local science fairs. Recognizing that postdocs are very busy with research, these and all CPA-sponsored outreach efforts are designed so that the postdoc volunteers spend only a few hours in preparation and 1-2 hours with the class for a visit or an afternoon at a school for a career day or science fair.

Since some postdocs may be interested in volunteer projects in the community, but uncomfortable teaching young children, the CPA outreach committee will work with the Caltech Y to find a more general outreach project such as the “Make a Difference Day” once or twice per semester that postdocs will be welcome to join.

2004-2005 Budget

For the coming school year, we request an amount of funds sufficient to cover the cost of supplies for the class experiments and to provide a folder for the students to keep the handouts and a kit to make simple telescopes for one visit.

Caltech ring binder for each student: 50 students x $2.25 = $112.50
Telescope kit for each student: 50 students x $6.00 = $300.00
Supplies for 10 visits: 10 visits x $50.00 = $500.00
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Total Budget request: $1000.00
The Advocacy committee has worked this past year to better quantify the quality of life of postdocs through the second annual postdoc survey, and has worked with the Caltech administration to address issues in the areas of salary, retirement, and housing. We’ve also continued our involvement in WMW (Women Mentoring Women) and have suggested some improvements in HR processing that have been adopted.

- **Survey** - In the fall of 2003 the committee implemented the second annual postdoc survey designed to gain a better understanding of the needs and concerns of postdocs at Caltech. 210 postdocs completed the survey, which represents about 40% of the total Caltech postdoc population. Based on the survey results, the CPA advocacy committee has focused on a few priority areas: salary, maternity leave, retirement benefits and housing. Currently, the advocacy committee is preparing our involvement in a national postdoc survey through Sigma Xi to be launched in September or October 2004.

- **Salary** - Discussions with administration and faculty has led to a raise in the minimum salary for postdocs, with promises of future raises to stay at or above the NIH scale for new postdocs. Traditionally, the NIH pay scale has been used as the de facto minimum salary scale for postdocs at Caltech and elsewhere. For fiscal year 2005, the minimum for postdoctoral scholars is $35,000, $37,000 for senior postdocs. Also, postdocs transferring from fellowship to non-fellowship sources of income may experience one month without a paycheck due to changing payroll dates. Emergency loan funds are now available for postdocs who will expect this transition in payroll dates.

- **Housing** - Housing was very responsive to the idea of transforming their waitlisted, long-term apartments into fully furnished transitional and emergency housing. Four apartments were set aside for this fall, and are already reserved through December for emergency housing for up to six months. Priority is given to international students and postdocs with families. Transitional housing for up to one year is now available from the housing office. We hope that this will eliminate the need for a waitlist and will allow all arriving postdocs to be placed with such housing if they so desire.

- **Women Mentoring Women** - In collaboration with the Women's Center, the CPA implemented the Women Mentoring Women Program. The program matches women graduate students with women postdocs in an interaction that promotes the professional development of both parties. The 2003-2004 full academic year program had 62 women participating (31 matches). There were a variety of social and career development events which culminated in very positive evaluations by both the mentors and protégées. A new program year is set to begin in October 2004 with 25 matches as the maximum.

- **Human Resources** - Additionally, our active dialogue with the Postdoc Office has lead to a few improvements in HR protocol: 1) development of an exit survey to track postdoc success in the job search, 2) implementation of the new welcome section for postdocs on the HR site, and 3) implementation of a survey for the quality of check-ins through HR.

For FY2004, CPA-advocacy operational costs were $1135.44, and we anticipate that those costs will continue to be on the same scale for next year. In addition to these operating costs, the Women’s Mentoring Program would like to bring in Linda Babcock, writer of *Women Don’t Ask*. She will be giving the group a discounted rate, with the CPA’s share being $750.00. The final tally for the Advocacy budget is $2000.00.
REPORT FROM THE TREASURER

Change in net assets in FY2004

Assets as of 10/02/03

Campus POETA account “PROV.PDA” $-297.60
Campus POETA account “DLG.00027” $4544.63

Total $4247.03

Assets as of 9/20/04

Campus POETA account “PROV.PDA” $-445.75
Campus POETA account “DLG.00027” $65.09

Total $-380.66

Change in assets for FY2004 $-3866.37

Cash flow activity for 2004

Office of the Provost $20000.00
Office of Human Resources $1000

Total revenues1 $25247.03

Summary of expenses for POETA PROV.PDA

Social 7691.80
Organization 2960.13
Advocacy 1135.44
Career 9182.52
Miscellaneous 381.74

Total $21351.63

Expenses totaled $4479.54 for POETA DLG.00027

Total expenses 2004 $25831.17
Net deficit $-584.14

1Balance represents total revenues for 2004 in POETA accounts PROV.PDA and DLG.00027.
The majority of funds supplied by The Office of the Provost were used for Career Committee activities that have been highly applauded by the postdoc community at large. The CPA intends to continue efforts to help develop and support the careers of all Caltech and JPL postdocs. A large portion of the CPA funds have also successfully been used to fund numerous social activities, providing opportunities for postdocs from various disciplines to interact.

Funding request-

<table>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Career</td>
<td>13.2K</td>
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<tr>
<td>Outreach</td>
<td>1K</td>
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<tr>
<td>Advocacy</td>
<td>2K</td>
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<tr>
<td>Organization (website maintenance and Graphic Arts advertising)</td>
<td>3K</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>29.2K</strong></td>
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</table>

The CPA never intended to overspend our funding, but the late year supply costs were too large. In light of this development, we have institutionalized a better controlled spending protocol to ensure the most efficient use of our funds.

The CPA kindly requests **$29.2K** in order to continue its efforts to provide the resources and support which the community has grown to appreciate. This funding request of ~$50/postdoc is greatly needed and will be used to foster all aspects of postdoctoral work.

Chad A. Haynes
Treasurer