

2023/24

Annual Report



MOUNT
TAMALPAIS
COLLEGE

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Gregory Eskridge



Dear Friends,

It is always a challenge to distill down all the activities, events, learning, and progress of an entire year into a single report—but once again we’ve done our best here!

The pages that follow capture some of the formidable accomplishments of Mount Tamalpais College's student and

faculty communities, the thoughtful reflections of the year's wonderful graduates, and updates on the remarkable progress we've made in expanding our course offerings and support services at San Quentin. All of this is just the teeniest glimpse of the extraordinary range of moments that unfold every day in MTC classrooms, and in the individual lives and communities touched by our work.

We hope that this report conveys the potential of not only delivering excellent educational opportunities at San Quentin, but also of building a robust academic community that extends beyond the prison walls, influencing public discussions of politics, policy, and civic responsibility.

In the year ahead, we look forward to further advancing our vision of a world in which currently and formerly incarcerated people have access to the opportunities, skills, and resources they need

to thrive, and to serve as educators and thought leaders for the larger world. To this end, we are committed to establishing MTC as a model of an intellectual community in which people from vastly different worlds build constructive bridges across the deepest of divides, in service of creating a less broken and more productive and equitable society.

That community comprises all of you: our supporters, faculty, students, alumni, and partners. With San Quentin taking center stage in statewide and national discussions about transforming prisons, I'm continually struck by the braintrust MTC represents, and the unprecedented opportunities we now face to disseminate our collective insight and expertise. It will take all of us to effect the kind of systemic transformation so urgently needed around California and across the country.

We are deeply grateful for your commitment to this work.

Jody Lewen, PhD
President, Mount Tamalpais College

With San Quentin taking center stage in discussions about transforming prisons, I'm continually struck by the braintrust that MTC represents.



Transformative Moments

A year of growth, achievement, and powerful dialogue in classrooms and on campus.

352
students

were enrolled in at least one class at MTC during the academic year.

124
academic
volunteers

taught courses, tutored, and supported lab and research needs, on average, each semester.

After three years of pandemic-related restrictions, this year Mount Tamalpais College was able to return to its usual three full terms, allowing students more opportunity to take the classes they need to move forward in their degree. We introduced new courses and also launched Early College Seminars, a new course series for students earlier in the degree to experience deep dives into exciting topics in small class settings.

This year was packed with extracurricular offers and special events. We hosted guest speakers and ran workshops throughout the year on topics ranging from Biological Illustration, to AI, to Evolution and Christianity. We hosted an international film festival on the theme of disability, and our first-ever Student Research Showcase. In the spring, our Celebration of Teaching and Learning event featured student and faculty speeches that addressed themes from religion to race, Othello to escapism.



“Mount Tamalpais College students have much more enthusiasm interacting with the material than other university students I have taught—this includes undergraduate and graduate students at both UCSD and USF. This energy and maturity helped drive class discussion and solidify their understanding of core concepts.”

ARMAN KHACHIYAN, Microeconomics Instructor
Assistant Professor of Economics, University of San Francisco



211
students

were enrolled in at least one college preparatory class in math or writing.

25,590
hours donated

by academic volunteers—in total, an estimated in-kind value of over \$1 million.

“I have learned that we can learn a great deal from science, and the clues that were left behind by nature. I have also learned that even with all these amazing discoveries and scientific breakthroughs, there are things that humans were just not meant to know. I believe that we have so much more to learn about our planet earth, and that thus far we have only seen the tip of the iceberg.”

PAUL ROSS
MTC student on *Environmental Science*

Course Offerings

2023-2024

Introduction to College Foundations of Reading & Writing I & II	Environmental Science	California History
Mathematics Foundations I & II	Introduction to Neuroscience	Cultural Anthropology
Reading & Composition	Introductory Chemistry with Lab	Elementary Spanish I & II
Critical Thinking, Reading, & Writing	Comparative Religion	Ethnic Studies
Interdisciplinary Reading, Writing, & Research	History of Photography	
Introduction to Literature	Introduction to Dramatic Arts	
Elementary Algebra	Introduction to Philosophy	
Intermediate Algebra	Public Speaking	
Biology I	Social Ethics	
	Sociology	
	U.S. History	
	Microeconomics	



“My reason for taking economics is that every big issue has an economic dimension. Microeconomics offers ways to think about problems and identify solutions. Economists study the ways humans behave and make decisions in the face of scarcity.”

MARK HENSLEY
MTC student on *Microeconomics*





Students and Faculty in Dialogue

This past spring, Mount Tamalpais College hosted A Celebration of Teaching and Learning—a community-building event which offered a glimpse into the extraordinary conversations that occur every day inside MTC's classrooms. Students and faculty presented speeches crafted in dialogue with one another. The following are excerpts from two of those speeches.

The Madness of Prison

MICHAEL K. MOORE
Class of '22

There is a misconception among those incarcerated in penal institutions: many of us believe that when we are allowed to leave prison, that in some way means we are free. On the contrary, when you are allowed to leave prison you are simply emancipated, which means you are released from physical bondage, not free.

Freedom means having control of your thoughts, your feelings, and your whole mind. Now, in order to be free we must work hard, because nobody else can give you your freedom other than yourself. You have to take your own freedom. And, ladies and gentlemen, I'm here to tell you that the number one way to take your freedom is through your mind, starting with the acquisition of knowledge and education. Not just any knowledge, but knowledge that has substantive value. Then of course, after gaining an understanding of the knowledge you have acquired, it becomes wisdom when you properly apply it.

I believe that ignorance is humanity's true prison. Ignorance breeds fear. We fear the unknown. To extricate ourselves from the prison of ignorance, education is absolutely necessary. Education is one of the greatest tools we can use to free ourselves from our own mental prison. An uneducated person is wasting their own human potential. When you are uneducated the world leaves you behind. I'm not just talking about a formal education but an education that civilizes and inspires the human being to excel beyond the mediocre thinking that perpetuates the status quo.

Being inside prison is very traumatic. But it can also be traumatic to not have a high level of reading comprehension. And if you don't understand what you read, you are mentally "imprisoned". Knowledge is power only if it is understood and properly applied. Greatness starts with education. People who end up in penal institutions are already imprisoned mentally, intellectually, psychologically and educationally. They call these penal institutions

prisons, but the major "prison" that exists is illiteracy. These institutions are only designed to hold the physical body, not the mind.

Helen Keller is an example of human potential—a person who achieved greatness and overcame overwhelming odds. She was the first deaf and blind person to attain a Bachelor of Arts degree, was well traveled, and became a prolific author after she was marginalized by society because of her disability. Some of us who are incarcerated feel that the uniform given to us to wear is degrading and dehumanizing. On the contrary, it doesn't matter what's on the outside, it only matters what's on the inside.

Penal institutions, jails, and places of confinement for the most part are built to house people who have little or no desire for education or any ambition for success in their lifetime. Many individuals in penal institutions seek no education while serving 30, 40, or even 50 years in prison. I believe we need to practice "rugged individualism", but in a positive way. Not selfishness but self-sacrifice and self-reliance in order to gain our true freedom.

“To extricate ourselves from the prison of ignorance, education is absolutely necessary.”

And after freedom is achieved the struggle is not over. You have to continue to work hard to retain and maintain your newfound freedom. We must continue to utilize the gift of intelligence we all were born with.

There are signs all around us that our thinking is the key to our true freedom. We must grow up and outgrow prison mentally and physically to attain our freedom. We must get out of this antiquated, outdated, abrogated, incomplete and obsolete mode of thinking that causes us to not realize our true purpose in life. Let us all be satisfied with nothing but the best.

Education, Exclusion and Participatory Citizenship

IAN SETHRE, MTC Faculty
In response to Michael K. Moore

In my conversations with Mike, I thought of the ancient Greek philosopher Plato's conception of education; he argued that a holistic education with physical, intellectual, and moral curricula is a necessary prerequisite for citizenship—meaningful participation as a member of society—and that education of individuals is beneficial for the common good, for society as a whole. Ideally, citizens would pursue education as its own virtue. In Plato's Republic, he declares “a free soul ought not to pursue any study slavishly; for while compulsory physical exercise does no harm to the body, knowledge which is acquired under compulsion attains no hold on the mind.” In other words, it is up to the learner to own their own educational experience; forcing it doesn't work. As you heard, Mike addresses the essentiality of personal initiative and dedication on several levels.

When Mike and I talked about the concepts of freedom and self-possession, I also thought of the linkage between education and participatory citizenship, both informally, as a member of a community, and the more formal, legal concept.

One outgrowth of mass incarceration is the perpetuation of a social class without access to educational opportunities, and often formally stripped of civil rights. At present, more than five million people in this country are prohibited from voting due to their status as incarcerated, formerly incarcerated, on parole, or probation.

(continued on next page)

“What we are doing here, together, is an act of resistance to the forces of ignorance and exclusion.”

In other words, even though many have been technically “freed” from state custody, they are not free to be full members of society. As it stands now, in four states, they’ll likely never have that right restored. And this disenfranchisement was intended to marginalize people of color. While this practice existed in a few colonies prior to independence, it only became standard practice at the state level after the Civil War.

This is not to say the incarcerated population simply doesn’t count in politics. In fact, the numbers do count, even if your votes don’t. People in prison are included in the overall determination of congressional districts in a quiet but impactful form of gerrymandering.

Four of California’s congressional districts in the Central Valley include more than a dozen prisons with thousands of people who are represented by officials who do not serve those constituencies. Correspondingly—and more importantly—those same citizens are NOT counted in their home districts, where their families live, and where they will return, and which are mostly urban, often impoverished, and subsequently underrepresented and underserved.

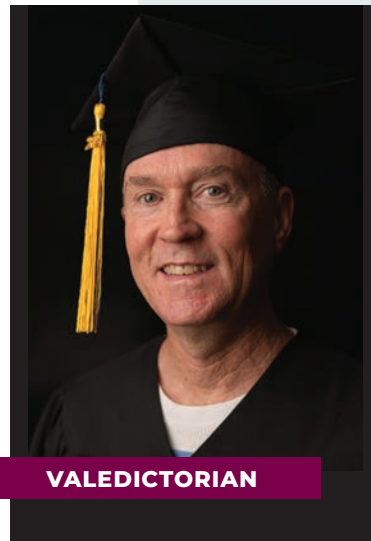
If we’ve been in class together, you know I don’t have a lot of trust in power structures, but I believe it is incumbent on us, as a community of lifelong learners, to understand and engage these systems rather than avoid them.

What we are doing here, together, is an act of resistance to the forces of ignorance and exclusion. I admire the camaraderie of this learning community, where students of varying backgrounds, motivations, interests, and objectives lean inward together, to create and perpetuate this culture. When people outside ask what it is like to teach in this prison, I make a point of noting that civility triumphs over volatility every time—and that’s not always the case outside. What you have here—what you maintain—this culture, this collective student body—is a rare and precious thing. Props to you for your initiative, ingenuity, and where-withal, and thank you for letting those of us fortunate enough to teach here be part of this.



A Celebration of Community

On June 28, seven new graduates of Mount Tamalpais College walked the stage at the San Quentin Chapel and received their Associate of Arts degree. The event was a joyful and emotional gathering of friends, family, faculty, staff, and supporters.



VALEDICTORIAN

David Ditto

“MTC is community. It's us—the people in this room. Every one of us gives of our own self to help the others. We are all connected. It's the community between faculty, staff, and students that creates a culture of engagement and self-exploration in the least likely place of all: the middle of a prison.”

VALEDICTORIAN ADDRESS: mttamcollege.edu/2024-commencement



SALUTATORIAN

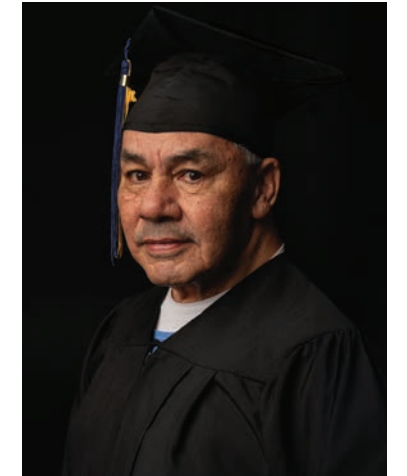
Roberto Antonio de Trinidad

To me, this degree represents twenty years of effort, failure, resilience, growth, and finally, success.



Jerry R. Gearin

With this achievement of an Associates of Arts Degree, I honor and celebrate the life of my mother Dorothy Lee Gearin. This achievement means a lot to me because it would have meant a lot to her.



Ralph A. Cendejas Jr.

School gives us the skills we need to join people together; to realize that we are all, in a sense, brothers and sisters, and that we must live as one united community, with love and respect for each other.



Gregory Eskridge

A college education gave me the opportunity to improve my skills as an audio journalist and storyteller. My goal is to give incarcerated people a platform to express themselves as well as give the public an accurate account of prison life.



Wilbert Frank Jr.

I commit to fighting for the world I want to see for my children, bringing needed change and meaningful healing. I will represent this class by being a living example in my community of the equal value of formerly incarcerated people.



Ray Howard Jr.

To earn my degree I had to overcome the stressors that came with being incarcerated, while managing the challenges that come with completing each class. I never gave up.



Lateefah Simon, a nationally recognized advocate for civil rights and racial justice in Oakland and the Bay Area, delivered the keynote address.

“This is an amazing day where we can come together collectively to celebrate brothers who have said *yes* where so many folks have said *no*. They put their heads down and they studied and they learned about the world. They have made a commitment to better themselves. This is why we are here.”

LATEEFAH SIMON

KEYNOTE ADDRESS: mttamcollege.edu/2024-commencement



Bringing Stories to Life

GREGORY ESKRIDGE
Class of '24

Today, I am being given the opportunity as a KALW Uncuffed Leadership Fellow to continue doing something I have grown to love: working to amplify the voices of those who are isolated from society.

I began collaborating with KALW in 2012 as an incarcerated volunteer at San Quentin; there, I honed my skills as an audio journalist and storyteller. Thanks to KALW's belief in me, I have the joy of working for an enlightened professional organization upon my parole that sees my authentic self and not my mistakes. Words can't fully describe the value of this opportunity for me.

To be able to restart my life after being incarcerated for 30 years with dignity while working for a good cause is life-changing.

My goal moving forward is to continue bridging the gap between the public and the incarcerated by bringing stories to life, fostering a culture of empathy, and giving others the same opportunity that has been afforded to me.

I am just so blessed and thankful.

GREGORY ESKRIDGE was released shortly after graduating with an associates degree in June of 2024. He shared this update in August.

KALW 91.7 FM is a pioneering educational and community broadcast service licensed to the San Francisco Unified School District. On-air since 1941,

it is the first FM station west of the Mississippi and is deeply rooted in the Bay Area and its culture. KALW's track record of innovation includes its *Uncuffed*

radio training program inside San Quentin Rehabilitation Center and Solano State Prison.



Supporters

Mount Tamalpais College would not exist if not for our supporters’ generosity and belief in the transformative power of education. The college is funded entirely by philanthropy and charges no fees or tuition.

Faculty

Kayleigh Adams
Madeline Adee
Ester Agasha
Raul Aguayo
Omair Akhtar
Stefano Alberti
Robert Alexander
Angel Alvarez
Maddie Alvendia
Mindy Ariowitsch
Todd Armitstead
Esme Bajo
Drew Behnke
Christina Blair
Will Bondurant
Wendi Bootes
Jason Bowers
Jim Bowsher
Anne Bozack
Daniel Bresnahan
William Brigham
Tryn Brown
Haidyn Bulen
David Buuck
Matthew Byrne
Fiona Callahan
Ariana Canalez
James Carlin
Shaina Carroll
Jean Chadbourne
Grayson Chadwick
Michael Chang
Janelle Charles

Janet Christensen
Emily Chu
Maddy Cimino
Elizabeth Clark
Darcy Cohn
Robert Cordova Jr.
Julian Cortella
Julia Costacurta
Shawn Costello
Anne Coyle
Max Coyle
Isaac Craig
Matt Culler
Lily Daly
Austin Dannhaus
Dana Darmohray
Jupiter Davis
Ethan Dettmer
Eva Diez
David Ding
Bill Drummond
Rowan Duim
Peter Esmonde
Marisa Espinoza
Michael (Yuan-Sheng) Fang
Shannon Fender
Josh Feng
Anne Fernald
Jessica Ferri
Jenn Fisher
Cameron Flynn
Kathryn Forest
Sara Friedman
Flor Garza

Paulo Goeb
Oscar Gonzalez
Martha Gould
Leasa Graves
Tal Green
Justin Grosnick
Steve Haraguchi
Clarke Hardy
Chad Harper
Rebecca Haskell
Nigel Hatton
Natasha Haugnes
Susan Hirsch
Winnie Ho
Tara Hottman
Taylor Hovish
Andy Howard
Morgan Hubbard
Stephanie Hung
Tomás Husted
Mia Ihm
Lyndsay Jackson-Ross
Emma Jacobs
Kea Johnston

Suzanne Jones
Barbra Jordan
Justine Juson
Arman Karshenas
Jaclyn Katz
Aidan Kelley
Arman Khachian
Michael Kielstra
Bryan Kim
Judy King
Drew Kisler
Andrew Klein
Brian Knight
Maya Koneval
Ipsita Krishnamurthy
Connie Krosney
Maureen Lahiff
Juleen Lam
Crystal Land
Seth LaRosa
Malcolm Lazarow
David Le
Luc Le Pottier
Sara Leibovich

Alissa Leigh-Valles
Gabriella Licata
Ron Light
Marisa Lin
Jessica Liston
Chris Lowenstein
Rita Lucarelli
Ana Lyons
Emily Ma
Jeff Magnin
Sophia Magnone
Jessica Mahinthakumar
Eliezer Margolis
Stephen Martin
Alyssa Mathiowetz
Beverly Matsuishi
Tyler Maxey
Anna Mazur
Christina Mazzola
Tess McClernon
Howard McCoy
Theo McKenzie

“I support MTC financially and by teaching a writing workshop because I believe that everyone is entitled to opportunities to improve their minds and skills.”

TOWNSEND WALKER

(Faculty continued)

Jeanne McPhee
Izaak Meckler
Hershel Mehta
Kathryn Miller
Tess Miller
Claire Mirocha
Anny Mogollón
Marguerite Morgan
Serena Morgan
Billy Morrison
Matthew Mueller
Emily Mullin
Andrew Myers
Alex Naeve
Avaneesh Narla
Sally Nelson
Hamilton (Kobe) Nguyen
Jeff Nichols
Christian Nixon
Tausif Noor
Jake Nuernberger

Tyler Ogata
Connie Oliver
Ulf Olsson
Oliver Organista
Bobby Ortiz Stahl
Karin Parramore
Evan Patrick
Cavan Patterson
Randy Pendleton
Jules Perez
Steven Piantadosi
Brian Pines
Paritem Poonian
Diane Portillo
Jazdil Poupart-Feliciano
Wendy Quezada
Shobha Rao
Susannah Raub
Ariel Raymon
Sydney Recht
Dave Reiter
Yessenia Resendiz Torres

Victor Reyes-Umana
Marc Robbins
Theresa Roeder
Eric Roos
Joe Ruppercht
Tahsin Saffat
Zuriel Sanders
Ariana Sarkhosh
Ziva Schatz
Jennifer Schmidt
Will Schuerman
Howard Schweber
Dee Seligman
Ian Sethre
Sahil Shah
Isadora Sharon
Sara Shonkwiler
Kelly Smith
Nickolai Smith
Bill Smoot
Nina Sokolov
Ilana Somasunderam
Jenny Song

Andrea Sosa
Hallie Stark
Tavi Steinhardt
David Stiepleman
Zack Stier
Dan Sullivan
Susan Tachna
Andrew Tai
Kim Taylor
Maria Thomas
William Torous
Lena Trotochaud
Cris Turienzo
Rie Uzawa
Elena Vasiliou
Suji Venkataraman
Jason Vytlačil
Megan Wachpress
Katie Walker
Townsend Walker
Charlotte Wang
Jessica Warren
Andrew Westphal

Sienna White
Jason Whitney
Justin Williams
Adam Williamson
Grant Wilson
Carole Wilson
David Wong
Andrew Wood
Cameron Woodard
Bill Woodward
Jane Yamashiro
Chris Ying
Nathan Yoshino
Avery Yu
Sahar Zarafshan
Anna Zhao

“Hearing the students read their papers, seeing the bonds of friendship and respect they have for each other against the background of a life of incarceration, the sense of freedom and joy and of the students' transcending their circumstances are experiences that stay with me.”

PATRICIA DIENSTFREY

“MTC has an amazing volunteer community but we would be nothing without the administrators and support staff. I know my donation supports these necessary roles and helps make the college successful.”

DREW BEHNKE

Our Donors

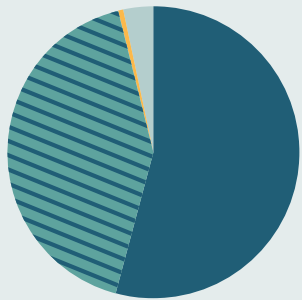
For a full list of MTC donors for the 2023 Fiscal Year, please use the QR code below or visit: mttamcollege.edu/donate



Financial Overview

In the 2023 fiscal year, MTC continued to strengthen its work in an array of critical areas, including student services and advising, information technology and library services, alumni support, and extracurricular offerings. Investing in infrastructure and human resources has allowed the college to reach new heights in service of students' flourishing and success, both pre- and post-release.

REVENUE

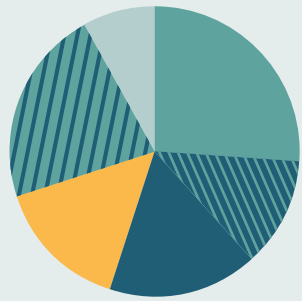


\$1,914,968	Individuals
\$1,473,933	Institutions
\$22,546	Corporate
\$109,709	Other *

* Other revenue includes program service fees, interest, merchandise sales, and miscellaneous income.

\$3,521,156	SUBTOTAL
\$1,225,234	In-kind value of donated instruction (revenue)
\$4,746,390	TOTAL

EXPENSES



\$1,155,410	Academic Affairs
\$540,512	Alumni & Student Services
\$734,161	Other Program Expenses
\$665,075	Operations
\$963,468	Fundraising
\$384,101	Communications (Educating the Public)

\$4,442,727	SUBTOTAL
\$1,225,234	In-kind value of donated instruction (expenses)
\$5,667,961	TOTAL

PLEASE NOTE that this Revenue and Expenses snapshot is pending a 2023 audit.

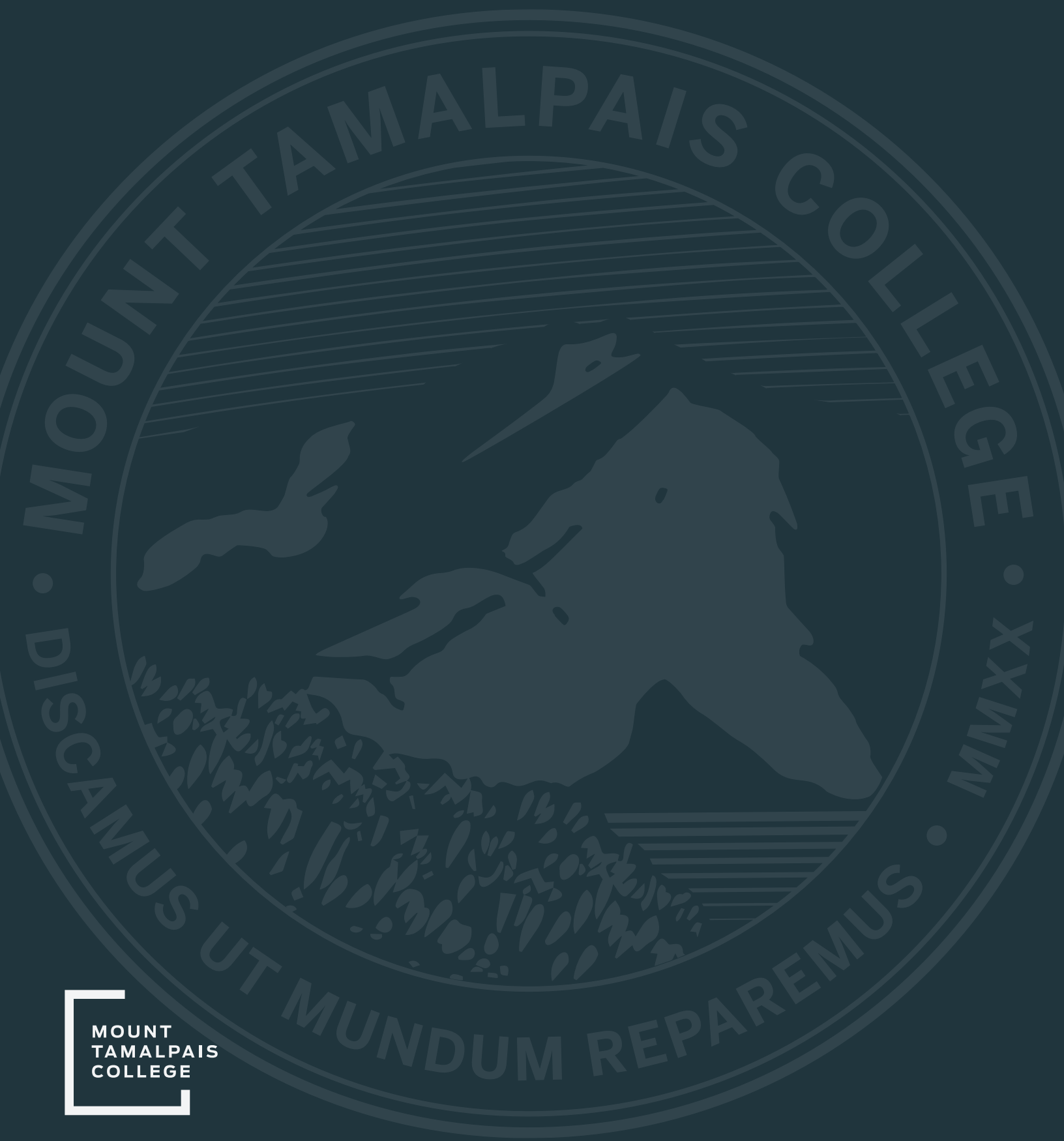
STAFF

Jody Lewen, PhD President	Amy Jamgochian, PhD Chief Academic Officer	Sarah Manley Humanities and Social Sciences Program Director	Bonaru Richardson Communications Associate
Mauricio Avello Program Manager	Jen Juras, PhD Chief of Institutional Effectiveness and Research	Denisse Manrique Development and Community Outreach Manager	Frances Santiago Learning Specialist
Charles Crowe Program Clerk	Jacob Kernodle Registrar and Interim Director of Advising and Student Servicess	Corey McNeil Alumni Affairs Associate	Amy Shea, PhD Writing Program Director
Danny Ho Academic and Student Affairs Associate	Volker Kirchharz Finance and Human Resources Manager	Sasha Morozoff Chief Operating Officer	Carson Temple Development and Communications Manager
Astrid Hoover-Batt Institutional Effective- ness Manager	Bekki Lee-Wendt Chief of Staff	Victor Olguin Program Clerk	
Zaw Htet, PhD Math and Science Program Director		Kirsten Pickering, PhD Senior Researcher for Policy and Practice	

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Jeff Feinman BOARD CHAIR Chief of Partnerships <i>National Summer School Initiative</i>	Jody Lewen, PhD EX-OFFICIO President <i>Mount Tamalpais College</i>	Pat Mims Director <i>Reentry Success Center</i>
Connie Krosney, EdD BOARD VICE CHAIR Professor of Education	Izu Akamiro Vice President <i>Goldman Sachs & Co. LLC</i>	Larry Norton Trustee Emeritus <i>California State University System Foundation</i>
Daniel Stid BOARD SECRETARY Executive Director <i>Lyceum Labs</i>	Will Bondurant Chief Financial Officer <i>Pareto Health</i>	Theresa Roeder, PhD Professor and Chair, Decision Sciences <i>San Francisco State University</i>
Lilly Fu BOARD TREASURER Senior Director of Finance and Administration <i>The George Lucas Education Foundation</i>	Zachary Bookman Chief Executive Officer <i>OpenGov Inc</i>	Puneet Singh Managing Director <i>EY Consulting</i>
	Meredith Levy Founder <i>Meredith Levy Design</i>	Sha Stepter Founder <i>Slow And Steady Media</i>

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