To all members of the Caltech community,

Since 2001, the Caltech Postdoc Association (CPA) has grown to serve the postdoc communities of CIT and JPL in numerous ways. This report details how the CPA used financial resources provided by the Office of the Provost to put forth various activities and programs over the previous year. This report also lays out future programming possibilities for the next year and describes the budgets required to achieve these programming goals.

The CPA fills a unique niche at the Institute. While postdocs at CIT have always benefited from working with many of the world’s most prolific faculty, several key areas involving professional and personal development have historically been underrepresented. Along with providing a strong voice for advocating positive change, the CPA has successfully offered postdocs a multitude of programming to supplement their research agendas. By working closely with the Postdoctoral Scholars/Visitors Services (PDS) located within the Office of Human Resources, the CPA has made significant progress in bettering the postdoctoral experience at CIT. For example, we successfully pushed for the inclusion of postdocs into the TIAA-CREF retirement program, and regardless of funding source, all postdocs became eligible for all Caltech health and welfare benefits over the past year. We hope to continue our work with the PDS office well into the future, and take this opportunity to thank those responsible for consistent support and advocacy.

As noted within this report, our career oriented programming grew over the past year to include more events to an expanding audience. We have also successfully partnered with the Graduate Student Council (GSC) and Alumni Association to co-sponsor many programs of mutual interest. These partnerships, which will continue over the next year, help us to increase our programming while maintaining a lowered cost. The CPA has also continued the strong tradition of community, by bringing postdocs together from all divisions for numerous social events.

On behalf of the CPA, I would like to thank the Office of the Provost for financial and moral support. Indeed, all of our programming, activities, and events are a direct result of the shared vision between the CPA and Provost. I also thank the many faculty, administrators, and staff who have continued to support our efforts. Yet perhaps above all, the postdocs who serve the CPA and their community deserve extraordinary praise for their work. I thank our past and present Board, notably former Chair Lisa Taneyhill, for their efforts, and I look forward to yet another successful year.

Best regards,
Chad A. Haynes
CPA Chair 2005-06
Caltech Postdoctoral Association Mission –

The Caltech Postdoctoral Association seeks to foster a sense of community, provide resources for career and personal development, and 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 –

Chad Haynes, Chair (cah@caltech.edu)

Ed Coles, Treasurer

Karin Crowhurst, Secretary

Pawel Wocjan, External Affairs Officer

David Alderson, Member

Jason Gonzales, Member

Max Ezin, Member

Claire Newman, Member

Francis Pope, Member

Daniel Rizzuto, Member

The CPA elected several new members to its Board this past summer. However we are always looking for additional help and hope to recruit new postdocs from among our population. Any amount of time and energy one could possibly spare would be greatly appreciated! Contact us at cpa-discussion@its.caltech.edu to express your interest.

Postdoctoral scholars Chad Haynes, David Alderson, Claire Newman, Francis Pope, Claudine Chen, Andrew Hawkins, and Ed Coles contributed to this report.
The Advocacy committee has worked this past year to better quantify the quality of life of postdocs through the third annual postdoc survey, and has worked with the Caltech administration to address issues in the areas of salary, retirement, maternity leave and housing. We’ve also continued our involvement in WMW (Women Mentoring Women) and maintain our active dialogue with the Postdoc Office and Human Resources.

- **Survey** - The committee implemented the third annual postdoc survey designed to gain a better understanding of the needs and concerns of postdocs at Caltech. The 2004-2005 survey was conducted in collaboration with Sigma Xi as a part of their national survey. The PDS office was instrumental in coordinating Caltech’s participation in the Sigma Xi’s national survey, and in addition, provided prizes and randomly distributed the prizes to participants. 237 (40%) postdocs completed the survey. In addition to Sigma Xi’s standard questions, we submitted additional questions concerning maternity leave and multiyear visas. Based on the survey results, the CPA advocacy committee has focused on the priority areas of salary, maternity leave, retirement benefits and housing.

- **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 was $35,000, $37,000 for senior postdocs. For FY06, minimum postdoc salaries will increase $1,000.

- **Benefits** – There were a string of improvements last year to postdoc benefits. Postdocs have maternity leave for six weeks, up to 12 weeks unpaid leave, and health and welfare benefits (Basic LTD and Basic Life insurance) are now equally available regardless of funding source. In addition, as of July 2005, postdocs who have been working at Caltech for at least 2 years and have been paying Social Security and Medicare taxes are eligible for retirement contributions from Caltech. Finally, a negotiation with the Athletic department has resulted in reduced spousal membership rates; previously postdocs and their spouses were charged at the faculty rate.

- **Housing** – Last year, Housing transitioned most of their waitlisted, long-term apartments for postdocs and faculty into one-year term apartments. Currently there are four apartments set aside for transitional housing for two to three months. The PDS office works with the incoming postdocs and Institute Housing in coordinating the reservations.

- **Women Mentoring Women** - In collaboration with the Women's Center, the CPA implemented the Women Mentoring Women Program in 2002. The program matches women graduate students with women postdocs in an interaction that promotes the professional development of both parties. The 2004-2005 full academic year program had 60 women participating (26 postdocs and 34 graduate students); some postdocs had multiple mentees. There were a variety of social and career development events which culminated in very positive evaluations by both the mentors and proteges. While matches for the current year are still under development, the Women’s Center estimates participation comparable to last year. The program also brought in Linda Babcock, writer of Women Don’t Ask, for a lecture and discussion session.

### Budget FY05

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The CPA Career Development Committee has continued this past fiscal year in sponsoring diverse programming to support the career-related goals of Caltech postdocs. We are pleased to report that our events have experienced increased participation not only by postdocs, but also from graduate students, research and non-scientific staff, as well as other individuals from local universities and research centers. We have succeeded despite two setbacks to our projected agenda of one year ago. The first of these was a budget shortfall that forced us to operate at a level of only $8650 (as opposed to the requested amount of $13,200). In order to stretch this budget, we have actively sought co-sponsorship of individual activities from other campus organizations. In recognition of the increased attendance by graduate students, the Graduate Student Council (GSC) co-sponsored several events to a total of $1500. The Caltech Alumni Association (CAA) also assisted with a total of $250 in sponsorship.

The second setback during the last year was the departure in December 2004 of Victoria Lieding, our liaison within the Caltech Career Development Center (CDC). In the past, Victoria has not only assisted with the logistical preparation and execution of our events, she has also been a tremendous resource in the planning and development of our programming. Although the initial hope was to have a replacement for Victoria’s role within the CDC by spring 2005, to date there have not been any candidate interviews and the search appears to be on hold. The Career Committee has offered to support the hiring of a new CDC liaison by assisting with the interviews if and when the search resumes. In the meantime, the existing staff within the CDC continues to assist with the logistics of our events, but the absence of a professional career counselor actively supporting our activities is becoming increasingly noticeable.

In terms of our programming, our events continue to fall into one of three categories: (1) successful job searching, both academic and industrial; (2) professional development, such as grant writing, negotiation, or public speaking; and (3) personal development, including work-life balance. These events range from informal brown bag workshops usually held during the lunch hour to formal workshops and seminars. The cost of each event depends on its size, whether or not we are bringing speakers to campus, and the extent to which we provide food and beverages. These costs typically range from a few hundred to a few thousand dollars. During the past year, we have expanded the quantity and scope of our workshop events, and we have continued with a “Personal Excellence” Workshop Series during the summer months. A brief summary of the events from this past year is as follows.

Oct  Brown bag lunch: Science Editing
Nov  Brown bag lunch: Patent Law
Dec  Brown bag lunch: Working at the National Labs
Jan  Brown bag lunch: How to Choose a Postdoc Position, co-sponsored by GSC
Mar  Workshop: The Art of the Scientific Presentation, co-sponsored by CAA
April Workshop: Writing Grants for NIH Workshop
May  Workshop: Understanding Visual Communication, co-sponsored by GSC
June  Workshop: Teaching is Not Learning, co-sponsored by GSC
      Brown bag lunch: Academic Job Search Debrief
July  Workshop: Goal Setting and Goal Getting, co-sponsored by GSC
      Workshop: Using Feedback Effectively
      Careers in Science, co-sponsored with Caltech Biotechnology Club
Aug  Workshop: Understanding your personality type
Sept co-sponsorship of the CDC’s Annual Career Conference
Details of these events are archived on our website, [www.its.caltech.edu/~cpa/career_comm.html](http://www.its.caltech.edu/~cpa/career_comm.html).

As in the past, we have continued to video record our career-related events as appropriate and make these recordings available for viewing through the CDC. In addition, we have transferred our previous analog recordings to a digital format, in order to facilitate storage, access, and ultimate viewing over the campus web. We envision future recordings to be conducted in digital format.

Our programming and expenses for FY2005 were as follows:

- Speaker fees or honoraria: $3750
- Travel/lodging expenses for speakers: $2250
- Food and refreshments at events: $2500
- Advertising / workshop materials: $700
- Digital recording: $200
- Caltech Biotech Club Career Events: $500
- CDC Career Conference: $500
- GSC co-sponsorship: ($1500)
- CAA co-sponsorship: ($250)

FY2005 CPA Career Expenses: $8650

Building on our relationship from last year, we have secured $1500 in sponsorship from the GSC for career-related events over the course of the coming year. We expect speaker fees to increase in the coming year, since we leveraged personal relationships with the speakers during the past year in order to hire them at “below market” rates. Also, we are budgeting $500 toward the purchase of a digital video recorder camera that would be housed at the CDC for recording our events. Using last year’s expenses as a baseline and considering these estimates of future costs, we will require approximately **$9500** to cover our programming for FY2006.
CPA Social Committee

Our goal is to arrange events which provide an easy way for postdocs and their families to:

a) adjust to life at Caltech,
b) meet people outside the work environment, and
c) promote a healthy sense of community at the Institute.

With these goals in mind, we strive to host social events that benefit of our postdoc constituency:

1) Monthly social hours. As in previous years, we have continued to hold these on the first Friday evening of every month at the Central Rec. Room of the Catalinas. We provide free food (catered by Burger Continental) and drinks, and this is a pleasant, relaxed atmosphere in which to socialize with CPA members from Caltech and JPL. For new postdocs, this also provides an informal opportunity to ask existing postdocs about everything from finding an apartment to getting a driver’s license.

2) Theater trips. For well over a year now we have arranged monthly outings to see various productions across the LA area. The CPA does not subsidize these outings, but we work to obtain group or other discounts wherever possible, and also arrange transportation for anyone interested in going. Half of these outings are planned well in advance, and advertised to the full CPA membership. Trips have included the comedy "Come Blow Your Horn" and the musical "The Pajama Game" in Glendale, and the comedy "The Front Page" and Agatha Christie's "Witness for the Prosecution" in Sierra Madre. The remainder of the outings are arranged at quite short notice (allowing us to obtain ~half price tickets, but effectively preventing us from advertising them to everyone in the weekly CPA mailings) and thus are advertised only to those signed up to the CPA theater trips mailing list (to be added, please e-mail claire@gps.caltech.edu which currently has 44 members. Trips have included open air productions of "Hamlet" and "Richard III" in Barnsdall Park, the musical "Little Shop of Horrors" and the play "The Goat, or Who is Sylvia?" at the Music Center in downtown LA.

3) Annual CPA Barbecue. Held in August this year, the barbecue was a great success, and attended by approximately 180 people. As in previous years the barbecue was catered by Mesquite BBQ, and we also provided drinks and additional food. Children were kept entertained at the activities table as well as by several games and races, not forgetting the chance to take a swing at a couple of pinatas! Everyone who attended also received a free raffle ticket, with the top prizes ranging from a private wine tasting for 4 at Le Petit Vendome (worth ~$400) to two facials at Skin Deep Laser MedSpa (together worth ~$200), and other prizes ranged from $25 Target and Trader Joe's certificates to $5 Starbucks gift cards. For photos please see http://www.gps.caltech.edu/~claire/CPAbbq2005/CPAbbq2005.html.

In the coming year we will continue these activities, but are always looking for ways to do more. In particular, if you are interested in helping out with our ongoing events, or are interested in arranging any other activities, please contact us about joining the social committee!
Budget FY06

Monthly Social Hours:
Food (Burger Continental) $200
Drinks $300

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$500

Monthly Social Hours Total = $6000

Annual BBQ (includes hiring park, food, drinks, non-donated prizes for raffle and kids games, miscellaneous) = $3000

Total requested for FY 2006 = $9000
2004-2005 Outreach Summary

During the 2004-2005 academic year, the outreach activities which were directly linked to the actions of the CPA were limited. Apathy of the postdoc population was partly to blame. However, the CPA outreach efforts were not sufficiently well structured to allow postdocs easy access to community projects, without causing excess stress on postdocs’ already busy schedules.

2005-2006 Outreach plans

The major goal of this year is to re-establish the CPA’s role in creating and mediating outreach activities. This will enable Caltech postdocs to contribute to the community in a manner which is beneficial to both sides. Historically, the main stumbling block towards postdoctoral participation in outreach activities is the heavy work schedules of postdocs. The resulting situation is many postdocs would like to participate in outreach activities, but feel they have insufficient time. This year a framework will be constructed in which it will become easy for postdocs to become involved. It will enable postdocs to help the community in a manner which is not overly burdensome on their time.

To these aims, the CPA outreach website will be re-organized to allow for links to various organizations and charities in which postdocs may wish to contribute their time. The use of small incentives, such as vouchers for coffee will be implemented to raise the profile of planned CPA activities, and to give a needed ‘activation energy’ for the process. The use of the monthly CPA social hour as a ready made place and time to discuss and recruit willing postdocs will be encouraged. In addition to the social hour, greater publicity will be generated through a variety of media, including email and paper flyers. Further links will be fostered between the GSC and Caltech Y outreach activities, to learn from their experience, and to allow for better implementation of the CPA’s own activities.

Budget FY06

For the coming year, the request is made for the following funds to enable the successful running of the CPA’s outreach activities.

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**CPA Organization**

The CPA’s strength lies with our ability to organize postdocs from across the Institute and JPL. Along with electronic and printed communications, our website, administered by CIT Information and Technology Services, serves as an effective source of a variety of information.

The CPA web site is indeed a critical resource for Caltech postdocs and provides our most cost-effective method for information delivery to postdocs in the Caltech community. As the CPA does not publish a print newsletter, our organization news is passed on to Caltech postdocs via our web site and weekly e-mails. The CPA website (http://cpa.caltech.edu/) is maintained by a Caltech staff member at a rate of $35/hour. For FY2005, our total routine maintenance cost was $2485.00. For FY2006, we request **$3000.00** for maintenance and an update to the site that will contain additional information for new postdocs.

The CPA will continue to work with Eloisa Imel, Manager of Postdoctoral Scholars/Visitors Services located in Human Resources, to construct material of practical use to new postdocs. Some examples of this material are: a printable check-in checklist for new postdocs who arrive on campus, information about time management, information on constructing an “individual development plan” for the postdoc experience at Caltech, and links to information from the Caltech Career Development Center and Postdoctoral Scholars Office. While some information is already available for new postdocs at the Postdoctoral Scholars Office website, we wish to expound upon this, including lists of administrator contact names and phone numbers for each program/option/division on campus (as most require check-in procedures in addition to the Human Resources check-in), information on keys, e-mail accounts, parking, etc.

The PDS office celebrated numerous accomplishments this past year, including:
-Continuation of the ESL (English as a Second Language) Club for Postdoc Spouses
-Poster presentation at 2005 National Postdoc Association (NPA) annual meeting highlighting the partnership of the CPA
-Continued representation on the NPA’s International Postdoc Committee (Eloisa Imel)

The CPA is proud to advertise the many successes of the PDS office and hopefully with the PDS office staff intact, the CPA and PDS will continue to improve the postdoctoral experience at Caltech.

**CPA External Affairs**

The CPA maintains an active external affairs component designed to increase our visibility and communication with other organizations. Examples of these activities include serving as an Affiliate Member of the University of California-Council of Postdoctoral Scholars (UC-CPS). The CPA has sent representatives to two UC-CPS meetings over the past year. While we are not under the UC system, and thus do not have voting rights within the Council, we continue to serve in an advisory capacity to help representative postdoc organizations evolve into effective societies.

Our External Affairs Officer represents the CPA to the Caltech Alumni Association (CAA). This relationship now enables CIT postdocs the ability to join the CAA with the same rights and benefits afforded to traditional CIT alumni. We are also continuing to work with the CAA to develop career related programming.
REPORT FROM THE TREASURER

Change in net assets in FY2005

Assets as of 9/20/04
Campus POETA account “PROV.PDA” $-445.75
Campus POETA account “DLG.00027” $65.09
Total $-380.66

Assets as of 10/15/05
Campus POETA account “PROV.PDA” $1152.70
Campus POETA account “DLG.00027” account closed

Change in assets for FY2005 $706.95

Cash flow activity for 2005
Office of the Provost $21,000.00

Total revenues $20,619.34
Total revenues change from 2004 ~20% decrease

Summary of expenses for POETA PROV.PDA
Career $6866.55
Social $8839.35
Organization $2929.22
Advocacy $908.03
Total $19,543.15

Project # PROV.PDA
Award # OAIC.000001

Pie chart illustrating CPA spending proportions
The CPA received 100% of all funds for FY05 from the Caltech Office of the Provost. We are extraordinarily grateful for the $21,000 contributed in FY05 by the Provost to our organization. Drs. Jennings (Provost) and Goodstein (Vice Provost) have demonstrated vigorous support for the CPA and our efforts. The CPA recognizes the success of this relationship and looks forward to continued cooperation.

Considering a 20% revenue decrease from FY04, the CPA Treasury implemented a precise documentation protocol in order to more effectively manage our finances. Further, establishing collaborative sponsorship of particular events with the Graduate Student Council and Caltech Alumni Association enabled us to offer expanded Career programming while maintaining cost within our budget. In POETA PROV.PDA-1-OAIC.000001, the CPA is currently maintaining a balance of $1,000.

Despite the current General Budget climate, we are hopeful that the Office of the Provost will grant our funding request as stated below. After years of experience, we feel the budgetary estimate is an accurate prediction of funds necessary for us to continue to grow our services to the postdoctoral community.

Caltech Postdoctoral Association Budget Request Fiscal Year 2006

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Caltech Postdoc Association Supplemental Budget Request

The Caltech General Budget deficit has begun to significantly impact our constituency by limiting the extent to which Human Resources can contribute services. The Office of Postdoctoral Scholars/Visitors Services has to date funded and organized two important and highly applauded services, the English as a Second Language (ESL) Tutoring Course and a subscription to a private rental real estate database (Westside Rentals). The ESL Club for Postdoc Spouses was created two years ago by Caltech’s Postdoctoral Scholars Offices to help aid the transition for international postdocs and their families. The program, lead by a certified TESOL instructor, matches participants with a ‘conversation partner’ and provides an informal, instructional learning environment. The program also provided childcare by members of the Caltech Children’s Center. As mentioned, HR also funded an institutional subscription to the Westside Rentals Property Database which enabled prospective postdocs from all over the world the ability to peruse rental property possibilities in advance of their arrival.

It is now understood that these services will absolutely be terminated in order to come under budget. Further, the PSD office’s ability to administrate such programming has been drastically impacted due a reduction in staff. With little to no chance of hiring a replacement, the priorities of the PSD office have shifted from program and policy development to daily administrative functions. Therefore, it is not just the funding for these programs that is important, but funding for the office to be fully staffed, in order to administrate such programs. A permanent reduction in the staff of the PDS area would not only impact the services provided by the PDS office to postdocs, visitors and the academic divisions, but the programs that the postdoc community has benefited from the last two years.

With that said the CPA is highly interested in continuing these excellent services and is willing to under take the responsibility solely. Unfortunately, the financial cost of administrating these services falls outside of our current budget. In light of this reality, the CPA would like to submit the Supplemental Budget Request outlined below. We would appreciate the benefits of offering these services to be recognized and are hopeful to receive funding for their support.

Childcare Personnel Cost for ESL Course $1000/ year
Institutional Subscription Westside Rentals Database $3000/ year
Total Supplemental Request $4000