Beware of Falling Pumpkins

Douglas Smith
Student Life

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Anybody can smash a pumpkin, but at Caltech we do it in the name of science: a demonstration of triboluminescence on a grand scale.

Tribo-luminescence? Well, if you’ve ever gone into a dark closet and heard a whoosh and a roll of Wint-O-Green Life Savers, you’ve seen it—the blue-green flash when you bite into the candy. The flash comes from the sugar crystals as they are crushed. As a sugar molecule gets distorted, a positive charge builds up on one side and a negative charge on the other. What the flash means is that the sugar as a whole has grown from a black op into a really big, really bright flash.

ping it from high atop Caltech Hill, if you made the pumpkin as big as a few sugar crystals, what if you “pinched” it and pushed it with a hand mirror and a roll of tape? Or what if you “pinched” it and pushed it with a ball of tape?

And just for good measure, what if you put a few sugar crystals on a dining plate, and taped a mirror and a roll of tape to the plate? Or what if you put a few sugar crystals on a plate, and taped a mirror and a roll of tape to the plate?

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Elina Sendinov, Aditya Medicherla, Shana Elorza, and Catherine Masih

Opinion

Following the C/GPU majority support rally at Caltech last week, discussions on labor unionization have been increasing on campus. While the goals of the C/GPU and Caltech’s administration were different, the outcome was the same: a majority vote to unionize. Caltech’s administration didn’t expect a unity of that scale. Our voices were heard.

However, the process of actually forming a union has only just begun. Our support rally on campus was a significant step towards organizing. We have a long road ahead of us, including many challenges and potential obstacles. Caltech’s administration will be working to delay progress, but we are determined to form a union. Caltech’s administration is working hard to make sure we are in a weak bargaining position with their own union, which is currently being formed. The CSU will be representing us, and we will be represented by the C/GPU.

The C/GPU has been active on campus for many years now. They have fought hard for our rights and are committed to improving our working conditions. We need to continue supporting them in their efforts. Caltech’s administration is not alone in trying to delay our progress. Our bargaining team is prepared to negotiate with the administration to make sure we get the best possible contract for all of us.

We are working hard to form a labor union for graduate students, postdocs, and staff at Caltech. Our research is diverse, and we are working on a variety of projects. We are building a strong community, and we need to support each other in order to achieve our goals. In our union, the goals are not just personal; they are about us all. We are working towards creating a better working environment for ourselves and for those around us. We have a vision for a better, more equitable future, and we are committed to making it a reality. We are ready to negotiate with the administration to make sure that we get the best possible contract for all of us.
Introducing...

**The California Tech**

**CalGuesser**

Every issue we'll show you a different location on campus. Find the place and find the QR code hidden there to sign the log book and win a fabulous prize!!!

("On campus" is defined by the bounds of the map on caltech.edu/map. The QR code will be hidden somewhere within the pictured area.)

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**#2 Last week’s winners!**

**Amazon Skymall**

Welcome back to Amazon Skymall! In this column, we hold a raffle where we [not] randomly select one of our lucky readers and give them the item of their choice from these hand picked selections!

Enter this week’s raffle by using the QR code or the link below:

Last Issue’s Winner

**Housetalia:**

“Something About Fire Alarms”

by Jen Hu

if anyone has requests or suggestions for house activities or interactions to draw, shoot them my way on discord @otaku553!
Balancing Equations and Laps: The Life of Sam Small, BioE Major and Star Swimmer

Skye Ruedas  
Humans of Caltech

Caltech is known for its rigorous academic environment, but beneath the surface lies a community of student-athletes who defy the odds daily, balancing their passion for their sport with the demands of academic life. One such athlete is Sam Small, a junior BioE major, majoring in Chemistry. His journey provides an enlightening perspective on what it's like to be a student-athlete at Caltech.

Waking up at 6:30 am, Sam's day begins with a morning lift in the gym from 7 to 8:30 am. Refueling quickly with a coffee and snack, he goes off to his 9 am lab meeting. As a BioE major, Sam's academic plate is just as full as his athletic one. After his lab meeting, he makes some time for studying and lunch before attending his 1 pm to 2:30 pm class.

Sam's commitment to swimming is evident. Not only does he along with the other swimmers practice every day from Monday to Saturday, but they also attend two morning gym sessions a week. These practices and sessions build both their physical abilities and their bond with the team – a close-knit group that feels like family.

Sam's athletic journey impacts his social life too. The swim team, for him, allows him to be part of a community with shared goals and aspirations. This unified team provides companionship, mutual support, and lasting memories. On the other hand, there are trade-offs. The dedication to his sport occasionally keeps him and other swimmers from joining certain activities, like house ski or beach trips, especially during the season. Yet, for Sam, the personal growth and team victories make it all worthwhile.

Post-practice, Sam grabs dinner and then shifts his focus back to academics. His evenings often involve working as a TA for a lab class from 7 to 10 pm. Despite the long day, Sam's dedication to both his studies and sport is clear.

Through the eyes of Sam Small, we're granted a glimpse into the demanding yet rewarding world of a Caltech athlete. His story shows the commitment that defines Caltech’s athletic community. Whether it's the support of a team that feels like family or the relentless pursuit of academic and athletic excellence, student-athletes like Sam show the spirit of Caltech.

written by Jacqueline Bircher

directed by Brian Brophy

Caltech Theater presents

another revolution

starring Skyler Ware, G6 & Michael Gutierrez, ’25

Wed-Thurs, Nov. 8-9 @ 7:30 pm
Friday, Nov. 10 @ 4:30 pm
Beckman Institute Auditorium

This production was made possible with funding from Katie & Jose Helu and with the help of donors and Student Affairs. For tickets and further information link to QR code

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