Parker Palmer to Speak at CIIS Commencement

Author, educator, and activist Parker J. Palmer, PhD, will speak at CIIS’s 39th Annual Commencement Ceremony on May 20. Palmer will accept an honorary doctorate in Integrative Teaching and Learning at the ceremony, which will be held at the Palace of Fine Arts in San Francisco.

Palmer focuses on issues in education, community, leadership, spirituality, and social change. His work spans a wide range of institutions—colleges and universities, public schools, community organizations, religious institutions, corporations, and foundations. He serves as senior associate of the American Association of Higher Education, as senior advisor to the Fetzer Institute, and is the founder and senior advisor for the Center for Courage & Renewal.


Palmer has been awarded eight honorary doctorates and several national awards, including two Distinguished Achievement Awards from the National Educational Press Association, an Award of Excellence from the Associated Church Press, and major grants from the Danforth Foundation, the Lilly Endowment, and the Fetzer Institute. The Leadership Project, Palmer has been awarded eight honorary doctorates and several national awards, including two Distinguished Achievement Awards from the National Educational Press Association, an Award of Excellence from the Associated Church Press, and major grants from the Danforth Foundation, the Lilly Endowment, and the Fetzer Institute. The Leadership Project, Palmer focuses on issues in education, community, leadership, spirituality, and social change. His work spans a wide range of institutions—colleges and universities, public schools, community organizations, religious institutions, corporations, and foundations. He serves as senior associate of the American Association of Higher Education, as senior advisor to the Fetzer Institute, and is the founder and senior advisor for the Center for Courage & Renewal.

Palmer was one of the 30 most influential senior leaders in higher education and one of 10 key “agenda-setters” of the past decade.

In February, Palmer was the opening keynote speaker at CIIS’s groundbreaking conference, Uncovering the Heart of Higher Education.

“I am delighted and honored that Parker Palmer will be the keynote speaker at CIIS’s 39th Annual Commencement Ceremony on May 20. Palmer will accept an honorary doctorate in Integrative Teaching and Learning at the ceremony, which will be held at the Palace of Fine Arts in San Francisco.”

CIIS President Joseph Subbiondo
IN MY OWN WORDS

SHANKAR BHATTACHARYA

In each newsletter, CIIS Today profiles a donor who has generously made a contribution to the Institute. In this issue, we talk with Shankar Bhattacharya, who, along with his wife, Kimi, met CIIS cofounder Haridas Chaudhuri when he officiated their wedding in 1973. The Bhattacharyas donate generously to the Haridas and Bina Chaudhuri Endowment for South Asian Philosophy and Culture. Mr. Bhattacharya, who retired as vice president of engineering from PG&E in 2005, recently joined CIIS’s board of trustees and chairs the Finance Committee (See page 7 for more details)

How did you find out about CIIS?

My wife and I were so impressed by Haridas Chaudhuri that we wanted to stay connected with him by being associated with his school. However, my employment required me to relocate away from the Bay Area. When we returned, we learned that Haridas Chaudhuri had passed away. We lost contact with the Institute for many years until the mid-90’s when we learned that many of our friends were in touch with Mr. Chaudhuri’s wife, Bina. We started to attend CIIS’s annual Chaudhuri Dinner to learn more about the school. We were very inspired by the vision and the philosophy of the Institute. We believed that an institute like CIIS, which offers the teachings of Western philosophy alongside Eastern philosophy, was very important for our globalized new world. We wanted to be part of such an institute.

Why do you donate to CIIS?

Besides the fact that Haridas Chaudhuri played a crucial role in our lives, his teachings are essential for today’s complex world where religious differences and misunderstandings have proliferated hatred between human beings. Through our contributions, we want to see CIIS play a stronger role in creating a better understanding between various religions and cultures.

Why do you believe in philanthropic giving?

My wife and I strongly believe that we have a social and moral obligation to give back some of our wealth and wisdom to the community that has given us so much. We hope our contributions will help our community to be stronger and a better place to live.

What do you hope to achieve during your time as a trustee?

I would like to see the school become even more financially strong, and I hope to help CIIS reach its highest potential. I envision more scholarships for students and more opportunities given to the faculty to perform research. I plan to work with the other board members and the president to aggressively increase the school’s revenue through sources other than tuition.

“We believed that an institute like CIIS, which offers the teachings of Western philosophy alongside Eastern philosophy, was very important for our globalized new world.” —Shankar Bhattacharya

Alumni Notes

Deanna McKinstry (BAC, ’99) received her PhD in Mythology and Depth Psychology from Pacifica Graduate Institute. Working with groups, individuals, and corporations, she facilitates creativity and psychological integration by refreshing and strengthening the multiracial archetypes within the human voice. Her upcoming one-woman musical will reflect how America’s psychic energies are revealed and carried through music.

Miri Hunter Harsbach (WSE, ’99) is the director of Project Sheba, part-owner of the Magdalene Center in Los Angeles, and has taught at colleges and universities throughout the country. Her one-woman shows include Grandmothers of the Universe, The Queen of Sheba? Yes I Am, and The Prophecy Diaries. She also has two recordings: “Harvest of the Heart” and “The Ways of Love.” She frequently tours and lectures on topics related to women’s spirituality.

Mary Ellen Manthey-Halloran (IOP, ’99) has completed a new book titled Anger: Let the Tiger Out, but Keep It on a Leash. She has a private psychotherapy practice in San Francisco.

Diana (Bracy) Verbalen (HOT, ’04) is the Northern California program manager for the Labor Management Partnership at Kaiser Permanente. She also has a private practice as a certified somatic coach, facilitator, and change consultant. Diana utilizes appreciative and expressive arts methods with individuals and groups to promote connection with and fulfillment of what matters most to them.

Barbara Berman (CLN, ’93) is a psychotherapist working with adolescents and adults in Marin County. Additionally, she volunteers at County Community School, a continuation school in San Rafael where she runs a young men’s group and works with the principal on ways to improve the curriculum. Barbara also meets with a group of colleagues to establish a consortium of providers and trainers committed to social change through the practice of cultural competency.

Tina Fields (EWT, ’01) teaches in the University of California, Santa Barbara’s Wildlands Studies Field Program in Hawaii. She is also a faculty member in Culture, Ecology, and Sustainable Community at New College’s North Bay campus. Tina was listed in the 2006-07 Who’s Who Among American Women.

Christian de Quinney (PPC, ’90) is a professor of Philosophy and Consciousness Studies at John F. Kennedy University, a faculty member at The Graduate Institute, director of the Center for Inter- species Research, and adjunct faculty at the University of Philosophical Research and the Holmes Institute. He is also cofounder of The Visionary Edge whose focus is transforming global consciousness by transforming mass media. Christian is the author of the award-winning book Radical Nature: Rediscovering the Soul of Matter and Radical Knowing: Understanding Consciousness through Relationship, as well as the visionary novel Deep Spirit.

Marya Grathwohl (PCC, ’98) gives lectures and workshops and holds retreats integrating reflection on the universe story with spirituality and care of Earth. She serves as Earth Consultant for the Women’s Center in Montana, implementing wind and solar power, geothermal heating and cooling, water catchments and greenhouse designs, and permaculture.

STUART DIAMOND is a business leader, entrepreneur, writer, composer, and musician. He is the cofounder of Empowered Media Corp., an international organization providing online software communications and business management tools to the real estate and healthcare industries, among others. Stuart has worked on international political and human rights issues, consulted on counter-terrorism strategies for the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, and discussed with the United Nations about technologies and business models to aid economies of the least-developed nations.

A recognized composer and musician, Stuart has composed more than 100 works in a variety of mediums. He won a grant from the Criterion Foundation in 1976 to write, create, and perform contemporary classical and electronic music. His ensemble, Electric Diamond, has been performing classical electronic music concerts since 1979. Stuart has also authored screenplays, novels, essays, poetry, and documentaries for television.

Shankar Bhattacharya is a professional engineer and management executive with more than 30 years of experience in a broad range of engineering, construction, and power plant operations, including energy transmission and distribution systems. He recently retired from Pacific Gas and Electric Company where he worked for 20 years, the past ten years as vice president of engineering and asset management. In this capacity, Shank, as he is known to his friends, led a team of more than 1,000 engineers, professionals, and managers utilizing a capital budget of more than $1 billion.

Shan currently serves on the engineering advisory board for San Francisco State University, the community advisory board of the Center for South Asia Studies at UC Berkeley, and on the board of Woodrome for Opportunity, a nonprofit community mentoring organization in the East Bay.
CIIS Opens New Integral Counseling Center

In its ongoing effort to provide clinical experience for its psychology students, CIIS opened its fifth counseling center on January 24, 2007. Located at 507 Polk Street in San Francisco, the Golden Gate Integral Counseling Center offers low-cost professional psychotherapy to the community as well as provides a solid training ground for CIIS Integral Counseling Psychology students.

The Golden Gate Integral Counseling Center is the third clinic that focuses on integral counseling. The other two are located on Pierce Street and Church Street. The integral counseling model is based on the principle that each client is viewed as a whole person and that all aspects of the person are included in the healing process. The Golden Gate Integral Counseling Center offers a unique focus on a transpersonal perspective in its training program.

“At Golden Gate, we include an explicit emphasis on how spirituality can inform and support the practice of psychotherapy,” said Dr. Judith Kinst, Golden Gate’s clinical director.

In addition to the three integral counseling centers, CIIS has a Center for Somatic Psychotherapy, staffed by master’s-level Somatic Psychology students, and the Psychological Services Center, which provides training for doctoral clinical psychology students.

Integral Counseling Psychology graduate students must accumulate 150 hours of direct client contact as a prerequisite to receiving their master’s degree in counseling psychology. Students can perform their yearlong internship at the counseling centers or at other community agencies. “Golden Gate’s main goal is to provide good solid training to the students, so that when they walk out the door after a year, they have confidence in themselves as therapists,” said Dr. Kinst. “We also provide good, quality low-fee therapy to the community. It’s really a win-win situation for everyone.”

The current center has six students on staff, each seeing three to four clients. At the center’s client base grows, it will admit more students each semester. Dr. Kinst expects a total of 15 student trainees on staff by yeas’ end. An internship program for the trainees will be established in the future. Students also receive weekly group supervision and trainings, and perform group work at the center.

The new center was made possible by a major gift of $100,000 from the J.C. Kellogg Foundation in New York. The Kellogg Foundation has generously supported all of the master’s level counseling centers. “CIIS is extremely grateful to the J.C. Kellogg Foundation for this significant investment as well as for its generous support of the counseling centers at CIIS and other projects,” said Director of Development Dorothea Reyna.

CIIS Travel Program Expands Offerings for 2007-2008

Trips to Scotland, Siberia, Japan, and India planned.

By Richard Buggs, Dean of Alumni and Director of Travel Program

The alumni and friends journey to India was modified this year so that travelers could experience more of the subcontinent. After spending the first week in South India at Auroville, the universal township founded on the principles of Sri Aurobindo, the group of 24 flew north to Delhi and witnessed the simple, powerful tribute to Mahatma Ghandi’s life at Bilar House. The ambitious itinerary also included a few days in Jaipur, the Rajasthani city of pink stone, as well as a total of 15 student trainees on staff by yeas’ end. An internship program for the trainees will be established in the future.

As CIIS enters its fourth year of culturally enriching travel and study programs, we’re pleased to announce new offerings and unique itineraries designed to excite, inspire, and awaken the explorer and learner within. Whether you’re drawn to practice calligraphy at the Serene Moss Temple of Japan, study with the shamans of Siberia, or explore Scotland’s Findhorn community, or travel by elephant to the majestic Amber Fort in India, you are invited to join like-minded travelers on the adventure and make meaningful connections with new people and cultures. Please consider joining other alumni on one of these remarkable journeys.

For a travel brochure or more information, visit www.ciisd.edu/publicprograms or call 415.575.6278.

Never Too Late

This August, Bachelor of Arts Completion student Georgia Jackson fulfills a lifelong dream to receive an undergraduate degree.

Georgia Jackson always wanted to get a college degree. But a bad turn of events in her life prevented her from doing so—until now. The 53-year-old native San Franciscan will complete CIIS’s Bachelor of Arts Degree Completion (BAC) program in August. Jackson says that she was drawn to the spiritual and interpersonal environment of CIIS, noting: “Everyone is so connected here.”

Jackson considers herself a lifelong learner. She started taking courses at San Francisco City College in 1974, but a long battle with substance abuse interfered with her desire to graduate from college. With her life back in order—she has been clean and sober since 1994—she decided that it was finally time to get her bachelor’s degree. In 1997, she returned to City College and earned a Drug and Alcohol Certificate in 2003 and then an associate’s degree in 2004.

Jackson explored several colleges before choosing CIIS upon the advice of friend and CIIS alumna Briana Monier. Jackson was particularly attracted to the BAC program, which is designed to accommodate working adults, because it fits perfectly with her work schedule as an evaluator, researcher, and interviewer for San Francisco’s Department of Public Health.

She was also supported in her decision by receiving much-needed financial assistance from CIIS as the recipient of the Asia Cummings Memorial Scholarship. This endowed scholarship fund was established in 2005 by Pamela and David Smith in memory of their daughter, Asia Leah Cummings, who was admitted to the BAC program before her death in 2004 at age 21. Jackson currently evaluates two grant-funded programs for the Department of Public Health: Women Integrated Services Health (WISH), which helps female offenders with mental health issues; and the Standing Against Global Exploitation (SAGE) Project, which assists victims of commercial sexual exploitation. Her duties include conducting intensive baseline, six-month and 12-month interviews with program participants to gauge the effectiveness of the programs. Jackson also works as a relief counselor at Baker Places, a nonprofit organization providing an array of community-based services in San Franciscans with mental health, substance, and/or HIV/AIDS related issues.

According to Jackson, BAC’s “cohort learning” model, where a group of students study and learn together throughout the academic year, has improved her writing and listening skills and given her a sense of connection to a community of kindred spirits. These skills, along with her past personal struggles with addiction, have helped her better relate to and serve her clients.

“I know where the clients are coming from,” said Jackson, who wants to eventually earn a master’s degree in rehabilitation counseling. “Some of the people I see are looking to get high with. They see me clean and say, ‘Georgia, if you can do it, I can do it.’”

Food for Thought

New “Lunch for the Soul” Lecture Series a Success

While noshing on tandoori chicken and tikka masala, Marinites indulge in intellectual nourishment during CIIS’s new “Lunch for the Soul” lecture series, launched in October 2006. The popular lunchtime series, held at Gaylord India Restaurant in Sausalito, introduces the Marin community to scholars, scientists, health professionals, authors, community leaders, and artists, among others, whose life work reflects CIIS’s mission of integrative education, peace, justice, health, transformation, and spiritual development. “The central theme of the ongoing series is ‘engaged spirituality’—meeting the world with personal and professional spiritual strength and purpose,” said CIIS President Joseph Subhando.

Some 40 to 60 people have attended the monthly talks. Featured guests have included cardiologist Dean Ornish, Marin-based Jungian analyst and author Jean Shinoda Bolen, CIIS philosophy professor Richard Tarnas, choreographer and teacher Anna Halprin, director and actor Corey Fischer, and poet and Rumi translator Coleman Barks.

The series is “a great opportunity to share CIIS with the Marin community,” said Director of Development Dorothea Reyna. CIIS trustee Kishore Kripalani, owner of Gaylord India Restaurant, and the Pacific Sun newspaper cosponsor the lecture programs.
We all understand that if you pay attention to the presence of a person when you are in that person’s company you can receive a very special kind of knowledge—the knowledge that comes from direct experience. From this perspective, Bina, the humblest of people who shunned pretension and insincerity, Bina the enthusiast, ever ready to throw herself at your feet to chase down the Divine; we were invited to bring together heaven and earth. As it turns out, we are that Higher Purpose that Bina had in mind when she took that risk to keep the doors open.

And so, though it is too late for your ears to receive these words, I finally take my leave. I have gained my vacation. Please let me go. I bowed down to all of you in reverence and bid adieu. I returned the keys to the door of the house and do not demand any claim to it. I only ask from all of you your love and best wishes.

I received more than I gave. Please let me go. I finally take my leave. I have gained my vacation. I bowed down to all of you in reverence and bid adieu. I returned the keys to the door of the house and do not demand any claim to it. I only ask from all of you your love and best wishes.

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