

Caltech

magazine

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Pictured on the cover: Julia Ehler Nair

Left: Graduate student **Jieyu Zheng** took
this photo of a snowy egret at a Caltech
lily pond on January 2, 2025.



Letters

Cycling Celebrity

*Readers connected with our #SoCaltech profile of
Caltech graduate student and cycling advocate
Elina Sendonaris.*

Read it here

I'm a JPL-er and Pasadena resident, and just
wanted to reach out to thank you for taking that
opportunity to promote the Pasadena Complete
Streets Coalition [CSC]! I grew up in a car-centric
suburb, then spent much of my early adulthood
commuting by bicycle in a more walkable city
and loving the feeling of freedom and connect-
edness, and the health benefits it provided. Now
I'm living in Pasadena feeling like we have such
potential to be a cycling-friendly city but are re-
ally missing the necessary infrastructure. I have
two young daughters, and I would love to be able
to bike with them around town, but for the most
part, it just doesn't feel safe.

I signed the petition for the All Ages &
Abilities Greenway and will continue to keep an
eye on the CSC social media for opportunities
to support their work. Thank you for using your
platform to promote a worthwhile cause!

—Joseph Russino
PASADENA, CA

Please thank Elina for her efforts to improve
cycling. I am doing the same thing in her native
Bay Area—Castro Valley. Sadly, it is far more
challenging than it should be, and we recently
lost a battle to install bike lanes on a spine of
our connected bike network because nobody
would remove parking—so disheartening. Any-
way, I just want her to know there are others out
there supporting her efforts.

—Bruce Dughi
CASTRO VALLEY, CA



Laser Focus

It's a Coherent 699 laser in the photograph (not
599). I have used both.

—Mark Lindsay (BS '84)
ESTES PARK, CO

*Editor's note: The laser described in our "Shine
a Light" story (Fall 2024) was the Coherent 599
dye laser, but the photo wrongly depicted the 699.*

Organ Donation

I read George Cannon's letter about Hunter
Mead, the Caltech professor who had a large
pipe organ in his home [Fall 2024]. As a member
(originally) of the class of '76, I was not able to
meet him. In fact, the end-of-year Caltech musi-
cal event was called the "Hunter Mead Memorial
Concert!" I have been the Caltech organist for 50
years. I also served for a while on the LA Chapter
of the American Guild of Organists Finance
Committee, where I discovered Dr. Mead was
one of only two major donors to our fund! Alas,
the concerts are now called "Bandorama," and
we are forgetting about a fascinating person.

—Les Deutsch (BS '76, PhD '80)
CHATSWORTH, CA

Previous Paleontologists

On page 16 of the Fall 2024 issue of *Caltech*
magazine, you state: "Julia Tejada is only the
second paleontologist to join the Caltech faculty,"
the first being Chester Stock. What about Heinz
Lowenstam? During my sophomore year (1972–
73), I spent time working in his lab. Wasn't he
a paleontologist? What I observed of his work
would certainly be classified as paleontology.

—Mary Eichbauer (BS '74)
BENICIA, CA

As a former inmate of Jerry Wasserburg's "Lunatic
Asylum," I enjoyed the article "Signatures from
the Past," but Julia Tejada is not the second pa-
leontologist on the Caltech faculty. She may be
the second *vertebrate* paleontologist. As far as I
know, Heinz Lowenstam, professor of paleoecolo-
gy from 1952–83, didn't work on vertebrates, but
he was certainly a paleontologist.

—G. Price Russ III (PhD '74)
WALNUT CREEK, CA

*Editor's note: Indeed, in "Signatures from the
Past" (Fall 2024), we should have identified
Julia Tejada as the second vertebrate paleon-
tologist to join Caltech's faculty. We appreciate
those who wrote in defense of Heinz Lowenstam.*



Heinz Lowenstam
(at left)