Connect with **Azusa Pacific**

### Calendar of Events

**MARCH**

14 TH 8:30 a.m. - 2:30 p.m.  **Eighth Grade Majors Fair** Memorial Park North Recreation Center  
APU, in collaboration with California Polytechnic University Pomona and Citrus College, hosts its second annual Eighth Grade Majors Fair for all three Azusa middle schools.  

16–20 MO–WE  **Brain Awareness Week**  
APU hosts the second annual Brain Awareness Fair at all three Azusa middle schools, using hands-on experiments and other education modules to teach more than 250 seventh graders about the brain and how it works.  
Slauson, March 18 | Center, March 19 | Foothill, March 20

19 TU  **Girls/Kids on the Move Five-week Session Begins**  
These exercise programs, designed by Azusa Pacific University in collaboration with Azusa’s Parks and Recreation department, encourage children to exercise regularly and adopt healthy eating habits.

21 TH  **APU Cougar Pals Visit Campus**  
Students involved in Cougar Pals, a mentoring program that pairs kids from Center, Slauson, and Foothill middle schools with APU students, visit the APU campus to learn more about student life.

**APRIL**

4–20  **APU Presents Hello, Dolly!**  
Enjoy the performance of the classic play Hello, Dolly! Ticket prices vary.

18 TH  4–5 p.m.  **Azusa Reads/Writes/Counts Celebration**  
The Azusa Reads, Writes, and Counts tutoring programs hold their year-end celebration at the Azusa City Library, where participants, parents, tutors, and supporters gather in appreciation of the program’s impact on the community.

### College C.H.A.M.P.s

This March, a group of 406 excited and anxious fourth graders from six elementary schools find themselves preparing for graduation. They will proudly walk across the platform in front of a large audience of families and friends to celebrate their C.H.A.M.P. (College Headed And Mighty Proud) program commencement. In its 21st year, the C.H.A.M.P. program encourages fourth-grade students from across the Azusa Unified School District (AUSD) to dream of one day attending college and building a bright future.

**The C.H.A.M.P. program is an asset to the Azusa community because it gives its children exposure to college.**  
**Luis Marin '13**

Many C.H.A.M.P. graduates go on to pursue college once they finish their high school career; several attend Azusa Pacific University.

**“The C.H.A.M.P. program is an asset to the Azusa community because it gives its children exposure to college.”**  
**Luis Marin '13**

“A group of 50 C.H.A.M.P. graduates from the 2013 “graduation” at Felix Event Center from 6:30–8:30 p.m.  
Kimberly Rios ’13 is a Celebrate Azusa Nancy-Moore Scholarship recipient, a C.H.A.M.P. alumna, and a communication studies major at Azusa Pacific University. She began the Master of Arts in Management program at APU this summer.  

This program belongs to the schools of our city, I’m so thrilled that many Azusa residents cite this program as a major factor in their decision to go to college.”

Join the C.H.A.M.P.s students on Wednesday, March 20, for the spring 2013 “graduation” at Felix Event Center from 6:30–8:30 p.m.
**Why Does College Matter?**

By Pamela M. Christian

Students and families must exercise more fiscal caution than ever in selecting an institution of higher education. The realities of 16% in a resource-challenged economy prompts students to pursue the highest quality education at the lowest possible cost. While families everywhere grapple with affordability, few question the commonly understood benefits of postsecondary education. The most compelling motivators for pursuing a college degree include increased earning potential and/or vocational preparation, and quality of life. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, greater levels of education correspond to greater income. A college graduate earns an average of $412 more per week, or $21,424 per year. Master’s and professional degree holders increase the annual financial advantages to $33,592 and $40,768, respectively. Social Security Administration defines the normal retirement age as 67 years old. If a college graduate works from age 25 through age 67, a bachelor’s degree provides an $899,808 benefit, representing more than a 6 percent annual return on an investment of $140,000. The average cost of a four-year private college.

APU: How do you define student success?

KAMINSKI: Student success is more than grade-point averages and test scores. I see it as the ability to participate fully in society. I want students to leave their APU undergraduate experience with the tools necessary to analyze their world, weigh evidence, take a stand and support it, and solve complex problems. I hope that when these students are here in Azusa, they lay the foundation for a lifetime of learning that will serve them through every phase of their education and ready them to contribute to their communities.

APU: What attracted you to this position?

KAMINSKI: I have a poster in my office that shows a picture of 12 doors in the Harland campus. So when I graduated, I bought a print, and it has hung in my office ever since. But every time I looked at it, something felt wrong. Then one day it hit me: all the doors are closed. I am the AUSD superintendent. I want every student to have the keys to open any door at any college.

In addition to increasing earning potential, a college education has become a requirement for many entry-level employment opportunities. Many jobs previously secured by high school graduates now require a bachelor’s degree. In fact, the Public Policy Institute of California predicts that “41 percent of jobs in 2025 will require a college degree.” In today’s competitive marketplace, employers have stated that at least an undergraduate degree, often a master’s degree, and substantial experience. Americans will have an average of 11 jobs in their working career. A college education serves as a prerequisite for both marketability and flexibility. The discipline, persistence, and intellectual acumen required to successfully complete degree requirements are transferrable skills. These skills prove relevant across diverse workplace environments.

One of my first jobs after earning a Bachelor of Arts in History called for a computer science degree in the position description. Similarly, a thriving librarian I know earned an undergraduate degree in veterinary science. The adaptability of a college degree is noteworthy. Preparing students to critically evaluate, integrate, and apply knowledge, while demonstrating competence in the content and methods of their chosen discipline or professional program, effectively trains graduates for the world of work. This accounts for the lower unemployment rate among college graduates compared to those without a college education. The unemployment rate of those with a bachelor’s degree is roughly half the rate of those without college experience. The rate drops to less than 2.5 percent unemployment with a master’s degree, and less than 2 percent with a doctorate. Those who might be called a survivor of the fitness economy, higher education produces the most viable contenders.

Clearly, earning a college degree warrants the investment. A degree from an accredited institution should correlate with financial returns and employability. A college degree will help students to secure a better lifestyle after their education is complete. The initial cost and effort that a college education can provide may be overshadowed by a lifetime of higher salaries and job satisfaction. In the long run, the investment in higher education is perhaps one of the wisest ones a young adult can make.

Pamela M. Christian, Ph.D., is a professor of education and director of research and assessment in the School of Education at Azusa Pacific University.

Principal Leadership

By Evelyn Barge

On any given school day, students quickly spot Rosalinda Keeler ’03, M.A. ’05, along the walkways between buildings at Valleydale Elementary. She dashes toward her to offer greetings and hugs, spoiling details of classroom activities and home life. It’s little more than two miles north, at Victor Hood Elementary, a similar scene plays out as Victoria Velasquez ’89, M.A. ’09, strides across the breezeway with a classroom of kindergartners in tow.

In August 2012, both women officially assumed principalships at their respective Azusa schools. Between the two, Keeler and Velasquez serve more than 1,000 kindergarteners through fifth-grade students in the Azusa Unified School District (AUSD).

“The teaching community in Azusa is so dedicated, and there’s a real desire to give back,” said Velasquez, a 23-year AUSD veteran. “Many of the teachers on staff are Azusa residents, and the area I grew up in, so it’s really a full-circle moment for me.”

Keeler adds, “As a K-12 principal, we are part of a team that is so invested in making our schools the best places they can be. It’s all about the students.”

Evelyn Barge is a writer/editor at Azusa Pacific University.

Rosalinda Keeler ’03, M.A. ’05

Victoria Velasquez ’89, M.A. ’09

Community News

APU teams again with the Azusa Unified School District and the Southern California Edison Federal Credit Union to help local additional Mad City Money events for highschoolers, teaching them the importance to save money and plan for the future at Azusa High School and March 20 at Gladstone High School.

Azusa Pacific volunteers continue to provide free math, reading, and writing tutoring to elementary school students at the Azusa Community Church through the Azusa Reads, Write, and Counts program. The year-end celebration and for participants and their parents is slated for Thursday, April 18, from 4 p.m. to the library.

APU’s Azusa Literacy program continues to educate adults in the community on the topic of health literacy, while improving their English language skills. The program, which began last fall, takes place on Tuesday and Thursday afternoons at Azusa High School, with day evening at Foothill Community Church. The 9-10 week sessions are open to all Azusa residents.

On February 9, APU’s Keeping History Alive program held an open house reception for 325 Azusa Unified School District teachers who received educational grants. The event, which recognized the local foundations and awards all of the financial support to K-12 teachers in the form of small grants for book purchases, field trips, on-campus presentations, and professional development opportunities. This year 34 Azusa Unified School District teachers received grants totaling $24,515.

This spring, Azusa Pacific University expanded its Building Our Kids’ Success (BOKS) effort, a bible-study program in local elementary schools that combines play, physical activity, team games, and discussions on nutrition to establish a firm foundation to achieve lifelong fitness. The program now takes place at Powell Elementary School, in addition to Gladstone (East Elementary).