



# Cooperatively Yours

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## 90th Anniversary Gala brings together the co-op's past, present, and future over food

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Photos by Howard Watkins

On October 21, the BSC and the BSC Alumni Association commemorated nearly a century of the co-op with an unforgettable 90th Anniversary Gala. Held at International House on the UC Berkeley campus, the theme was BSC Food Through the Decades. This enchanting evening celebrated our alumni and our rich collective history of eating and living together in our beloved houses.

More than two hundred alumni, staff, and current members enjoyed the opportunity to come together and connect with old friends and meet new ones. Over a fantastic buffet dinner, and delicious wines and beer donated by Narsai David and Lagunitas respectively, alumni traded stories of their cooperative experiences. The BSC's unparalleled ability to create lasting bonds was readily apparent in the laughter and reverence throughout the great hall.

Thanks to sponsorship by generous alumni (see page 11), many current members attended—at one point, former Executive Director George Proper led all guests to self-identify by the year they graduated from the co-op, revealing an incredible spread of generations from the early 1950s to the class of 2026.



Gala attendees enjoying catered dinner.

While we missed emcee Narsai David in person, we enjoyed recorded remarks from this co-op alumnus and inimitable titan of the culinary world. Narsai's accomplishments are too numerous to list, and they began in the co-op: while developing his skills at local restaurants, he shared them with fellow students, working his way up from kitchen crew at Cloyne to Chairman of Central Food Services.

A guest panel of alumni staff — George Proper, Margie Guillory, Joe Marsh, and Miguel Duarte — took us through the evolution of food and its role in the co-op over the past nine decades. While we missed Danvy Vu, her remarks were read by Nancy



Alumni seated for dinner at the gala.

Blattel. They shared the trials and tribulations of transitioning from centrally prepared meals to house-made dinners, the development of increasingly effective ordering systems, and the occasional horror story of an infamous dish endured by many (hint: “green” may be in the name).

Nancy Skinner, California State Senator and Barrington alumna, could not attend but Romario Conrado, a member of her staff and BSC alum joined us to congratulate the BSC on its long history of providing affordable housing to students with a certificate of recognition from the state.



Alumni pose for a silly photo at the gala photobooth.

Other gala highlights included a photo booth where guests could ham it up with props or elect for a more demure black and white shot, a striking live electric violin performance by current Convent resident Rafi Grossman-Naples, lovely take-home table gifts including sustainable live herb centerpieces, the opportunity to purchase limited-edition co-op

merchandise, and heartfelt closing notes from BSC President Liza Mamedov, BSC Executive Director Steven Olesen, and BSCAA President Portia Lewis.



Portia Lewis, Elissa Roy, and Steven Olesen selling BSC shirts.

The 90th Anniversary Gala was a beautiful tribute to this organization that we love, and which has made such an indelible mark on our lives. In a world that too often sees people struggle to connect, the BSC remains a stronghold of powerful collectivity with each generation building on the radical work of diverse inclusivity and thoughtful engagement insisted upon by the one before. I imagine I can speak for all of us when I say there’s nothing more we could want than another 90 years of cooperative living (and eating!) with the BSC.

We hope to catch you at one of our next BSC or Alumni Association events, and if you’d like to get more involved or host your own alumni get-together, please don’t hesitate to reach out! We’re always happy to connect at [bscaa1996@gmail.com](mailto:bscaa1996@gmail.com).

BSC food history panel featured at the gala.



## Alumni spotlight

Continued on next page

by Portia Lewis  
BSCAA President, Interim BSC Events and Alumni Relations Lead

What does it look like to take our cooperative principles, skills, and values that we learn as members of the Berkeley Student Cooperative and use them to shape a broader movement for worker power? Bay Area cooperative leader and BSC alum J. Noven is doing just that. A former student Board member of the BSC, current Staff member and Executive Director of the Berkeley Student Food Collective (BSFC), and Staff member at the Network of Bay Area Worker Cooperatives (No-BAWC, pronounced “no boss”), Noven has been shaping the Bay Area cooperative landscape for almost a decade.

While attending UC Berkeley, Noven lived in Stebbins, Kingman, and Ridge and served on the BSC Board. As a Board member, they felt a strong imperative to learn more about the decisions they needed to make. Noven was motivated by central staff, who were invested in teaching and sharing information in a way that promoted creating a cooperative organization built on collective governance, rather than running an institution with maximum efficiency. The staff understood that the students had the wisdom, knowledge, and care to steward the BSC and make the hard decisions necessary to run the organization. Noven felt empowered to know that as a young person, they were

## Beyond the BSC: Alumn J. Noven a leader in Bay Area co-op community

capable of making hard choices in the decisions that govern our lives. This was especially impactful for Noven when they graduated and began making decisions that shaped the local working world.

It was during this time that Noven started volunteering at the Berkeley Student Food Collective. Noven saw both the BSC and the BSFC were offering alternative models to think about the way we create the foundational economic models of our society. Noven emphasized that though the structures of the BSC and the BSFC are different, both empower people to organize together and learn together to build collective power.

To build this power, we need spaces that welcome people into movements by providing access, education, and a place to practice democratic governance. Once people have experience taking action over their lives, we can build larger movements, Noven explained. Whether the space is

**“Living out the legacy of the BSC means... remembering that we’re powerful when we act together.”**

a housing or consumer cooperative, producer cooperative, worker cooperative, or union, these all are ultimately in the service of building power for ordinary workers.



BSFC storefront.

Photo by Emma Taila

Since 2016 Noven has been a full-time Staff member at the Berkeley Student Food Collective and is the current Executive Director. In addition, Noven is a Staff member at the Network of Bay Area Cooperatives, a network of over 35 democratic worker-owned cooperatives in the Bay Area. The cooperative architecture firms, bakeries, tech companies and more are building worker power in the cooperative movement in the Bay Area and beyond by building a coalition and solidarity among existing cooperatives. This work has resulted in passing state legislation (SB1407) and partnering with local non-profits to bring city funding to Oakland member-owned businesses all while increasing individuals’ sense of ownership in their workplace.

It is clear to Noven after almost a decade of working with students, thinking about economic governance, and practicing collective

democracy that people want to participate in the structures that govern their lives with remarkable consistency.

Noven has a message to fellow alumni and soon-to-be graduates: “Remember the radicalism of your time in the BSC. I encourage alumni to reflect on how powerful — and fun — living and working together was. The BSC — and the students who’ve stewarded it for decades — brought certain values to our homes and lives. And these values have never been more relevant. Living out the legacy of the BSC means, in part, remembering that we’re powerful when we act together. So shop at a co-op, get to know your neighbors, help organize your workplace, join a civic club. And consider donating your time or money to keeping the BSC strong. Getting organized means staying connected, and both are way more fulfilling — and fun — than the alternatives.”

# Student-led Kingman Hall Creek Restoration works with central to rebuild historic home



Photo courtesy of Eytan Stanton

by Emma Taila  
Publications Coordinator



During the spring 2023 semester, tragedy struck Kingman Hall. Rain from the heavy storm season seeped into the roof, causing cracks and leaks. Further investigation revealed the presence of mold and asbestos. Kingman residents had to relocate at the semester's end and their house was gutted.

Out of these misfortunes came an opportunity: the chance to rebuild.



The start of construction at Kingman Hall.  
Photo courtesy of Steven Olesen

Former Kingman residents have been working alongside the maintenance department to breathe new life into Kingman. While Maintenance Director Pavin Johnson

and Project Director Marty Spindler are leading the maintenance team in rebuilding the house structure, students are working to revive the outdoor areas and recreate the vibrant walls of this historic site.

These efforts are ushering in what students and workers alike hope is an era of renewed cooperation and empowerment.

Eytan Stanton, Kingman garden manager, launched the Kingman Hall Creek Restoration project this fall, with a \$20K grant from the Green Initiative Fund. Conceived in February, the project aims to engage students and the community to protect and revive the 100-foot segment of Strawberry Creek that runs through the Kingman Amphitheater.

Stanton, a UC Berkeley Landscape Architecture student, and five volunteer "creek keepers" have led dozens of students in volunteer work to assess and remove hazardous trees, stabilize the creek banks, and "radically increase" the native species in the area as of October. They plan to finish their landscaping alterations by the end of the academic year.

After that, the project will be in the hands of future "Toads" who will work regularly with Timothy Cole, a horticulturist with the Landscape Architecture Department at UC Berkeley, to ensure the new plants can establish strong roots over the next three years.

***"People who have come to the workday events have shared a similar feeling of real empowerment."***

Stanton sees the project as an opportunity for students to engage with the history and ecology of the land and to put the cooperative ethic of the BSC into practice beyond the house.

"A huge component of this is student engagement and education, the big concept being extending the ethic of collective stewardship that we have in our houses," Stanton said. "Extending that beyond the walls of our co-op

into the surrounding ecology and being actual stewards of the land."

The restoration is part of a greater project to revive Kingman after a year of challenges. Lu Agnew, another former resident, is leading an effort to bring alumni back to the house to repaint their murals, which were destroyed in the reconstruction.

Kingman residents' collective efforts to stay connected and care for the house during this transition period demonstrate the strong house culture and community. Riley Saham, Kingman's Board Representative, said they believe the time housemates have spent in other units will strengthen house cooperation. They said many Toads are eager to return.

"Now that everyone has left Kingman, they have seen there's another way of doing things," Saham said. "The hype is extreme at this point."

The Kingman reconstruction was completed in late November, ahead of schedule, and students will move back in for the spring 2024 semester. Spindler led the maintenance team in reconstructing the second and third floors, eradicating toxic substances from the house, and rebuilding the roof.



KHCR students planning at a workday.  
Photo courtesy of Eytan Stanton

Johnson said they have been very pleased with Stanton's work, and hopes to encourage more members to take on ambitious projects. Spindler agreed, emphasizing the need for cooperative education to break down the divide between residents and central.

"The co-ops are uniquely positioned to support efforts where we can leverage the fact that we're in school and can work together to get funding from this huge institution, work with the land already owned by the coops, work with collaborators in the BSC and get something done and see something physical," Stanton said. "People who have come to the workday events have shared a similar feeling of real empowerment."

Kingman's reconstruction is part of a multi-year plan that Johnson is creating to renovate the co-op properties and ensure a sustainable future for our units. Pavin's team is working to triage, budget for, and address critical conditions in each house over the next seven years.

Johnson fears trouble begins when students see themselves as tenants rather than owners, but he sees Stanton's restoration project as a model path to a more cooperative future. Stanton, too, emphasized that more co-ops should be aware of the resources at their disposal: both those the BSC provides and those found in the skill, knowledge, and talent of our student community.

"It's very difficult to organize these things elsewhere. We have the ability to afford that to members, and should be affording that to members so they can be empowered and use this place to improve their lives and their careers, and also take care of the land," Johnson said. "We could definitely find ways of merging member initiatives with necessary projects, like the restoration at Kingman, to turn these unfortunate situations into opportunities."



KHCR students mapping the creek area.  
Photo courtesy of Eytan Stanton

After all the challenges of the past few years, we (still) run it!



# Rock the co-op: A snapshot of the BSC music scene



BSC students jamming! Photo from BSC archive

by Emma Taila  
Publications Coordinator

“Does anybody here remember Barrington Hall?”

One example of the lasting influence of the BSC on music and musicians, this line opens a 2002 song by Colonel Les Claypool’s Fearless Flying Frog Brigade, to which the now-defunct co-op is the namesake.

Those who resided in Berkeley while Barrington still housed students may remember it for many reasons, but alumni of the early ‘80s remember the house as an incubator for the burgeoning

west coast punk scene. Bands like Ramones, Black Flag, The Dead Kennedys, The Zeroes, X, the Ophelias, Idiot Flesh, and Operation Ivy played at Barrington during its heyday. The house was a rich environment for anti-establishment, experimental expression of all kinds.

Alumnus Sam Quinones helped put Barrington on the map in the Berkeley rock scene. Working with friends or sometimes on his own, Quinones organized for bands to play on the homemade stage



Band night at CZ. Photo by Kat Smith

downstairs and promoted shows at Barrington. After relentlessly plastering Telegraph Ave. with signs promoting the show, Quinones reveled in the “energizing feeling” of watching his hard work pay off.

“I don’t think there’s ever been more people in that downstairs hall,” Quinones said. “The crowd was like a tornado, just uncontrolled, but never fully out of control. It was punk rock at its most pure.”

Quinones said his experiences in the punk scene taught him the importance of work ethic and gave him the confidence to make ambitious plans real. Though he even-

tually left the music industry, he applied his punk ethos to create a successful writing career, bringing his DIY attitude to freelance journalism.

**“[Band nights] can connect greater Bay Area artists to BSC housemates and provide so much creative community growth.”**

“You don’t wait until a moment you’re playing better,” he said, “People think of punk rock as slackers, but to me, it was always about you find what you want to do and you put a lot of effort into doing it.”

The BSC is still central to countless talented students immersed in the Berkeley music scene. The “band night,” is an exciting tradition for artists to showcase their



Andre Zendejas as “DJ Snakeskin.” Photo by Emma Taila



The Ramones at Barrington in 1980. Posted by Leslie Masson to a Barrington alumni Facebook group.

music and for students to connect over a shared love of music, typically rock or electronic. Kingman Hall, Lothlorien, and Casa Zimbabwe are known for hosting band nights, and names like “Most Fried,” “Racoon Hospital,” and more are familiar on flyers pasted to doors across the co-op.

Kat Smith, a resident at Casa Zimbabwe, helped organize a band night at her unit. “Band nights are such a wonderful way to give fantastic house-based artists a major platform for their work,” they said.



Racoon Hospital Performing at Save Rochdale Block Party, 2022. Photo by Emma Taila

“It can connect greater Bay Area artists to BSC housemates and provide so much creative community growth. I love a good band night.”

The Fall 2022 semester saw Lothlorien open their doors for a once-rare out-of-house band night: Gothlorien! Ciara Khor-Brogan was on the social team that helped

throw the event. Khor-Brogan said Loth has a vibrant music culture that is infused with everyday “elf” life.

“We have a frequently-used band room, a talent show called Song and Story where folks share their musical skills, and many band members have resided here,” she said. “It’s very common at Loth for people to jam on the front porch or common space. We have a piano in the North House, where it’s common to hear someone playing away. During cookshifts, you can hear hard techno and bass shaking the walls.”

Kingman is another house known for their themed band nights. According to former Kingman resident Lu Agnew, many musicians have lived at Kingman and contributed to the music culture. Agnew conceded, however, that Casa Zimbabwe has the best practice spaces. Smith added that many bands have formed as a result of students jamming together at CZ.

Andre Zendejas, a Loth social manager, said that band nights present a “refreshing” escape from the typical Berkeley social scene, as BSC students and Bay Area artists are drawn together as a result of creative, rather than academic, commonalities.

Or, they may be brought together for a common political cause. In the past two years, block parties have re-emerged as a regular feature of the co-op. Members have had the opportunity at these events to bring together their passion for music and important political causes, such as affordable housing and solidarity economy.

Many houses inherited musical legacies established in their spac-



Stebbins housemates enjoying guitar in nature. Photo courtesy of Grace Boyd

es before they were acquired by the BSC. Artists from Green Day to Elliott Smith played Cloyne Court, formerly the Cloyne Hotel, before making it big!

It is no wonder that so many co-ops are drawn together by music. Few mediums rival the ability of music to convey the tumult, passion, and beauty of Berkeley life. No other medium could so clearly reflect and captivate our creative, free-spirited, and diverse cooperative community.

“With so many different people living together, music taste and musical interests across the co-ops, and even in just one house, spans across a broad range of genres and artistic expression,” Zendejas said. “Music is something that is so integral to co-op culture.”



The Dead Kennedys performing at Barrington Hall. Photo by R. Lawrence Tripp

# Esteban Kelly, co-op movement builder, on how the BSC got him started

by Elissa Roy  
Interim Development Lead

The BSC was Esteban Kelly's formal introduction to co-ops after participating in collectives and anarchist groups in his home of New York City. Attending UC Berkeley, he first lived in the dorms: "It was miserable, just unsustainable." After applying to the co-op, he received an offer the next week for a room in Kingman Hall, his "root and forever home" at the BSC.

Shortly after, Kelly's friends at Le Chateau (now Hille-gass-Parker House) shared word about a big demonstration happening in Seattle. Seattle co-ops offered free housing and flights were affordable on a student budget. Soon, Kelly and his friends were among the more than 40,000 demonstrators in the 1999 World Trade Organization protests, which Kelly described as "one of the most life-changing experiences."

"We effectively confronted and shut down global trade talks, alongside global indigenous and environmental movements and unions," Kelly said. "It was a powerful demonstration of direct democracy and direct action."

Later, living at Lothlorien, Kelly and friends from across the BSC came to an epiphany. They were all involved with different campus and local organizing efforts, from Latin American student solidarity movements like Students for Chiapas to groups like Justice for Janitors (students teaching janitors English) to solidarity with working-class communities in Oakland. These groups were raising money to access industrial kitchens or spaces for film screenings and teach-ins. They realized they already had these in the BSC!

They created The Barrington Collective (BC), honoring the radical legacy of Barrington

Hall, to formalize their collaboration with local organizers and "unlock the collective resources of people stewarding cooperative properties and assets." They held DIY festivals with workshops on topics like how to make zines, build bicycle-powered blenders, and connect to broader movements with training by local organizers. One project the BC started outlasted the Collective itself: Free Skool, which taught everything from conversational Spanish to guitar, hide-tanning, and how clowns can bring levity to protests.

In Esteban's last year at the BSC, he was the Vice President of Education & Resources,



Photo courtesy of Esteban Kelly

## Alumni spotlight

which led to him serving as NASCO's Director of Education & Training for three years (and on their board for seven). He describes NASCO as a bridge to the larger cooperative movement. After leaving NASCO, he continued to receive requests to facilitate trainings, from anti-oppression to board governance. So Kelly, his friend kiran nigam (also a BSC alum), and others founded a worker-owned cooperative: Anti-Oppression Resources and Training Alliance (AORTA), which the BSC partners with today.

***"Nothing's going to change unless you connect, participate, and invest the time to change it."***

Kelly's history as a founder shows an impressive commitment to cooperative values and the solidarity economy. Beyond AORTA, Kelly has helped found the Philadelphia Area Cooperative Alliance (PACA), Democracy at Work Institute, U.S. Solidarity Economy Network, and Guilded, a freelance artists cooperative. Today, Kelly serves as Executive Director of the USFWC, a national federation of

worker-owned co-ops founded in 2004, and is Board Chair of NCBA-CLUSA, a national co-op advocacy organization, founded in 1916.

The throughline to his position today at the nexus of these two powerhouse organizations is the co-op movement's elevation and support for young leaders and student cooperators. When working for NASCO, Kelly was asked to represent youth and students at the conference that launched the USFWC. Similarly, Kelly first served on the NCBA-CLUSA Board as a NASCO appointee, again representing youth and student voices. With Kelly as Chair, there is great energy today within NCBA-CLUSA to take the youth voice seriously as part of their framework for inclusive economies. After serving as Executive Director of USFWC for the past nine years, Kelly has grown from two to over 20 and passed federal legislation for co-ops, including the first law that included worker-owned co-ops by name - the Main Street Employee Ownership Act.

To alumni, present and future, Kelly reminds us to have courage when facing entrenched power: "Stick to your principles and bring people along with you by engaging them with what it means to expand democracy. Those are skills that I learned and have taken with me from living in the

BSC." Further, Principle 6 "Cooperation among Cooperatives" drives the co-op movement. Paying dues for membership in local co-ops is key because this is money that's not from philanthropy or the government: "That is what it means to cooperate."

***"Stick to your principles and bring people along with you... Those are skills that I learned... from living in the BSC."***

Kelly's closing thoughts are: "Think about all the people who don't have the access and privilege to tap into an established cooperative like you. If you have benefitted from a cooperative you didn't start yourself, it is your duty to associate, become a member, and join the movement. If you have an issue with your local co-op association, first join and then change it. There's a democratic process and nothing's going to change unless you connect, participate, and invest the time to change it."

# We appreciate you, donors!

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# State Senator Nancy Skinner on her memories of Barrington Hall

by Emma Taila  
Publications Coordinator  
Photos courtesy of the office of Nancy Skinner

Nancy Skinner started paying closer attention to city politics during her freshman year at UC Berkeley when she helped a housemate at Barrington Hall campaign for city council.

While pursuing her master's degree at Cal, Skinner became the only student ever elected to the city council, a title she still holds. Over the years she found success in her political career, serving on the East Bay Regional Park Board and the California State Assembly before her current position in the state legislature. In 2016 she was elected to the California State

Senate representing parts of the East Bay.

Skinner lived at Barrington Hall during the 1972-1973 school year, when defining events shook the nation. She remembers conversations in the hallways and at dinner about reproductive rights amid Roe v. Wade and watching with her housemates as the Watergate scandal began to break.

"I remember in the spring there was a TV room off of the main dining room in Barrington and everybody crowded in there watching," Skinner said. "News was coming out but all the hearings and stuff hadn't begun."

The co-op has long been a place where students gather in

community and fulfill their need for creative expression. Skinner fondly remembers the lively wine dinners at Barrington, and going to live music events with friends. The Keystone, a venue downtown where artists like Merrel Sanders, Jerry Garcia, and Clifton Chenier would play, was the place to catch shows with housemates, Skinner recalled.

***"Participatory democracy and participation in decision-making was... already important to me... Of course it made sense to live in the co-ops."***

"We'd always organize to go to concerts," she said. "There always seemed to be someone at Barrington who had some kind of scam on tickets so we'd get in for free or really cheap."

During her brief time at Barrington, Skinner made an impact on the 225-resident house's food program. Noticing that she and other vegetarian students had limited meal options from central kitchen, she got involved with the vegetarian food program. She used one of the house's kitchens to prepare meals in-house for 55



## Alumni spotlight

residents, who each donated an extra hour of workshift per week to sustain the program. Skinner managed to keep dinners to 50 cents per person amid rising food costs.

Skinner learned about the co-op through a friend from high school who had lived in Barrington before her, and was "drawn first and foremost because it was affordable." The BSC, or University Students Cooperative Association at the time, helped Skinner put herself through college.

Before she had to start thinking about college housing, though, Skinner advocated for participatory democracy at her high school. She worked with her friends to take her student government from an organization that mostly planned spirit events to one that took student issues more seriously.

***"Any time any protest was going on you heard about it first at Barrington"***

"Participatory democracy and participation in decision-making was something that was already important to me," Skinner said. "A bunch of my friends and I started thinking of it — probably because of the activism at the time of the late '60s — like, no we should use the student government to really put forward some of these kinds of participatory ideas... Of course, it made sense to live in the co-ops."

The BSC proved to be an environment that cultivated that pull towards politics. Skinner was involved with the campus political party Educational Democracy, which later became CalSERVE. She said many Educational Democracy candidates were current or former co-op residents.

Later at Cal, Skinner became involved in the Anti-Apartheid movement on campus. Though the movement wasn't centered in the co-op, she remembers familiar faces from many different houses would get involved.

"Any time any protest was going on you heard about it first at Barrington," she said.

Skinner remembers issues such as affordable housing and inflation being prevalent during her time as a student. Though enrollment has increased, the campus has added less than a thousand housing units since her time at UC Berkeley.

Much of Skinner's legislative work has focused on increasing the amount of affordable housing in the East Bay, especially for students. In the last two years, she helped increase state funding for CSU and UC schools with the condition that they expand student



housing. Still, she recognizes there are many years of work ahead to solve the housing crisis.

Additionally, Skinner has supported the founding of a few independent co-ops in Berkeley. Models such as co-housing are becoming more common, and community land trusts help people purchase properties to start a residential cooperative.

"We know housing affordability is a number one issue for everybody, especially for students," Skinner said. "The co-op does it so much more affordably than any one else."

# Congrats to our scholarship winners!

These amazing students and many more received a need-based scholarship from the BSC to reduce their rent, made possible by our donors.

## Amanda Mendez

My name is Amanda, and I am a re-entry student finishing my degree in Native American Studies. As an independent, low-income and first generation student, I have been able to rely on the BSC to provide stable and affordable housing throughout my time at Cal. Receiving this scholarship will help reduce the financial burden of living costs and allow me to keep focusing on my studies. I first joined the BSC in Spring 2013 and I have had the opportunity to live in Cloyne, CZ, Ridge and Rochdale. While I enjoy the independence Rochdale provides as an older co-oper, my favorite memories of the BSC come from house events like Special Dinner, Band Nights, Study Jams and impromptu kitchen dance parties. Most of all, I am thankful for all the love and friendships I witnessed and found in the BSC.



## Katherine Rodriguez

I would not have been able to pursue an undergraduate career if not for the BSC. Oscar Wilde gave me my first Berkeley home, the best roommate I could wish for, and crazy memories that will live on far past graduation. I was proud to serve a term as House President, watch my friends take over, and make the house better!



## Hana Lee



Hello, my name is Hana Lee and I am a senior majoring in Computer Science at UC Berkeley. My first co-op journey last year at the Lothlorien house not only provided me with a memorable summer but overall enriched my college experience. The home-made, plant-based meals were a highlight, and the cooperative living atmosphere left a lasting impression. In that upcoming fall, I found myself at Rochdale. As a current resident of Rochdale, I strove to give back to the community and took on the elective position of Council Member to amend our house bylaws, and worked on reviving the Rochdalian Scholarship this fall semester. The scholarship has been helpful in reducing the financial stress associated with higher education and empowering me to invest more deeply in the cooperative community. I am forever grateful to the BSC and generous donors for creating a meaningful impact on my life.

## Maricruz Montes de Oca-Sanchez

Hi, my name is Maricruz and I'm a senior majoring in data science. I am originally from near Chico, California, and have been living in Cloyne since Fall 2021. I am currently on the board of directors and am very grateful for the many opportunities the BSC has given me. Having access to lower-cost housing this close to campus has greatly improved my college experience, and receiving this scholarship has alleviated a lot of financial burden. As a first-generation, low-income student, I do not have access to financial resources outside of government aid and anything I work for. I'd like to thank BSC alumni and donors for making BSC scholarships possible and helping other students and I succeed at Berkeley.



# Alumni notes

## A Celebration of Cooperation with BSCAA and Umunhum Brewing!

by Noelle Gillies  
Barrington, Rochdale/Fenwick Village, Wolf '87-'90

May 20, 2023, turned out to be the perfect day for a backyard co-op party in celebration of BSC's 90th anniversary as well as the 10th anniversary of Umunhum Brewing (UB), California's first co-op brewery. The BSC Alumni Association and UB planned the event to feature food and drink from local cooperatives: UB donated kegs of Porter and Sison beers while the BSCAA supplied pizza and salad from A Slice of New York and cookies from Niles Pie Company.

Alumni from several BSC eras arrived, as well as UB members from the South Bay. BSC alumni were especially interested in Noelle's scrapbook from 1987-90, with room and board bills, Toad Lane Review articles, newspaper clippings, and photos from her time in Barrington Hall, Wolf House, and Rochdale.

Several BSCAA members joined Umunhum Brewing that day, which the UB Board appreciated (no need to explain what co-ops are with these members).

We hope to have another get-together in the South Bay in the future!



BSC and BSCAA members at the NASCO convening.

Photo by Portia Lewis

## BSCAA, BSC Members Participate in NASCO Staff & Leadership Convening

by Portia Lewis and V. Nedeltchev  
BSCAA President, Interim BSC Events and Alumni Relations Lead and BSCAA Vice President

The NASCO Staff and Student Leadership Convening was held July 26th-28th in Madison, WI. Portia Lewis (BSCAA President), V Nedeltchev (BSCAA Vice President), Cyn Macias-Gomez (BSC Vice President of External Affairs), MK (former Cooperative Experience Manager), Josh Lavine (BSC staff member), and Josy (maintenance staff member), as well as alum Aidan Hill, who does mutual aid work with the BSC, attended the event. There was a large turnout from the BSC and BSCAA. NASCO greatly appreciated our participation and has already con-

tacted the BSC about potentially hosting the next Staff and Student Leadership Convening in Berkeley.

V and Portia presented on Alumni Engagement during a Skill/Topic Lab. There was an inspiring conversation about the struggles and successes of engagement and fundraising. We were immersed in two days of non-stop cooperation, showing the beautiful and not-so-beautiful parts of the cooperative systems. Other attendees were gracious with their time & knowledge.

Due to the incredible support of our alumni community, the BSCAA generously contributed a \$500 sponsorship to the event! It remains to be seen how the relationships started at the Convening will evolve. Still, the connections made with other housing cooperatives resulted in Portia and V's invitation to lead a session at NASCO's flagship Institute from November 10 to 12, 2023 in Ann Arbor, MI.

## Letter from the BSCAA President

by Portia Lewis  
BSCAA President, Interim BSC Events and Alumni Relations Lead

It was great to make an introduction to many of you at the 90th Anniversary Gala. What an honor it was to share space, laughter, and food with so many generations of co-ops! In June, I was elected to step into the unfillable shoes of Analise Smith-Hinkley as the President of the Berkeley Student Cooperative Alumni Association, less formally known as the BSCAA.



Portia Lewis and V Nedeltchev. Photo courtesy of Portia Lewis

For those who do not know me, my love story with the co-ops began in a typical Gen-Z way: a Snapchat story. While in Community College, a friend from High School shared the wildest stories of their time living in a giant, graffiti-covered building in Berkeley. I had no idea what a co-op was, but I knew when I transferred to Cal and moved to Berkeley that weird, giant building was where I wanted to live. I first moved to Casa Zimbabwe (CZ) in 2018. Little did I know that those mural and graffiti-covered walls would become a home I never knew I needed.

Growing up low-income, I started working at sixteen years old. I continued to work customer service jobs through four years of community college, and once

I moved to Berkeley. My first position in the BSC was as the Non-Perishables Coordinator at CFS. While at the BSC I held many other positions such as Workshift Manager and President at CZ, and Kitchen Manager and Community Builder at HiP. I continued to run for manager positions in the co-ops partially because even with working part-time and receiving financial aid I otherwise would not have been able to pay my rent. Another large part, though, was because, for the first time in my life, I found the work I was doing to be meaningful, impactful, and aligned with my values. If it was not for the BSC, I can honestly say, like many of you, that I might not have been able to make it to graduation.

I am happy to report that I graduated in 2021. Once a co-op, always a co-op: to stay connected with other alumni I joined the BSCAA Board in 2022. Suppose you are not currently a BSCAA member. In that case, I invite you to take the opportunity to sign up — there is more about our very affordable memberships on the next page. We could not do what we do without our BSCAA member contributions! If you did not already know, soon-to-be graduates receive your first year of membership for absolutely free! There is nothing you need to do. Upon graduating, you will receive a welcome email from us.

Finally, if you have had an inkling of stepping up your commitment to our alumni community, I strongly encourage you to run for the BSCAA Board! By the time you receive this newsletter, we will have already elected our new BSCAA Board members at our Annual Meeting on Saturday, December 9th, 2023, but you can reach out to me anytime about how to join the Board — bscaa1996@gmail.com.

I am always available to share more with you about how awesome it is to continue the legacy of the BSC into the broader community through our work with partner organizations, to provide critical support for the BSC through fundraising for scholarships, capital improvement projects, or during the Covid-19 pandemic, as well as to participate in bringing to life spectacular events such as the BSC's Annual Block Party and 90th Anniversary Gala!

Being elected the President of the BSCAA has been a gratifying, motivating, and eye-opening experience. As President, I want to strengthen our alumni community and continue to provide critical scholarship and capital improvement donations to the BSC — but that is only possible with all of your support. In the new year, we are looking forward to welcoming our new BSCAA Board members, strengthening our relationship with current BSC members & staff, building solidarity with other co-ops, and hosting many more fantastic alumni events. That being said, the BSC needs our active support as alumni, whether through making a critical donation or through the contribution of our time and energy, our support that has been critical for sustaining the BSC for ninety years. Let's keep it going.

Cheers to ninety more years!



Cheers to many more years of cooperation!

Photo by Portia Lewis

# Join the BSCAA!

You can join online at [bscaa.coop/membership](https://bscaa.coop/membership).

Or fill out this form and cut out; mail with a check to "BSCAA" at 2424 Ridge Rd, Berkeley, CA 94709. Membership rates can be found at [bscaa.coop/membership](https://bscaa.coop/membership). Questions? Email us at [bscaa1996@gmail.com](mailto:bscaa1996@gmail.com).

NAME

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## Select which applies

- Lifetime membership
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# Where do your donations go?

All donations ultimately keep rents low for students. How do we use your donations specifically?

## 1. Capital Improvements

Donations to Capital Improvements help us preserve and improve our most important assets – buildings and infrastructure. When you donate to capital improvements, you help relieve the biggest upward pressure on rents as we tackle years of deferred maintenance, software upgrades, and capital projects like seismic retrofits.

## 2. Scholarships

Donations to Scholarships go directly to our lowest-income students who get a rent reduction of 1/6 to 1/3 off their rent.

## 3. Where It Is Needed Most

Donations to Where It Is Needed Most are unrestricted donations. You are investing in the BSC and our mission to make an impact on the affordability of higher education and the cooperative movement. The Board determines the use of these funds. In the past, unrestricted donations have funded seismic retrofits and helped us grow our operating reserves.

# Donate to the BSC! [bsc.coop/donate](https://bsc.coop/donate)

## 1 Choose your gift:

- \$100
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- \$  / month
- I am making a gift in my will
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## 2 Choose your area of support:

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# Many ways to give!

The Berkeley Student Cooperative is a student-run 501(c)(3) affordable housing provider that removes barriers to higher education for low-income and traditionally marginalized students and empowers them with community-building skills that they can take into the future.

**Legal Name:** Berkeley Student Cooperative, Inc., a California not-for-profit corporation, with its principal place of Business in Berkeley, California.

**Tax Status:** 501(c)(3) charitable organization. Confirmation of our tax-exempt status is provided in the form of a letter from the US Department of Treasury, available upon request.

**Tax ID:** 94-0948140

**Contact:** Elissa Roy, Interim Development Lead at [development@bsc.coop](mailto:development@bsc.coop)

**Donor Advised Fund:** The BSC can receive gifts from donor advised funds like Fidelity Charitable Gift Fund, Vanguard Charitable Endowment Program, and Schwab Charitable Fund.

**Qualified IRA Distribution:** If you're 70.5 or older, you can make a qualified charitable distribution from your IRA. You'll pay no income tax on that amount and satisfy your required minimum distribution.

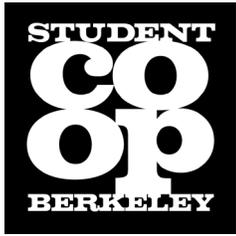
**Securities Transfer:** Avoid capital gains tax by donating appreciated securities.

**Employer Matches:** Double your impact – ask your HR department about gift matching! The BSC has received matching employer donations from Google, Apple, Facebook, Applied Materials, Lawrence Livermore National Labs, and others!

**The BSC wants to reach all alumni!**  
[bsc.coop/alumni/update](https://bsc.coop/alumni/update)

**Moved? Changed your name? Different email address? Let us know so we can keep you informed about BSC news that matters to you!**

**Use the online form or contact Elissa Roy at [development@bsc.coop](mailto:development@bsc.coop)**



**Berkeley Student Cooperative**  
2424 Ridge Road  
Berkeley, CA 94709

## The Berkeley Student Cooperative, est. 1933

*The mission of the Berkeley Student Cooperative is to provide a quality, low-cost cooperative housing community to university students, thereby providing an educational opportunity for students who might not otherwise be able to afford a university education.*



Photo courtesy of Eytan Stanton