

CLAREMONT SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY

Rev. Dr. Kah-Jin Jeffrey Kuan, President and Professor of Hebrew Bible

CST values its connection to The United Methodist Church, and we are so thankful for your love, prayers, and gifts. Our dedication to “preparing our graduates to become agents of transformation and healing in churches, local communities, schools, non-profit institutions, and the world at large” has not wavered and is made possible by your continued support.

In 2015, CST developed a **five-year strategic plan** based on three goals: promoting transformative education; engaging local and global communities; and, achieving long-term institutional stability. CST’s groundbreaking approach to theological education is leading the way. Enrollment is up again; students, professors, and graduates are truly **creating a difference for the world we live in**; and, our advancement numbers are strong. Still our endowment has never been particularly robust, and with an aging campus and the rising cost of higher education, we are running a budget deficit. Many free-standing seminaries are experiencing this problem, too. One way of ensuring a healthy future is to embed in a like-minded university, so last summer we began exploring the possibility of embedding within **Willamette University** in Salem, Oregon to insure our **long-term institutional sustainability**.

Willamette is one of few United Methodist-related universities in the western U.S., which makes it possible for CST to retain both its affiliation as a United Methodist seminary and its reputation as an excellent theological school with renowned programs. Further, partnering with Willamette provides a number of interesting opportunities to strengthen *both* institutions – including dual degree programs, joint degree programs with Willamette’s current graduate schools (Atkinson Graduate School of Management and the College of Law), and coursework for Willamette undergraduates. **CST has always met challenges with courage** – from its founding in 1885 in San Fernando Valley to its affiliation with and later break from University of Southern California, to its 60 years in Claremont – CST’s mission has always survived. Embedding within Willamette allows us the opportunity to thrive in a new way.

Even after announcing a possible move, CST’s alumni and friends have been supportive—evidenced by a **35% increase in revenue/contributions** from alumni and friends in the first 6 months of the 2017-18 fiscal year, as compared to the same period of time in the 2016-17 fiscal year. We believe this is an indication of the continued support of our mission and students, and see this as a vote of confidence in our efforts to create a stable financial model able to sustain the CST mission for years to come.

Additionally, our **Spring enrollment of 424 students is the highest in CST history**, demonstrating that the potential move has not deterred students from seeking the **transformative**

education offered by CST. In fact, our M.Div. program has had a 60% jump over the past three years, our D.Min. program has had a 204% increase, and our **number of United Methodist students has doubled** in the same time period. Our current enrollment is also the most diverse in CST’s history:

- Our youngest student is 22, and our oldest is 82, with an average age of 42
- Our student body is 22% United Methodist, 55% other Christian, 15% non-Christian traditions, 1% non-religious, and 7% unaffiliated/undeclared
- And, nearly 60% of our students identify as people of color (16% black/African American, 15% Asian, 14% international/non-resident, 6% Hispanic, 4% Pacific islander/native Hawaiian, 3% two or more races, along with 7% undeclared and 35% white.)

In a world rife with division, our students, professors, and alumni are agents of healing who model peace with justice. CST is made up of people who are **engaging local and global communities** on a variety of issues, from environmental justice and immigration reform, to confronting Islamophobia and peace-building. We could not do this critical work without you.

In 2017, we wished **farewell** to two retirees: **Karen Dalton and Helene Slessarev-Jamir**. Karen is a United Methodist pastor who served as CST’s Associate Professor of Practice of Ministry, Director of Field Education, and was co-director of the Center for Global Methodism. Her teaching was shaped by her passion for connecting theory and practice, and by her strong interest in leadership and spiritual formation. Helene served as CST’s Mildred M. Hutchinson Professor of Urban Studies and Professor of Ethics, Politics, and Society. As a political scientist by training with an expertise in urban policy and civil rights, Helene’s research was situated at the intersection of politics and religion. She also served as a member of the Board of Directors of Sojourners and on the UMC’s National Committee for Hispanic/Latino Ministry and its National Immigration Task Force. These women contributed to CST’s deep commitment to The United Methodist Church, our ecumenical mission, and our interreligious partnerships. They are missed. We also said **goodbye** to **Rev. Jeanne Audrey Powers**. Jeanne Audrey exercised bold and courageous leadership and made possible CST’s Center for Sexuality, Gender and Religion (CSGR) which fosters intellectual inquiry, open dialogue, and spiritual care within religious communities. Five years ago, CSGR founded the Jeanne Audrey Powers Award, which recognizes graduates who demonstrate outstanding service or leadership in LGBTQIA communities and display a commitment to be an activist for social change on gender and sexuality issues. CST is fortunate to have had a friend and supporter like Jeanne Audrey.

Thank you again for supporting Claremont School of Theology as we continue **creating a difference for the world we live in**. We invite you to **Stay connected** by visiting us at cst.edu, on Facebook, and/or on Twitter @CST_News; and, to sign up for our monthly e-newsletter at cst.edu/cst-newsletter.