



PACIFICA
GRADUATE INSTITUTE

OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT INSTITUTIONAL UPDATES – MARCH 2024

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“The doors to the world of the wild Self are few but precious. If you have a deep scar, that is a door, if you have an old, old story, that is a door...If you yearn for a deeper life, a full life, a sane life, that is a door.”

Clarissa Pinkola Estés

Warm wishes to the Pacifica Community on International Women’s Day,

As March unfolds, it opens pathways of transition, where the changing seasons mark the onset of growth and renewal following the quiet and restful winter months. This time of awakening the light is personified by Persephone, the newly individuated Greek goddess, who returns to the world, heralding the revival of verdancy and life. In the Persephone myth, it is the relationship between mother and daughter that drives the cycle of nature and creation. Therefore, it is fitting that March is dedicated to Women’s History Month, a time to honor the pioneering achievements and extraordinary impacts women have made on history and civilization. At Pacifica, we commemorate this month by recognizing **women making history in Depth Psychology**.

We asked our scholars to tell us about the women who mentored them, inspired them, and helped them forge their own academic path. The responses were as varied as our faculty, culminating in a constellation of scholarship that bears witness to women’s fundamental role in taking the torch from Jung and bringing Depth Psychology into the present. Pat Katsky, who has been teaching at Pacifica for 23 years and herself is a mentor to hundreds of psychology students, remembers when Marion Woodman would

stay on campus for a month and guest-teach for anyone who asked, leading somatic experiences for students that were “beyond words. The way people were able to interact with music at a bodily level was magical.” Joan Chodorow was crucial for her work with somatic psychology. Lore Zeller exemplified a heroine by outwitting the Nazis and saving her husband (Max Zeller, the founder of the L.A. Jung Institute) from a WWII concentration camp.

One word was repeated in these expressions of gratitude: Compassion. Clarissa Pinkola Estés was mentioned for her “wise, compassionate, and fierce words,” and Marie-Louise von Franz for her “compassionate but unflinching wisdom and insight.” Compassion, then, may be one of the legacies of women scholars in Depth Psychology. Maureen Murdock, author of the best-selling *The Heroine’s Journey*, and former Pacifica faculty, found feminist theologian Carol Christ to be an inspiration for taking women on pilgrimages to Crete to connect with Minoan goddesses, as well as Marija Gimbutas’s *Language of the Goddess*. And of course, and perhaps most importantly, as we walk the grounds of Pacifica in early spring, bright and lovely with the promise of new growth, let us acknowledge those many women scholars of Pacifica who were praised as heroines and mentors: Christine Downing, Ginette Paris, Mary Watkins, Fanny Brewster, and Susan Rowland, among many others, have made and continue to make an indelible impression on their students’ hearts and minds.

This is the work we carry on at Pacifica, stepping through the doors of our scars and stories with compassion, bringing the light of the feminine to this ever-regenerating world, and fearlessly evolving what Depth Psychology means, as we tend soul in and of the world. Please look for more communications around International Women’s Day and Women’s History month from our Pacifica News and Events mailbox, the [Pacifica News](#) page, and our social media.

In this spirit of gratitude and service, I am pleased to share the following key updates from across our campuses and community:

Academic News

This winter marks a time of transition for many students. Cohorts in the MA Counseling program, Jungian & Archetypal Studies specialization, and Depth and Creativity program are experiencing their **last residential sessions on campus this quarter**, a significant moment of celebration (perhaps bittersweet), ritual, and accomplishment. Let us recognize the achievement of getting to this phase in their degree journey and acknowledge that while your monthly or quarterly visits together as a group may be concluded, you always have a place at Pacifica – the mark you have made on your programs and cohorts following you will be enduring.

We are also drawing nearer to another milestone for Pacifica students, our [Commencement ceremony](#) (Saturday, May 25 @ Hilton Santa Barbara). Those eligible to participate in this year’s commencement were recently contacted by our Registrar’s Office with additional details. Please look for that or reach out to registrar@pacifica.edu if you are unsure about your graduation status.

As we celebrate those students completing their degrees at Pacifica, we prepare for the next generation of Pacifica learners. Last month, we **welcomed over 100 prospective**

students to our virtual **Pacifica Experience Day**, where we engaged with them in a rich discussion about the vision for Pacifica's campus climate, and they were able to engage with faculty and staff about program offerings and student services. Our next virtual [Pacifica Experience Day](#) is scheduled for April 5.



Writing Down the Soul: An Archetypal and Mythological Approach to Memoir Writing with Maureen Murdock, Ph.D.

Maureen Murdock is the author of the best-selling book, *The Heroine's Journey*, which explores the rich territory of the feminine psyche. She was also

Teen Forward: An Interview with Dr. Myka Hanson

As part of Pacifica Graduate Institute's observance of World Teen Mental Wellness Day, we are delighted to be speaking with Dr. Myka Hanson, a PGI alumni who is the founder of Teen Forward.

A Bittersweet Weave of Survival and Purpose: An Interview with Dr. Indhushree Rajan about Project Satori and Healing from Human Trafficking

Dr. Rajan is a graduate of Pacifica's M.A./Ph.D. in Clinical Psychology with Emphasis in Depth

There is a great deal of recent, rich content highlighting the work and scholarship of our students, faculty, and alumni that we encourage you to read on our

[Pacifica News page](#), including interviews and reflections on: Black History Month, Teen Mental Wellness, Human Trafficking Prevention, the Psychedelics & Individuation Conference, and more.

Student Research

We recently announced an exciting new protocol for Pacifica research involving human participants that involves formal review and approval by an external **Institutional Review Board (IRB)**, which we have partnered with Cottage Health Research Institute to implement. This development enhances our ethical review processes, inclusion of multiple perspectives, the level of consideration for research participants, and the level of support provided to our dissertation students. For more information, students and faculty can refer to recent communications from the Academic Affairs and Dissertation Offices that provide a more detailed overview of this process.

Also, in support of student research and professional development, Dr. Juliet Rohde-Brown, Chair of our Integrative Therapy and Healing Practices specialization, hosted a webinar last month on ***How to Prepare for Conference & Publication Submissions***.

To read about recent and upcoming **dissertation oral defenses** from across Pacifica's doctoral programs – including on topics related to global warming, divorce, sandplay therapy and telehealth, psychological stress in western medication, the Divine Feminine, and more – visit: <https://www.pacifica.edu/dissertation-oral-defenses/>

Student & Employee Engagement

We will soon be sending out our **annual climate surveys** for both students and employees that will also include reports from our 2023 survey data. Please know we



greatly value the feedback and data gathered from these surveys, and they are used to drive important developments, action plans, and conversations, so we are aiming for a high engagement

on the surveys this year.

The date of our annual **Employee BBQ** was recently announced. It will be held on the Ladera campus with a fiesta theme. Employees can look for more information from the Human Resources Office and planning committee.

For the first time in Pacifica's history, following employee encouragement and feedback, we will honor Cesar Chavez Day (March 31) by observing the holiday on Monday, April 1. Our offices will be closed that day, with more information forthcoming about how we recognize Cesar Chavez Day and encourage those of us in the community to use it as one of service and activism.

2030 Strategic Plan: Onward Together

With a vision toward Pacifica's 50th anniversary in 2027 and the end of the decade in 2030, Pacifica's **new strategic plan** aims to set a course toward four strategic imperatives:

- *Expand Pacifica's Impact*
- *Elevate Learner Outcomes*
- *Empower Organization Development*
- *Enhance Fiscal Strength and Institutional Legacy*

As we look to building Pacifica's future, we stay committed to our depth psychological traditions and maintain focus on the 2024 operational priorities and 2030 long-term goals. To foster widespread awareness, we will launch an engagement campaign featuring town hall meetings, a dedicated webpage to track our progress, and targeted emails to keep you engaged and informed. Additionally, we will implement tracking, assessment, and reporting systems to cultivate a culture of inclusivity and ownership within our campus community. These initiatives will be communicated this month, leading up to a community gathering in the weeks ahead.

Institutional Health

To hear more institutional updates, including around our **2024 WSCUC accreditation** activities and faculty news, I encourage you to view my latest [Eye on Pacifica video](#).



At our February meeting with the **Board of Trustees**, we were pleased to have students from our Depth and Creativity program present and engage with the board on their experiences, feedback, and priorities as students. This continues our recently adopted practice to have student representatives from each program attend Board meetings.

Concrete progress continues on several critical, strategic initiatives. Our **Shared Governance** Task Force has been actively engaged across the institute in the documentation of institutional standing committees and updates on faculty governance structures. The results of the **Campus Utilization Study**, in which many community members participated, were presented to the Board at the February meeting, with a larger report to all coming soon. We are also kicking off the process to secure the permanent **Provost position**, with a search committee that includes representation from across areas and programs.

Pacifica Extension & International Studies

Our Pacifica Extension division has put much effort into its **partnerships, development, current programs, and infrastructure development**. Pacifica Extension engaged in several presentations and conversations and moved towards strategic partnerships with the IAAP, Santa Barbara Foundation, Rooted Santa Barbara, Cottage Health, and the Joseph Campbell Foundation. It also opened enrollment for multiple Certificate courses with some already reaching capacity: Finding Ourselves in Fairy Tales, Writing Down the Soul, and Applied Archetypal Astrology, in addition to successfully completing two new Webinar series. We were also pleased to welcome a first-ever Associate Director for Online Programs and Events, Carolyn Vega, in moving towards the vision for expansive and innovative growth of online and on-campus courses that feature and promote the innovative scholarship of PGI. For a complete listing of upcoming offerings, visit: <https://retreat.pacifica.edu/>

Community Engagements

Pacifica's Soul Promise (PSP) is coming alive! Our ten-year commitment to cultivating 1500 practitioners on the Central Coast of California has been received with open arms. We have shared our vision to transform mental health education and care in



California with over 15 potential partners within the greater Santa Barbara and Ventura communities. PSP's five pillars of

- Student Scholarships,
- Academic Innovation,

- Faculty Development,
- Campus Enhancements, and
- Transdisciplinary Research

will allow Pacifica to make Depth Psychology accessible to all. We will keep [our webpage](#) updated regarding the program's goals, aims, and progress, so please remember to follow our roadmap for success.

Additionally in the community, I was recently included by the *Pacifica Coast Business Times* in a feature on the "[State of Black Leadership](#)," along with such luminaries as Sevet Johnson, the CEO of Ventura County, and Erica Stewart, the mayor of San Luis Obispo, to discuss challenges around diversity and inequality.

Myself and members of our Leadership Team and other faculty/staff at Pacifica have been in attendance at several community events like Chamber of Commerce Gala and LEAP awards, Healing Justice (inaugural Black is Beautiful Gala), and more.

Lastly, I have been honored by the number of you who have taken time out of your days to attend our initial sessions of *Breaking Bread with Dr. Lee*. Look for invites to upcoming offerings to this virtual office hour time where we can gather together as people, colleagues, partners, and soulful members of this dynamic community. This time together – and my daily witness to the vivacity of campus life – has demonstrated that while we have various backgrounds, imperfections, and even ideas for our continued growth, there is a strength in the belief in our work together and its impact on lives that carries us.

Joyfully Serving,



Dr. Leonie H. Mattison, Ed.D, MBA
President and CEO