It was a simpler time three years ago. On March 3rd, 2020, students submitted their assignments they wrote on sheets of paper to physical drop boxes, the most interesting thing that happened on campus in the past two weeks was a party put on by the undergraduate house we now know as Venerable, and the article with title "Coronavirus Cases Pop Up Across U.S. Over Weekend" wasn’t a big enough deal to be the first thing you see as you picked up the day’s issue of the The California Tech.

Looking back now, it seems like so long ago, because it was! On this day three years ago, three quarters of our current undergraduate population was still in high school! Hopefully, this puts into perspective how long it’s been since I’ve been promised a wage I still haven’t received.

The March 3rd, 2020 issue was the first one I worked on for the Tech, and at that time, the pay rates were made very clear to us by the business manager. As a page editor, I would be paid $30 for my work on the issue. The long hours I worked the night I helped set up the publishing office, my effective hourly rate well below minimum wage, but since our publication is funded entirely by the dues each undergraduate pays to our student union, ASCIT, I was glad I was being paid at all.

Last Friday, on the 24th of February, a group of about 40 Caltech graduate students and postdoctoral researchers delivered a petition signed by over 400 of our colleagues, in support of an international graduate student. Facing unjust retaliatory action from the Institute, the student risks losing their graduate student status at Caltech permanently, and injuries, the graduate office has done nothing to effectively intervene and met with attempts at remediation. Instead, the student was required to apply for their work on the issue. The long hours I worked the night I helped set up the publishing office, my effective hourly rate well below minimum wage, but since our publication is funded entirely by the dues each undergraduate pays to our student union, ASCIT, I was glad I was being paid at all.

Of course, this would be the last issue we would publish from on campus. I wasn’t paid immediately, but at the time, losing out on $30 wasn’t my primary concern. Most of us working on the Tech shared this outlook, so as I got sporadic updates on the earnings I had accrued and wasn’t paid out over the next year, I assumed that things would work themselves out once we got back on campus.

When we returned to campus at the start of the 2021-2022 academic year, I asked our business manager at the time about the status of payment for our contributors over the past two years. I was told that he didn’t know how to access the account that would be used to pay the Tech contributors.

We later organized a meeting with the administrators responsible for payment distribution. By this point, all the financial records for payment had long since been submitted to them, we were told by the administrators that Caltech’s bureaucracy is set up to pay for million dollar microscopes, not twenty dollar article payments, and that the process would require more time. There were additional legal complications due to the payments being linked to work that had occurred in a previous tax year. They said they would get things resolved within four to six weeks.

Well, it’s been nine months since they said that. In that time, we occasionally heard rumblings of progress - during the summer of 2022, contributors were asked for tax information. We were also asked if we were okay with receiving our backlogged payments and all future payments in the form of… gift cards. But as you may have guessed by the fact that I’m writing this article, neither of these things have led to any of us actually getting paid our promised wages. As of this week, the payment procurement forms were rescinded, though whether or not this will lead to any of us actually getting paid is yet to be seen. Let’s hope it does...

REINSTATE, IT CANNOT WAIT: A COLLECTIVE CALL TO ACTION FOR AN INTERNATIONAL SCHOLAR

Abedullah Farooq (G5 Biology · International student), Venkatesh Ponnada (G3 Astronomy · International student), Sam Ponnada (G3 Astronomy · International student), Nadia Suryawinata (G2 Biology · International student), Elissabetta Benazzi (Postdoc Chemistry · International scholar), Varun Wadia (G6 Biology · International student), Zitong Wang (G3 Biology · International student)

Last Friday, on the 24th of February, a group of about 40 Caltech graduate students and postdoctoral researchers delivered a petition signed by over 400 of our colleagues, in support of an international graduate student. Facing unjust retaliatory action from the Institute, the student risks losing their graduate student status at Caltech permanently, and with it, their legal immigration status at Caltech permanently, and injuries, the graduate office has done nothing to effectively intervene and met with attempts at remediation. Instead, the student was required to apply for their work on the issue. The long hours I worked the night I helped set up the publishing office, my effective hourly rate well below minimum wage, but since our publication is funded entirely by the dues each undergraduate pays to our student union, ASCIT, I was glad I was being paid at all.

Despite these dire circumstances and injuries, the graduate office has done nothing to effectively intervene on the student’s behalf. Graduate students are often told that part of the Graduate Office’s role is to mediate student-advisor disputes, but the student’s grievances were not met with attempts at remediation. Instead, the student was required to take unpaid medical leave—or else graduate within two terms and lose the research credit and publications from their work over the past 4 years. While on leave, they lost access to the lab they worked in, their research records, data, and materials, and their stipend—all while faced with heavy medical expenses. At the direction of Caltech’s General Counsel, other students (including those who are part of the Graduate Student Council) have been barred from mediating on their behalf.

The urgency of this situation came to a head at the beginning of February. The Institute delayed the student’s re-enrollment for so long that their F1 visa status was allowed to lapse. Now, the student depends on an F1-OPT (optional practical training) visa extension to legally remain in the US. If not reinstated within the next 2 months, the student will lose their immigration status in the US. The exigency of this timeline, and the continued stonewalling by senior administration, spurred CGPU to take public collective action to demand accountability for a member of our own community.

ASCIT WINTER ELECTIONS: THIS WEEK!

Elections for Caltech’s undergraduate student council will be held on Monday, March 6th. The positions being elected are:
- Interhouse Committee Chair
- Board of Control Chair
- Board of Control Secretary
- Conduct Review Committee Student Co-Chair
- Tech Editor

Statements from candidates in this election can be found on Pages 5 through 7 of this issue.

NEWS TICKER

3/4: Venerable Interhouse

Also known as “OPI”, the party’s theme will be “Once Upon a Time”
More on OPI on Page 12.

3/10: Last day of classes

3/11: Dabney Interhouse

Also known as “DEF”, the party’s theme will be “Deep Sea Horror”
More on DEI on Page 12.

3/17: End of Winter Term

3/18 - 4/2: Spring Break

4/3: First day of Spring Term

To show support for the student, a group of graduate students and postdocs delivered a petition to the office of the Dean of Graduate Studies

The California Tech

Vol. CXXXVI No. 1

Pasadena, California

Friday, March 3, 2023

tech@caltech.edu

I HAVEN'T BEEN PAID FOR MY WORK IN THREE YEARS. WHAT'S UP WITH THAT?

KENNY THAI | LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

Well, it’s been nine months since they said that. In that time, we occasionally heard rumblings of progress - during the summer of 2022, contributors were asked for tax information. We were also asked if we were okay with receiving our backlogged payments and all future payments in the form of... gift cards. But as you may have guessed by the fact that I’m writing this article, neither of these things have led to any of us actually getting paid our promised wages. As of this week, the payment procurement forms were rescinded, though whether or not this will lead to any of us actually getting paid is yet to be seen. Let’s hope it does...
Avery’s Interhouse Party (“Ravery”) was held on Saturday January 21st from 10PM to 2AM in Avery’s courtyard and dining hall. We interviewed Patrick Tan (former Avery Social Director, current Avery Chancellor) and Clara Wang (former Avery tech) on their experiences about planning the party and the Interhouse itself.

Q: What was your theme and how did you go about bringing it to life?
A: Our theme was “Avatar: The Last Airbender” but for Avery. So it was Avery’s “Avatar: The Last Airbender” but for Avery. We had Avatar-themed foods corresponding to each nation and we also had Avatar-themed games. We also had a Water Nation game that was like a fishing game. We had an ice cream bar. Avery Interhouse is pretty interactive for people who are not intoxicated because we have games corresponding to each nation and we also had Avatar-themed drinks that were very exciting about that – it was nice to see.

Q: What were some of your favorite things about the Interhouse?
A: Avery Interhouse in particular did have another Interhouse. Do you know why that was?
A: It’s because someone told me that we have so much food, we don’t need another Interhouse. I think theAlternate Interhouse is usually for the non-drunk experience. And I think Interhouse. I think the Alternate Interhouse is pretty interesting for people who are not intoxicated because we have games corresponding to each nation and we also had Avatar-themed drinks that were very exciting about that – it was nice to see.

Q: What makes Avery Interhouse different from other Interhouses?
A: Avery Interhouse in particular did have another Interhouse. Do you know why that was?
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Q: What was done differently this year from other years, and is there anything that’s likely to change in the future?
A: We had a dance floor this past year. It’s a great way to bring it to life. We had a dance floor this past year. It’s a great way to bring it to life.
RENLSTEIN, IT CANNOT WAIT: A COLLECTIVE CALL TO ACTION FOR AN INTERNATIONAL SCHOLAR

[From Page 1]

The student’s situation is one that international scholars in the US are all too familiar with. Without the proper support and understanding from Caltech, it is all too likely that the student will experience a great deal of stress. Hence, we are calling for a collective call to action by the international student community, and we are putting the call to action directly to the administration in the form of a letter to the President of the Institute.

We are demanding the following:

1. Full transparency and accountability of all administrative decisions related to the student’s situation.
2. A prompt and thorough investigation into the circumstances surrounding the student’s situation.
3. Immediate provision of adequate housing and support services to the student.
4. A commitment to providing a safe and inclusive environment for all students, regardless of their background.
5. An institutional review of the policies and procedures that may have led to the student’s situation.

We urge the administration to respond to this letter with a commitment to these demands and a clear plan for action. As international scholars, we are committed to standing in solidarity with our colleagues and partners around the world to ensure that students are treated with dignity and respect. We are counting on your leadership to make this a reality.

We are calling on the Caltech community to join us in this call to action. We are united in our commitment to ensuring that all students are treated with fairness and justice. We are calling on you to join us in this important work. We believe that when we stand together, we can create a better future for all.

Sincerely,
[Your Name]
[Your Institution]
Sophie Elam

IHC Chair (Candidate 1 of 4)

In my experience, one of the most positive and unique aspects of Caltech is the House System. As we have all come to learn, each house contributes its own personality to campus culture, and between the eight houses, students can find a family-like community that endures outside of the classroom. My goal as IHC Chair would be to advocate for the best interests of the Houses and facilitate full partnerships between student administration so that the Houses may continue to maintain their culture and traditions to the fullest experience.

During my time at Caltech, I have had the privilege to serve in a variety of positions including Camus-Wide Orange Watch Coordinator, Fleming Arch Representative, a member of the Fleming Title IX and Peer Advocate roles. In each of these I have had the chance to work with students, and I am certain that by enhancing my ability to serve a as an IHC Chairperson. In order to achieve this goal, I believe that our relationships with multiple houses, organizations, and student groups are of utmost importance. I have established several leadership roles with multiple residential contexts, as I am in an ideal position to be solutions-focused and work with the expectations of all academic restrictions, I want to explore how to put on a smile when we need to deal with admin and faculty on a regular basis. It feels like we have had to constantly adjust to the new norms resulting as an effect of the pandemic. I am interested in seeing the interworking’s of rotation. So, as IHC Chair I want to further refine the rotation process and avoid the algorithm to ensure a fair gender distribution amongst the administrative assignments. Additionally, we have a student who is non-binary, genderqueer, and has had to face unfair challenges. I aim to increase this number as IHC Chair and to fully account for non-binary, genderqueer, and gender fluid students when assigning leadership roles, and updating student photos on Donut. This is an extremely important task, and it will eventually be reported.

The California Tech | Candidate Statements | March 3, 2023

Michael Gutierrez

Tech Editor (Candidate 1 of 1)

Hey all, I’m Michael (or perhaps better known as Guutz) and I’d like to throw my hat into the ring to become your next editor for the Caltech Chronicle. I believe my position with the promise that if elected, the Tech will return to a regular publication schedule. If you’ve ever gone back through the archives and read old issues of the Tech (I highly recommend it), you’ll see how much pride, passion, and care went into documenting each chunk of student life at Caltech. To me, it’s really inspiring to see the entire campus come together over stories, whether good or bad, hopeful or dismal, joyful or heavy. It feels like these days, most of us have clustered in our respective corners of campus; my hope is that the Tech can bring everyone together and make us all something in common to talk about.

My qualifications:

- I can read and write English
- Passed my frosh hums
- Enrolled in a 9-unit journalism class next term so I’ll have some experience

Write for the Tech!

Give our next Tech Editor an easier time!
techcaltech.edu
INTERVIEW WITH HIMMA VATTI ABOUT THE CALTECH TITLE IX PROGRAM

Asa Partanenlampi / Campus

How long have you worked in the Equity and Title IX office?

I became Caltech's Title IX Coordinator and began managing the Equity and Title IX Office in July 2020.

What does the Title IX Office do?

We facilitate students' access to campus resources, help students, staff, and administrative and support personnel navigate and understand complaints and reports related to discrimination, relationship violence, stalking, and harassment. We work with students to understand their needs and provide support.

How do you help students who are experiencing sexual harassment or assault?

We provide a confidential and safe environment for students to discuss their experiences and concerns. We also connect them with resources and support services.

How do you work with students who are experiencing mental health issues?

We work closely with the Counseling Center to provide mental health support and resources to students.

What is the role of the Title IX Office in preventing sexual misconduct?

Title IX requires that universities provide a nondiscrimination commitment and establish policies and procedures to prevent and address sexual harassment and assault. We work to ensure that these policies are implemented and that students are aware of their rights.

What kind of training do you provide to faculty, staff, and students?

We provide training on Title IX compliance, sexual harassment prevention, and bystander intervention.

Can you tell us about your background in Title IX and sexual harassment prevention?

I have a background in human rights and social justice, with a focus on gender equality and sexual violence prevention. I have worked extensively in this field and have a deep understanding of the complexities of sexual harassment and assault.

What advice do you have for students who may be experiencing sexual harassment or assault?

It's important to know that you are not alone. We provide support, resources, and safe spaces for students to seek help.

What is the role of the Equity and Title IX Office in foster an inclusive and welcoming campus environment?

We work to foster an inclusive and welcoming campus environment by implementing policies and procedures to prevent and address discrimination and provide support and resources to students.

What kind of resources are available for students who need help?

We provide resources such as counseling, legal support, and referrals to local organizations.

What is the role of the Equity and Title IX Office in ensuring that the Caltech community is aware of their rights and responsibilities?

We educate the Caltech community about their rights and responsibilities under Title IX and other relevant laws and regulations.

What kind of impact do you hope to have on the Caltech community?

I hope to create a culture of respect and inclusivity, where every student feels valued and heard, and where we work together to prevent and address discrimination.

What kind of support do you provide to students who need help with issues outside of the Equity and Title IX Office?

We provide referrals to other campus resources and community organizations that can provide additional support.

What is your advice for students who want to make a difference on campus?

I encourage students to become involved in campus initiatives and programs, to speak up about issues, and to support each other.

What kind of support do you provide to faculty and staff?

We provide training, resources, and support to help faculty and staff implement policies and procedures to prevent and address discrimination.

What do you see as the biggest challenges in your role?

One of the biggest challenges is ensuring that everyone is aware of their rights and responsibilities under Title IX and that we are providing the support and resources that students need.

What do you see as the biggest opportunities in your role?

One of the biggest opportunities is creating a culture of respect and inclusivity, where everyone feels valued and heard.

What is your favorite thing about working at Caltech?

I love the opportunities to work with students, faculty, and staff to create a more inclusive and welcoming campus environment.

What is one thing you want students to know about the Equity and Title IX Office?

I want students to know that we are here to support them and that they can reach out to us at any time.

What is your advice for students who want to make a difference on campus?

I encourage students to become involved in campus initiatives and programs, to speak up about issues, and to support each other.

What is your advice for faculty and staff?

I encourage faculty and staff to implement policies and procedures to prevent and address discrimination and to support students who need help.

What is your advice for administrators?

I encourage administrators to create a culture of respect and inclusivity, where everyone feels valued and heard.

What is your advice for the Caltech community as a whole?

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What is your advice for the Caltech community as a whole?
On the first day of winter term, on-campus students woke up to find small glossy flyers outside their doors, advertising an app called “Fizz”. Throughout the day, representatives gave out free donuts outside Hammontree to encourage students to download the app. The invasion had begun.

Fizz is a social media platform designed specifically for college students: you need a university email to create an account and you can only interact with your university’s feast. So, while Fizz has launched in many other schools, a Caltech user will not be able to interact with the content whatsoever. In principle, everything you see on Fizz was posted by a fellow student and the FizzCaltech students will see what you post.

Once the app is open, users can create and consume posts, which contain things like images, text, or simply centering around Caltech. Other users can leave comments and award upvotes or downvotes to rate posts and comments. The app’s moderators are apparently Caltech students hired by Fizz, the stated intent being to have a more moderate moderation system than relying on an auto-moderator or human employees unfamliar with the platform. It has been reported that moderators are also paid.

According to Fizz’s website, the app was founded by Stanford drop-outs Teddy Solomon and Ashton Colen. The two say they had Stanford students struggling with “a lack of community-based moderation.” They envisioned Fizz as a way to remedy this by being a “campus-specific platform that facilitates authentic conversations”, and launched it at Caltech in 2021. In the months that followed, they would release monthly in seed funding and expand to other campuses. It has supposedly been quite successful: the flyers claim that 15% of Stanford, Dartmouth, and Pepperdine students use Fizz. I take this with a grain of salt considering Fizz is only available on iPhones and iPads.

The app’s website also states the following about the initial launch: “Fizz had completely changed the culture [at Stanford], creating a wholesome, intimate, and uplifting online space through proper community-based moderation.” While I am unable to access Stanford’s Fizz feed, it seems that the one I have access to Caltech Fizz hardly seem to be the product of positive culture change. The vast majority are banal memes, posts dunking on Caltech, certain blame, and a sprinkle of truly cursed content. I wouldn’t classify these posts as “authentic conversations” (albeit “uplifting”, and I doubt that many people forming new connections after seeing someone’s shitpost about Red Dog pasta. In short, it is essentially what one should expect from an anonymous Reddit-like platform: memes, shitposts, and some odd gadget whose sincerity will probably never be known. I don’t know much about the app’s engagement is authentic, considering mods are required to make sure content isn’t objectionable. You should know what you’re getting into: Fizz is garbage. As a Caltech Confessions reader myself, I should stress that it is not new to earning other’s. Indeed, I personally enjoy seeing the disgustingly things that my fellow Techers decide to inflict upon the rest of us. But you shouldn’t download Fizz thinking it’s revolutionary or positive.

**MAKING A CASE FOR THE ORANGE CREWMATE**

Dear Aching for Adderall,

The first piece of advice I have for you is to not take medication under the influence of alcohol. This can lead to serious problems with your health. Amphetamines are serious drugs and can lead to serious problems with your health. Amphetamines are serious drugs and can lead to serious problems with your health. They are highly recommended to everyone.

Dear Aching for Adderall,

I have been trying to get this girl (21+) but really the only thing she seems interested in is drinking. Before you start judging me (also 21+), let me say that I haven’t made any moves on her and we actually have very interesting conversations! The downside is that she is quite drunk during these discussions and it’s gotten to a point that I’ve been avoiding drinking on weekdays just to find an adult woman and slipping and honestly so my liver health. What should I do?

Dear Aching for Adderall,

I have been hand picking someone and it’s going super well! I’m really into him and he seems really into me. The only problem is that our relationship is constantly being mentioned on Fizz and not in a very flattering way. It’s gotten to the point that all my friends are now conversing about the latest Fizz post about us or how we should deal with the endless rumors surrounding our relationship. We barely even have sex anymore and the only thing we discuss is off-campus friends. If you’ve already done this, try to ignore the rumors and keep doing what you’re currently doing.

Dear Aching for Adderall,

Aging for Adderall,

Last year I successfully had a really good experience with Adderall. This year, however, I have been struggling with “a lack of community-based moderation.” I have been having untreated ADHD and I have been struggling with it (even if you have to do this while taking medication under the influence of alcohol). I have been struggling with it (even if you have to do this while taking medication under the influence of alcohol). I have been struggling with it (even if you have to do this while taking medication under the influence of alcohol). I have been struggling with it (even if you have to do this while taking medication under the influence of alcohol). I have been struggling with it (even if you have to do this while taking medication under the influence of alcohol).

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Q: What is your theme, and how did you go about bringing it to life?
I: Our theme is “Once Upon a Time”, a storybook and dark fairy tale kind of vibe. We mixed storybook and medieval fairytale energy and brought it into our construction and art. We also wanted it to be a little bit darker and less cutesy so it’s more focused on storybooks than fairy tales, which also allows us to expand the scope of our art.
K: A challenge with fairy tales was that a lot of people were unsure on how we could make the construction exciting at first. I’ve had this idea for the past year where it would be really cool to build a castle. I realized we could go for a run down castle vibe along with the fairy tales but that got a lot of people really excited about the construction.

Q: What should we look forward to as we attend your interhouse?
I: We try our best to cater to any person that wants to come to our party for different reasons. We try to make the stuff very danceable and the music great and well-mixed. For people who aren’t as into partying, we have Shrek playing in the lounge and we have really pretty decor if people want to come to partying, we have Shrek playing in the lounge and we have really pretty decor if people want to
K: One thing that we try to do really well is making our food part of our theme. It’s easy to order and we have really pretty decor if people want to

Q: What is your theme and how did you go about bringing it to life?
I: Our theme is “Deep Sea Horror”. It will be a very danceable and the music great and well-mixed. For people who aren’t as into partying, we have Shrek playing in the lounge and we have really pretty decor if people want to just look around at the art.
K: The rain sucks. We’ve lost basically three days of construction straight now to the rain. What this means is that I’m trying to do everything I can to get ahead on my work. You get ahead while you can, to prepare for when it rains for half the time you’re building the party and you lose half your remaining time.

Q: What’s being done differently this year compared to other years?
I: Come if you want! OPI isn’t a party where we try to make everyone come. It’s a party where we want people to come if they want to. I think we’ve done as best of a job as we can considering the amount of time we had and the fact that we’re all Caltech students working, so I hope it turns out well.
K: I think we did a really good job this year. I’m gonna be really stressed finishing it up because of course I will be. I hope people can come and have a good time.

Q: What makes Dabney Interhouse different from other interhouse parties?
A: Dabney Interhouse is a dry Interhouse. We don’t serve alcohol. Rather than loud music and focusing on dancing, it will be more focused on vibes and the experience. It’s scenery based, and we’ll have a lot of food, so I invite everyone to come even if for a short while to see all these incredible sights that we are preparing.

Q: What is the biggest challenge that you think you will face this year?
A: Jen Hu

Q: What do you have any final thoughts and plugs?
I: If you really liked the dome, it will be back next year! In the past year where it would be really cool to build a castle. I realized we could go for a run down castle vibe along with the fairy tales but that got a lot of people really excited about the construction.

DABNEY’S ELDRICHT INTERHOUSE:
DEEP SEA HORROR

Kenny Thai | Events

Dabney’s Interhouse Party (“DEI”) will be held on Saturday, March 3rd from 8 PM to midnight in Dabney’s courtyard, lounge, and dining hall. We interviewed Emma Markowski and Mira Menezes, Dabney’s current Social VP’s about what we should expect to see at the party.

Q: What is your theme and how did you go about bringing it to life?
A: Our theme is “Deep Sea Horror”. It will be a magical experience reaching the bottom of the ocean surrounded by creatures beyond your comprehension.

Q: What sights will there be to see?
A: Right now, we’re constructing the jellyfish, which is this giant net that spans the courtyard and has decorations hanging down from it. It’s going to have literal jellyfish hanging down from it, this year! There’s also gonna be things like shipwrecks, deep sea ruins, and we’re figuring out these other things right now. There will also be two murals to enjoy.

Q: What makes Dabney Interhouse different from other Interhouse parties?
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Q: What is the biggest challenge that you think you will face this year?
A: Jen Hu

Q: I hear there is going to be a ballpit. Is the ballpit going to be sanitary?
A: Each individual balls has been sanitized with bleach, and then the floor of the ball pit was sanitized this week, so the ball pit is as clean as it will ever be.

Q: Tell me about this fabric maze that’s being constructed.
A: The fabric maze is a maze made of fabric where the room have different themes and people get to volunteer to create them. It will be filled by various constructions that are the reaches of what the Darbs can imagine. You will be able to experience a myriad of wonders within it, and it won’t be limited to being “Deep Sea Horror” themed. It can be anything.

Q: Who made the flier to the right?
A: Jen Hu

SURVEY: DUAL-HOUSE MEMBER NAMES!

Kenny Thai | Culture

Members of Dabney House are called “Darbs”, and members of Blacker House are called “Moles”, so what do you call someone who’s a member of both Dabney and Blacker? They’re “Marbles”. “Marble” is among the most commonly used names for dual-house members, but many house combinations do not have an agreed upon joint name. Let’s change that!

The QR code to the right leads to a Google Form where you can leave suggestions on names for all combinations of the eight Houses + Bechtel.

Link: https://bit.ly/3EOQEBR

Tech@Caltech.edu | Student Life | March 3, 2023