Application Process

All Completed Applications are Due in the Chancellor's Office No Later Than 5:00 p.m. on Thursday, February 19, 2004.

Please answer all the questions on the application form, which is included as part of this brochure. Please do not include letters of recommendation with your application. When the application is completed, submit this entire application form to the Chancellor’s office on your campus, either by mail or in person. The application is also available on-line at www.universityofcalifornia.edu/studentreg.html; however the completed application must be submitted in person or by mail. The application, along with your responses to the essay questions, must be in the Chancellor’s office no later than 5:00 p.m. on Thursday, February 19, 2004. Following are the Chancellors’ office addresses; in parentheses are names, phone numbers and email addresses of the coordinators for student Regent recruitment on each campus. Please contact your campus coordinator for more information.

Chancellor Robert Berdahl
200 California Hall
University of California
Berkeley, CA 94720
(Hal Reynolds – 510/642-6772
hgr3@uclink.berkeley.edu)
Chancellor Larry N. Vanderhoef
567 Mrak Hall
University of California
Davis, CA 95616
(Ellen Yoshimura – 530/752-2418
emyoshimura@ucdavis.edu)
Chancellor Ralph Cicerone
501 Administration Building
University of California
Irvine, CA 92697
(Marti Barmore – 949/824-7741
marti@uci.edu)
Chancellor Albert Carnesale
2147 Murphy Hall
University of California
Los Angeles, CA 90095
(Mike Cohn – 310/206-8821
mcohn@sapp.net.ucla.edu)
Chancellor France Córdova
4148 Hinderaker Hall
University of California
Riverside, CA 92521
(Sharon Vander Veen – 909/787-3989
sharolv@admin.ucr.edu)
Acting Chancellor Marsha Chandler
107 University Center
University of California, San Diego
La Jolla, CA 92039
(Kyle Nakashishi – 858/534-4451
knakanishi@ucsd.edu)
Chancellor J. Michael Bishop
126 Medical Sciences Building
University of California
San Francisco, CA 94143
(Eric Koenig – 415/476-4318
ekoenig@osl.ucsf.edu and
Barbara Smith – 415/476-4318
bsmith@osl.ucsf.edu)
Chancellor Larry N. Vanderhoef
567 Mrak Hall
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(Eric Koenig – 415/476-4318
ekoenig@osl.ucsf.edu and
Barbara Smith – 415/476-4318
bsmith@osl.ucsf.edu)
Chancellor Henry T.Y. Yang
Cheadle Hall—Room 5221
University of California
Santa Barbara, CA 93106
(Joe Navarro – 805/893-4467
navarro-j@sa.ucsb.edu)
Chancellor M.R.C. Greenwood
296 McHenry Library
University of California
Santa Cruz, CA 95064
(Cyndi Edinger – 831/459-2789
cyndi@ucsc.edu)

Please Print or Type
(Application deadline is Thursday, February 19, 2004 at 5:00 p.m.)

Application Form for 2005-2006 Student Regent

Personal Information

1. Name ______________________________ 2. Campus ______________________________
2. Name ______________________________ 2. Campus ______________________________
3. Student Identification No. ______________________________
4. Campus Mailing Address ______________________________
5. Campus Telephone No. ______________________________
6. Mailing Address ______________________________
   (The address where you will receive your mail during spring break and during the summer.)
7. Telephone No. ______________________________ 8. Email address ______________________________
   (Number where you can be reached during spring break and during the summer.)
Educational Background

9a. Please check your class standing for spring term 2004

☐ FRESHMAN  ☐ SOPHOMORE  ☐ JUNIOR  ☐ SENIOR  ☐ GRADUATE  ☐ PROFESSIONAL

9b. Will you be enrolled as a student at the University of California continuously through the 2004-2005 academic year?

Yes ___  No _____

10. What is your major? Law

11. Please list all colleges or universities you have attended, including UC; indicate the dates you attended and any degrees you were awarded.

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<tr>
<th>Institution attended</th>
<th>Dates attended</th>
<th>Degrees</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. UC Davis, King Hall School of Law</td>
<td>Fall 2003 - Present</td>
<td>JD Candidate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. Alliant International University, Graduate School of Education; Fall 2002 - Summer 2003</td>
<td>Two CA Teaching Credentials</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. University of California, Los Angeles</td>
<td>Fall 1998 - Spring 2001</td>
<td>BA in History &amp; Minor Judaic Studies</td>
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12. Please list below the names, titles, addresses, and telephone numbers of three references. Please notify your references at the time you submit this application that, if you are selected as a semifinalist, they will be asked the second week in March to submit a letter of reference by April 2, 2004. The three finalists’ Chancellors will be asked to comment on the qualifications of their candidates, so you may wish to make your accomplishments and interests known to him or her if you are selected as a finalist.

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<tr>
<th>NAME/TITLEADDRESS</th>
<th>emailADDRESS</th>
<th>TELEPHONE NUMBER</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Dr. Berkly Nelson, Director Center for Student Programming: 105 Kerckhoff Hall Los Angeles, CA 90024-1607 <a href="mailto:bnelson@saonet.ucla.edu">bnelson@saonet.ucla.edu</a></td>
<td>(310) 206-8814</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Prof. Lisa Pruitt, UCD Law Professor: 400 Mrak Hall Drive Davis, CA 95616 <a href="mailto:lpruitt@ucdavis.edu">lpruitt@ucdavis.edu</a>, (530) 752-2750</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Robert Hunter Pierson, Director Bay Area Teach For America: 4300 Horton St. Emeryville, CA 94808 <a href="mailto:hunter.pierson@teachforamerica.org">hunter.pierson@teachforamerica.org</a></td>
<td>(510) 450-1288</td>
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On additional paper, please answer questions 13, 14, and either 15a or 15b. Label each essay with the question number. Answers to questions 13 and 14 should be limited to approximately 500 words each. Every page must be numbered and should have your name and question number on it. Also please include your resumé with this application.

13. Why did you choose the major or course of study you are in? Describe where you see yourself in five years.

14. What do you, as a University of California student and as a concerned member of society, believe you would be able to contribute to the Board if you were appointed Regent?

15a. The University is confronting an unprecedented fiscal crisis. How can it meet this challenge and still maintain access and quality for the planned enrollment levels?

- or -

15b. Describe the University of California’s role under the Master Plan for Higher Education. How should the University continue to fulfill its commitment under the Master Plan?
Adam R. Rosenthal

Education & Leadership

University of California, Davis School of Law; JD Candidate, May 2006
Elected 1L Representative to the King Hall Educational Policy Committee.

Alliant International University Graduate School of Education and Teacher Credentialing,
Received two California Clear Teaching Credentials (highest level teaching credentials in CA):
Multiple Subject Credential K-8 and Single Subject History/Social Sciences 9-12.

University of California, Los Angeles, B.A. 2001, Cum Laude in History & Minor in Judaic Studies
- President, UCLA Hillel, 2000 - 2001
- Co-founder, Coalition for Coexistence in the Middle East, 2000
- General Representative, UCLA Undergraduate Students Association Council, 1999 - 2000
- Founder & President, UCLA Undergraduate History Association, 2000 - 2001

Recent Professional Responsibilities

Teacher, Havenscourt Middle School (a Title One, California Underperforming School),
Oakland Unified School District, Oakland, CA September 2001 - 2003
- Teach For America corps member.
- Taught 8th and 6th Grade American History, Ancient History, Government, English, and Reading.
- Elected School Site Union Representative to the Oakland Education Association, California Teachers Association, & National Education Association, 2002 - 2003

Founder & Co-Director, Camp Empower, Oakland, CA Summer 2002
Created and directed a unique summer camp for ten underprivileged middle school students. Recruited students, organized academic and cultural programming, and secured grants to fully subsidize the program.

Teacher, Sinai Temple; Westwood, CA 2000 - 2001
Designed and taught curriculum to seventh graders around the principles of respect, responsibility, history, community service, and spirituality.

Honors & Awards

- Teach For America Education Collaboration Distinction, 2003
- UCLA Chancellor’s Service Award, 2001
- Provost’s Honors List at UCLA, Winter 2000, Fall 2000, Winter 2001
- UCLA Hillel Outstanding Leadership Recognition Award, 2001
- Finalist, UCLA’s Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Oratorical Contest, 1999

Some of my hobbies: Running, cycling, experimenting with tofu, organizing, browsing at book stores, March Madness, family gatherings, and morning coffee over the NYT.
Question #13

In order to fully explain how I came to study history, education, and the law, it is necessary for me to show the interconnectedness between my studies. Each of these fields has played an integral role in shaping my academic interests and social consciousness.

From as long as I can remember, I knew that if I was fortunate enough to attend college, I would study the stories which comprise human history. My early interest in history came from my fascination with folk tales from around the world. These stories gave me a flavor for the unique nuances that distinguish cultures. At the same time, these stories taught me that there are common lessons and insights which transcend all boundaries, and speak to the very essence of human nature.

When I enrolled as an undergraduate at UCLA it was only natural for me to major in history. Just as I enjoyed folk stories as a child, the historical rubric satisfied a similar intellectual interest in me as an adult. Through the study of history, I have enjoyed analyzing the distinctive events and peoples who have shaped societies and their environments, while also recognizing commonalities between past and present. In my classes at UCLA, I learned to interpret the successes and failures of the past, and in turn to understand how contemporary society can apply these fundamental lessons to ameliorate the problems we face today.

Early on in my undergraduate studies I realized that one of the best ways for me to amalgamate my love of history with my passion for social justice was to teach history in an underprivileged school. The day after graduation, I embarked on this career path under the auspices of the national teacher’s corps Teach For America. Shortly thereafter, I welcomed my first group of students at an under-resourced public middle school in
Oakland, CA, and started what became the hardest and most rewarding experience of my life.

I was placed on the front lines combating the social, economic, and political injustices that were content on keeping my students and their community disenfranchised, and deprived of equal opportunities to be successful. Despite the overwhelming challenges facing my students, it became evident that through hard work, collaboration, and resolve, I could affect significant change in their lives.

During my two years of teaching, I continued to pursue my own studies, and eventually earned two California teaching credentials. Between teaching, lesson planning, grading, parent conferencing, and working on behalf of the teachers’ union, I had little time to focus on my credentialing classes. Nonetheless, I persisted because I strongly believed that through my studies of pedagogy and best practices, I was constantly improving my abilities to close the achievement gap and help all of my students succeed. My two years in front of the classroom not only allowed me to work with amazing students and a proud community, but also gave me plenty of opportunities to study some of the fundamental issues involving disparities between those in society who have means and those who don’t. Based on these experiences, I made the difficult choice to leave teaching and enroll in law school.

I see law school as a natural extension of my studies in history and education. As a lawyer, I will fight to make necessary systemic changes and will speak on behalf of whose voices have for too long been silenced. As a future attorney I recognize the importance of learning from our past mistakes, while also being mindful of the complexities and complications of our nation’s social stratification. As continue my legal studies at UC Davis, I look forward to finding more ways to apply my educational training and experiences toward expanding access, opportunities, and democracy.
Question #14

Considering the myriad of fiscal and systemic problems facing the University of California, the student Regent must have significant leadership experiences and a profound understanding of California’s social, educational, economic, and political climate. Most importantly, the student Regent should have an unfettered belief that the UC must truly represent the great diversity of the state. If selected as the 2005-2006 student Regent, I will bring the aforementioned qualities to the Board of Regents. My ability to represent the student voice to the Regents is grounded in my experiences, education, and strong commitment to educational equity.

As an undergraduate leader at UCLA, I worked to mitigate many of the problems my fellow undergraduates encountered. During my first year, I was elected to serve as one of three General Representatives to the Undergraduate Students Association Council (USAC). As a member of USAC I worked with a diverse cross-section of student groups on issues ranging from defending affirmative action and supporting holistic review of applicants, to easing campus congestion. While at UCLA, I also founded the Undergraduate History Society and the university’s first Arab-Jewish dialogue group, The Coalition for Coexistence in the Middle East. Based on my experiences as an undergraduate, I am confident that I have the ability to effectively advocate on behalf of the UC’s undergraduate students.

As I mentioned in my response to Question #13, after graduating from UCLA I began teaching in an under resourced public school in Oakland, CA. The experiences I had and the skills that I acquired as a teacher will profoundly shape my agenda as student Regent. As a credentialed teacher and current student, I am in a unique position to discuss the complexities of our state’s educational system with my fellow students, regents, legislators, and educators. Of the many topics that concern me, I am particularly troubled by the relationship between the
UC and the K-14 system, especially in terms of teacher education and under-represented minority student recruitment, enrollment, and college preparation.

I believe having a student Regent with an "insider" perspective of the dramatic inequalities in our state’s public K-12 system is invaluable. There is no question that the disparities in our state’s poorest communities are inextricably linked to the lack of greater diversity on our campuses. If I am fortunate enough to be interviewed for this position, I hope to share with you many of the goals and objectives that I would pursue if appointed student Regent. As you will see, I am completely committed to convincing the Regents, legislators and governor of the necessity to reinstate funds for UC outreach programs to underrepresented communities, and to significantly reduce and cap higher education fees.

As a former teacher, I can attest to the impact that outreach programs have on students who would otherwise not be exposed to the value of a UC education. For example, the field trips to UC Berkeley that I organized for my students showed them that if they work hard and plan accordingly, a UC education is attainable. It pains me to know that under the proposed budget cuts, 750,000 current K-12 students (and countless more in the future) that have come to rely directly on UC’s successful outreach programs will be deprived of these necessary resources. Moreover, I worry about the immeasurable number of students who will forgo their right to higher education because it is prohibitively expensive.

Along with my experiences as a UC undergraduate and as a teacher, I will also bring to the Regents a strong voice on behalf of UC’s graduate and professional students. Due to the complexities involved in the management of the UC system (from graduate student labor issues to the intricacies of the legislative process), the student Regent must be able to navigate the complicated political and legal landscape. As a law student and educator, I am prepared to face these challenges. If appointed student Regent, I will work assiduously to advocate on behalf of the university’s diverse and distinguished student body.
Question 15a

Unfortunately, the prevailing mood widely found throughout the university is that if the State and the UC continue on its current trajectory, it will be impossible for the university to maintain its commitments to access, diversity, quality, and research. However, despite the many gloomy predictions regarding the effects of the budget cuts over the past two years, it is imperative for those of us who feel passionate about public higher education to remain optimistic. We must pursue a course which will sustain the UC’s excellence during this time of great uncertainty. There are two general paths that the UC must take to mitigate the current situation. The first path is on a macro level, where supporters of the university must endeavor to make several systemic paradigm shifts. The second path is one of pragmatism and planning, where the UC must work to secure additional funds, and to implement effective cost-saving initiatives.

Paradigm shifts can either be gradual changes in public perceptions or rapid transformations that quickly change society’s values and beliefs. It is therefore essential to be mindful that some changes that speak of may take longer than others. One of the most needed paradigm shifts is the way in which society allocates resources to public education—from Head Start programs to advanced graduate-level research. For too long, we have misallocated funds to expand institutions such as prisons, while ignoring the clear evidence that crime rates drop as educational opportunities rise. Related to this, there needs to be a paradigm shift that transforms the rhetoric of “equal access and opportunity” into a reality. It is unacceptable that the zip code a child is born into is often an accurate predictor of whether that child will graduate from college. This is an indication that as a democracy, we are not making the necessary strides towards equality.

On an issue closer to home, we must extinguish the myth that higher student fees are not correlated with lack of diversity and quality on campus. Aside from the damages that will result if successful outreach programs are eliminated, as student fees increase and financial aid decreases, many qualified students will forgo their right to a UC education because it is prohibitively expensive. In the long run, this will have the most dramatic effect on those Californians who aren’t fortunate to have amassed the ‘cultural capital’ to recognize the long-term benefits of a college education. It is the responsibility of all who have a vested interest in the UC to help implement the paradigm shifts I have mentioned.
The second approach to weather the current storm involves a reevaluation of funding sources and saving mechanisms. First and foremost, students have the responsibility of drawing attention to the fact that many elected officials in this State are adamant about not raising taxes, yet have no qualms supporting outrageous increases in student fees. This effectively results in a substantial tax on the poor and middle-class. This hypocrisy must be exposed, and students must lead the charge on behalf of the entire system. The best way for the UC to reestablish its funding base in the near future is to convince the decision-makers and the citizenry of the symbiotic relationship between the state and its world-renowned university.

Likewise, elected officials representing the state need to do a better job securing funds from the federal government. As the engine of our nation’s economy, California does not receive its equal share of funds, and as a result, state institutions such as the UC suffer. The UC also needs to continue building stronger and more equitable relationships with corporate partners. It is essential that those arms of the university that can generate funding from private sources work harder to do so. Their success will place less pressure on those arms which don’t have the means to generate funding, such as K-14 outreach programs.

Internally, the UC needs to use this time as an opportunity to examine and scrutinize its own operations. As an institution, the UC must encourage and support more effective collaboration in teaching and research within each campus and throughout the entire system. Another area where the UC can look to cut costs while maintaining quality is through the use of technology to enhance teaching, research, and administrative functions. The UC must make a stronger effort to streamline those parts of its operation which would be improved by emerging communications technologies.

Along with working toward increased funding for the university, the UC must also use its tremendous influence within academia to make significant improvements in the lives of all college students. Just as the UC demonstrated its power in leading the movement to modify the SAT I, it must use its organizational strength to rally for initiatives including: increased Pell Grants, decreased costs for college textbooks, and greater federal funding for college preparatory schools in under-resourced communities. I strongly believe that if students join with the millions of Californians who have a personal relationship with the UC, together we can make significant gains in securing a brighter and more stable future for the university.
This is a cumulative evaluation form to be completed by each reviewing group for each applicant who is being recommended on to the next step in the selection process. Please provide comments indicating why your commission/board/committee selected this applicant. The Office of the Secretary will type your comments and prepare the form for the next group to interview the applicants. Only one form for each selected applicant is required. You may fax (510) 987-9224 or email the comments (Anne.Shaw@ucop.edu)

Applicant’s Name:  Adam Rosenthal  
Campus:  UC Davis

1. **Comments from the Regional Nominating Commission’s review of applications (Feb 28)**

   Strong application throughout; ability to publicly approach and represent; knowledge of issues is thorough.

2. **Comments from the Regional Nominating Commission’s interviews of applicants (March 6)**

   Lots of experience (undergrad at UCLA, working in Oakland school district); very prepared, has thought deeply about issues; understands the value of UC education, importance for the state; seems a bit (a lot) dogmatic - we were unsure of his diplomacy skills.

   **Suggested questions for this applicant.**

   Assess your ability to negotiate difficult issues without alienating the other side - how are you at diplomacy?

3. **Comments from the UCSA Board of Director’s interviews of applicants (April meeting)**

   Suggested questions for this applicant:  

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April 2, 2004

The Regents of the University of California
Office of the Secretary
1111 Franklin Street
Oakland, CA 94607-5200
Attn. Ms. Leigh Trivette

To Whom It May Concern:

I am taking the initiative to write a letter of support for Mr. Adam Rosenthal who covets a position on the Board of Regents for the University of California. I initially met Adams approximately seven years ago when he began his first year as a student at UCLA. In fact, I had heard great things about Adam prior to his matriculation to our campus because of the leadership qualities he exhibited in high school. After meeting Adam and having the opportunity of working closely with him during his two year tenure as a member of student government, Adam garnered my highest personal regards as a student and humanitarian.

As a freshman Adam displayed maturity and intellectual development far beyond the years of his peers. He possessed a profound understanding of international politics, asked and answered pertinent questions pertaining to the topics at hand, and provided original thoughts during the scores of discussions that enabled me to think of him more as an intellectual equal than a student. I also became impressed by Adam’s uncanny ability to mediate disputes between students ranging from differences within student government to conflicts emanating from the Middle East crisis. Indeed, Adam’s personal friendship with the president of the Arab Student Association helped to mitigate tensions between the Jewish and Muslim student communities. If more people possessed the temperament, political acumen and sagacity of Adam Rosenthal the Arab-Israeli conflict would be resolved.

After graduating from UCLA Adam decided to join Teach For America. When he informed me about the experiences he acquired working in a low-income school district in Oakland, California, I became mesmerized by his account of the harsh conditions and circumstances that impeded learning among boys and girls in disadvantaged communities. Despite my many years of study on the African American community and instinctive compassion for children raised in dysfunctional households,
Adam helped me acquire information and attain a greater understanding of the plight faced by the urban poor.

Possessing a natural charisma, Adam has always left a favorable, indelible impact with people. He is candid, sensitive toward others, naturally curious, and challenges those with whom he interacts, forcing them to attain their highest intellectual potential. Personable and humanistic, Adam Rosenthal is destined to become influential within the political and social fabric of our nation and the world.

Given the issues the Board of Regents are likely to face in the ensuing years, appointing a student with the capacity to think objectively and engage in reasoned discourse on the Board is essential. Our institution will be well served with Adam Rosenthal functioning as a member of the University of California Board of Regents. He should be given the strongest consideration for this august appointment.

Sincerely,

Dr. Berkly Nelson
Director, Center for Student Programming
Ms. Leigh Trivette  
Office of the Secretary  
The Regents of the University of California  
1111 Franklin Street, 12th floor  
Oakland, CA 94607-5200  

By fax to 510 987 9224 with hard copy following by post  

Recommendation for Mr. Adam Rosenthal  

Dear Regents,  

I am writing to recommend that Mr. Adam Rosenthal be selected as student regent of the University of California for 2005-2006. I have known Adam since August 2003, when he enrolled as a first-year law student at the University of California, Davis, School of Law, Martin Luther King, Jr., Hall.  

Adam has been an engaged and active student in my 60-student torts class since the beginning of this academic year. Because I teach the same group of students for an entire year, I feel I am able to get to know every student in the course reasonably well. I believe I am especially well placed to comment on Adam not only because he has been an active (that is not to say over-active!) classroom participant, but also because he has occasionally taken advantage of my office hours to discuss with me a range of issues, from law careers to current events, the latter including educational policy. While Adam has not yet received a grade in my course (that will come in late May or June, after final exams are graded), I can tell you that he has approached the challenges of the first-year law curriculum in a conscientious manner. He is unfailingly well prepared and engaged in the material.  

Adam is an exceptionally mature and well spoken young man, attributes that would serve the Regents well. I suspect that a great deal of Adam’s maturity was gained from his time working with Teach for America in the Oakland Public Schools. As the statements he has submitted to you indicate, in his capacity as a middle school teacher, he enjoyed a wide range of opportunities and gained a variety of useful skills there. Adam also took
on related leadership roles in Oakland, including his work on behalf of the teachers’ union.

As someone very engaged in educational policy issues myself – particularly with regard to issues that have recently arisen in relation to the state budget crisis and the impact that reduced admissions and cuts to outreach programs will have on minority and other under-represented communities – I have found Adam to be very well thought out with respect to many of the challenges currently facing the University of California and other public education institutions in the state. Among other things, he understands the importance of maintaining a diverse student population. In addition, although my impression is that Adam had an economically and socially privileged background, he seems to understand the impact that poverty and minority status have on those seeking educational advancement. At one point in his statements of application for this position, Adam writes that he has a “social conscience,” and my impression is that he truly does.

You would make an excellent choice in naming Adam Rosenthal the student regent for 2005-06. In him, you would gain a mature, sophisticated and well-spoken advocate for students, including those from under-represented populations. If I can provide any additional information about Adam, please do not hesitate to contact me at 530 752 2750 or on lrpruitt@ucdavis.edu.

Sincerely,

Lisa R. Pruitt
Professor of Law
One day, all children in this nation will have the opportunity to attain an excellent education.

TEACHFORAMERICA

April 5, 2004

Leigh Trivette
Office of the Secretary
1111 Franklin Street, 12th Floor
Oakland, CA 94607-5200

Dear Student and Regents,

I write to strongly recommend Adam Rosenthal for the student Regent on the Board of Regents of the University of California. With his commitment to providing underrepresented minority students with equal access to educational opportunities, track record of achievement as an educator, and determination to affect social change, Mr. Rosenthal would be an insightful student representative and excellent board member.

For the last two-years, Adam has taught in the Oakland public schools as a member of the Teach For America program. Teach For America is the national corps of outstanding recent college graduates who commit two years to teach in urban and rural public schools. Corps members strive to affect significant gains in student achievement while in the classroom, becoming lifelong leaders in the effort to expand opportunity for children. I taught with Adam as a corps member in Oakland and now, as the Executive Director of our Bay Area program, I can see his tremendous impact on the East Bay community from several vantage points.

Adam worked relentlessly to provide students in low-income communities with an excellent education. Not only did he advance his students 1.5 to 2.0 grade levels in each of his first two years of teaching, but also he committed himself heart and soul to his school. I vividly remember Adam spending the weekends going to Home Depot and buying lumber to make a podium for his classroom. He organized fieldtrips for his students to Berkeley and San Francisco State. He gave the hardest tests and facilitated discussions that demanded the highest levels of critical thinking. Everyone in our corps of teachers knew that Mr. Rosenthal expected his 8th grade students to go to college and that there was no better place for them to start preparing than in Adam’s classroom at Havenscourt Middle School. In the last year of his Teach For America commitment, his fame extended beyond our group as he was featured in a series of cover stories in the Oakland Tribune as an exception to the rule that students in low income communities receive a second rate education.

Two years ago Adam asked me to join him in starting an academic summer camp for our students. He told me he wanted to attain non-profit status, raise $10,000 in funding, secure permission from the district to use their facilities, and recruit 12 kids from our schools to spend their summer mornings reading and writing. Honestly, I thought he was crazy. In the next few months, however, he poured himself into the task, and Camp Empower opened its doors in late June. During the four-week experience, students participated in writer’s workshop and literature circles in the mornings. In the afternoon, we went on field trips to Bay Area museums, parks, and universities. Adam designed the program to raise the self-expectations of the students and then provide them with the concrete skills to reach those aspirations.
In the non-profit world, I encounter many people who see the need for social change. Of those, I have had the privilege to work with a few who are willing to truly commit their life to affect that change. Yet I have found it extremely rare to find someone who not only sees the need and is willing to make the commitment, but also possesses the skills to create an initiative that actually alters the conditions that prevent young people from reaching their full potential. Adam is one of these rare individuals.

While Adam has the passion and the commitment for in-the-trenches community work, he also brings a distinct eloquence and intelligence to the boardroom. Last year, he represented Havenscourt Middle School in the Oakland Education Association. It was a difficult time for the Oakland Unified School District as mounting budget deficits set the stage for a State takeover. Facing a salary reduction, the teachers’ union was up in arms with many members urging a strike. After assiduously taking notes throughout the year and faithfully voting with the opinions of his school faculty, Adam rose to speak. He spoke of his own experience as an educator, refocusing the conversation on the students and urging negotiations rather than a walkout. His balanced perspective imbued him with a certain authority among the vast majority of the membership. As the youngest member of the union, he has earned their respect and consideration. Ultimately, the union decided to negotiate.

With his track record of success in the classroom, boardroom, and community, I believe Adam would be an invaluable addition to the Board of Regents. On top of these accomplishments, he’s kind, considerate, and someone with whom it is a pleasure to work. If you have any questions, please call me directly at 510.450.8251.

Sincerely,

Hunter Pierson
Executive Director
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