



the AMERICAN DREAM

Building Opportunity for Immigrants to the United States

Fostering the American Dream

A Progress Report from Paul Merage, Founder and President, Merage Foundation for the American Dream

Two years ago, my wife Lilly and I founded the Merage Foundation for the American Dream.

The Foundation's mission has been to inspire new Americans, especially the young, to embrace the American Dream, to seek a higher purpose, and to succeed as productive citizens.

The Foundation hopes to explore and celebrate the contributions of outstanding individual immigrants to the culture and economy of the United States.

During the past two years, over 1000 high schools in America have partnered with the Foundation to share with their students special DVDs and educational materials devel-

oped by the Foundation and its associates, The New York Times Upfront/Scholastic and Dewey Obenchain. Those DVDs depict the lives of individual American immigrants who, having started with little, have reached success in positions of leadership through intelligence, hard work and strength of character.

This year's selection of 14 new Fellows brings the total of American Dream Fellows to 43. The Fellows program provides 20,000 dollars over two years to outstanding immigrant students who are seniors in college. The stipend is used to "jump start" the Fellows' pursuit of their respective American Dreams. Fellows are nominated by the Foundation's 21 university "partners" because

of their academic performance, community leadership and their likely ability to contribute to America.

Several issue papers have been commissioned by the Foundation. The papers describe the fiscal and economic impact of immigration; the effect of immigration on the Social Security Trust Fund; the impact of immigration on employment; the relationship between immigration and crime; and the views of Americans on immigration throughout the nation's history. Positive commentary concerning the papers has appeared in the media throughout the nation and has come from government, business, academic and non-profit leaders.

What's Inside?

Marshall Kaplan, Editor of the American Dream Newsletter and Executive Director, Merage Foundation for the American Dream

In addition to Paul Merage's article above, which summarizes the progress of the Foundation, this issue of the American Dream newsletter provides brief profiles of the 2006 Merage American Dream Fellows and progress reports on many of our 2004 and 2005 Fellows. The Fellows program is unique. The journey of our Merage Fellows to America and their journey in America suggest courage, performance, achievement, and promise.

This newsletter also summarizes a recent

occasional paper by Stuart Anderson commissioned by the Foundation concerning the impact of immigration on employment. Mr. Anderson is President of the National Foundation for American Policy, a non-partisan think tank in Washington that focuses on immigration issues. He served as Executive Associate Commissioner for Policy and Planning and Counselor to the Commissioner at the Immigration and Naturalization Service under President George W. Bush. He also was an aide to Senator Spencer Abraham (R-Michigan) on the Senate Immigration Subcommittee and was Staff Director of the subcommittee for Senator Sam Brownback (R-Kansas). Mr. Anderson was a senior researcher at the Cato Institute.

Anderson in his paper indicates that determining the impact of immigration on employ-

ment and the economy is difficult because of the many variables involved. But if methodologies are used that link immigrant workers to related investment and specialization, the net effect of immigrant workers on jobs and the economy is likely positive. Further, Anderson reports that the net effect of immigrant workers on wage levels (particularly of native born high school dropouts and minority students) appears to be relatively small on either the upside or downside.

We hope this newsletter—as did the Foundation's previous newsletters—helps challenge readers to think about the impact of contributions made by immigrants to American life. The Foundation welcomes your comments on the content of the newsletter. Please e-mail me at mkaplan@meragefoundations.com.

The 2006 National Leadership Awards Luncheon

One of the Foundation's most important initiatives is the annual National Leadership Awards Luncheon. The Luncheon occurs every June. It honors nationally, indeed internationally, respected American leaders who came to the U.S. as immigrants.

This year on June 26, the Foundation will present its Leadership Awards to an outstanding group of recognized American leaders. They have lived the American Dream. They have made America a better place for each of us. They are:



VARTAN GREGORIAN
President, Carnegie Corporation of New York
Award for Leadership

in Education and Philanthropy

Dr. Vartan Gregorian was born in Iran, where he lived as a child before moving to Lebanon. He came to the United States in 1956 to begin his undergraduate studies at Stanford University. He finished his undergraduate studies in two years and was awarded a Ph.D. in history and humanities from Stanford in 1964. He is currently president of the prestigious Carnegie Corporation of New York. Prior to his current position, which he assumed in June 1997, he served for nine years as the president of Brown University. For eight years (1981-1989), Dr. Gregorian served as a president of the New York Public Library, an institution with a network of four research libraries and eighty-three circulating libraries. He has received many prestigious awards and honorary degrees. In 1998, President Clinton awarded him the National Humanities Medal. In 2004, President Bush awarded him the Medal of Freedom, the nation's highest civil award. He is the author of numerous publications including *The Road to Home: My Life And Times*; *Islam: A Mosaic, Not A*

Monolith; and *The Emergence of Modern Afghanistan, 1880-1946*. Dr. Gregorian currently serves on a number of boards, including the Institute for Advanced Study at Princeton, Human Rights Watch, The World Trade Center Memorial Foundation, and the Museum of Modern Art.



JENNY MING
President, Old Navy
Award for Leadership in Business and Community Service

Jenny Ming was born in Canton, China. When she

was three months old, her family fled Communist China and went to Macao. The family immigrated to the U.S. in 1964 and settled in San Francisco. She majored in clothing merchandising at San Jose State University and began working as an assistant manager at a Mervyn's department store in 1978. She joined Gap as a buyer in 1986 and rose quickly in the company to become a vice president after only three years. She helped launch Old Navy in 1994 and has been president of Old Navy since 1999. The company now has over 950 stores, and Old Navy had sales of \$6.8 billion in 2005. She has received numerous honors for her achievements. *BusinessWeek* has included her on its list of Top 25 Managers, and she was included in *Fortune* magazine's 2003 and 2004 lists of the 50 Most Powerful Women in American Business. She is a community leader whose efforts have helped expand the choices of those with few choices. She has served on the board of Big Brothers Big Sisters of San Francisco and the Peninsula. She now serves as a board member of the Committee of 100, a national non-partisan organization composed of American citizens of Chinese descent. Its goal is to enhance the quality of life for Chinese-Americans and to help address in a thoughtful way issues affecting U.S.-China relations.



CESAR PELLI
Principal, Pelli Clarke Pelli Architects
Award for Leadership in Architecture and Design

Cesar Pelli was born in Argentina, where he studied architecture before immigrating to the United States in 1952. While with Eero Saarinen, he served as Project Designer for the TWA Terminal at JFK Airport in New York and Morse and Stiles Colleges at Yale University. Working with DMJM and later Victor Gruen, he designed the Worldway Postal Center at Los Angeles International Airport, the Kukai Gardens in Honolulu, Hawaii, and the U.S. Embassy in Tokyo. In 1977, he was named Dean of Yale's School of Architecture, a position he held until 1984. Simultaneous with becoming Dean, he started his own firm, Cesar Pelli & Associates, now Pelli Clarke Pelli Architects. Because of his leadership and creativity, it has become one of the most respected architectural firms in the world. A large number of books and professional journals are dedicated to his designs and architectural concepts. He has received numerous honorary degrees and awards for design excellence. He is a Member of the American Academy of Arts and Letters and a Fellow of the American Institute of Architects. In 1995, the Institute awarded him its Gold Medal. The medal recognizes a lifetime of distinguished architectural and design achievements. In 2004, Mr. Pelli was awarded the Aga Khan Award for Architecture for the design of the Petronas Towers in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. He recently designed the Renée and Henry Segerstrom Concert Hall in Costa Mesa.

Last year's honorees were former Secretary of State Madeleine Albright, Nobel Prize winner Mario Molina, Pulitzer Prize winner and former editor of the New York Times, Max Frankel, and innovative entrepreneur and philanthropist Armando Codina. Each nominee has made and continues to make a positive impact on America. They have increased the quality of life and expanded the choices open to all of us.

2006 Merage Foundation for the American Dream Fellows

The Merage Foundation for the American Dream is proud to present our 2006 Fellows. Their life stories, goals, and accomplishments have inspired both the Foundation and our Partner Universities. The Foundation is certain that the Fellows' achievements will continue to have a positive impact upon their colleagues, their communities and the nation.



Oluwamuye Akinbote (University of Georgia).

Mr. Akinbote emigrated 15 years ago from Nigeria to America with his parents. He studied biology at the University of Georgia. His American Dream—to become a physician and serve under-privileged communities—is largely shaped by the disparities he experienced in health care when he came to America. He will use the Merage stipend to help finance his tuition at Loyola Medical School in Chicago.



Mae Bunagan (Harvard University).

Ms. Bunagan emigrated from the Philippines with her parents, brother and sister in 1993. She has been active in community organizations such as Habitat for Humanity and Youth Council for the Homeless. She studied social studies as well as women, gender and sexuality at Harvard. Ms. Bunagan plans to work with immigrant community organizations and to pursue a law degree.



Christine Chi-Yun Chiu (Massachusetts Institute of Technology).

Ms. Chiu emigrated from Taiwan 10 years ago with her parents and sister. She majored in chemical engineering at MIT, where she worked as a researcher at the Biological Engineering Lab and mentored under-privileged eighth-graders in science. She is an accomplished pianist. Before attending medical school, she intends to enroll in a music program and hopes to eventually teach music to immigrants. Ms. Chiu's American Dream includes using music as therapy for mental health patients.



Edo Duheric (University of Illinois, Chicago).

Mr. Duheric emigrated to America six years ago from Bosnia and Herzegovina with his family. He studied electrical engineering at the University of Illinois, Chicago. Mr. Duheric's career objectives include creating cleaner, safer alternative energies. His American Dream is to work at and eventually lead an organization whose purpose is to make energy more affordable, efficient and less damaging to the environment. The Merage stipend will finance his graduate studies.



Yevgeniya Elkina (Hunter College).

Ms. Elkina immigrated to America with her mother and brother from the former Soviet Union to escape religious persecution. She majored in math and minored in Spanish at Hunter. She was a National Science Foundation Scholar. Yevgeniya's American Dream is to earn her PhD in math education at Columbia University's Teachers College and eventually become an educational leader in an urban public school. The Merage stipend will help finance her tuition.



Robert Gonzalez (Princeton University).

Mr. Gonzalez was brought to the United States by his parents 17 years ago. He majored in politics at Princeton and worked as campaign chair in the University's Republican Club and as an executive member of the Board of the Law and Public Affairs Forum. He will attend Stanford Law School beginning in the fall of 2006. The Merage stipend will help finance his education and support his volunteer activities in the community.



Komal Joshi (Northwestern University).

Ms. Joshi emigrated to the U.S. from India 10 years ago. She majored in Biology at Northwestern. Her American Dream is to earn a joint MD/MBA and to

2006 Merage Foundation for the American Dream Fellows

eventually contribute to crafting policies that improve the quality and cost of healthcare. She has a particular interest in improving eye health in rural areas. The Merage stipend will enable her to accept internships that would enhance her knowledge of health care in relation to the underprivileged population.



Azim Karim
(University of Houston).

Mr. Karim immigrated to America 22 years ago from

Pakistan. He was a dual-major in biology and history at the University of Houston. While attending the University, his research experience included work with Baylor College of Medicine, Methodist DeBakey Heart Center and University of Texas Health Science Center. Mr. Karim's American Dream is to become a specialist in the field of cardio-vascular sciences.



Christine (Xiao) Ma
(University of California, Berkeley).

Ms. Ma emigrated from China 16 years ago with her parents. At Berkeley, she

majored in Spanish and psychology. She has been associated with Campus Crusade for Christ International and was a tutor at an elementary school. She will pursue a doctoral program at the University of California, Santa Barbara in social psychology. Her studies will be funded in part by the Merage stipend.

Vilma Palma (University of California, Irvine). Ms. Palma emigrated from El Salvador 11 years ago to America with her grandmother and two sisters to join her



mother. She majored in criminology, law and society at the University of California, Irvine. She has participated in leadership roles as

a member of the Latino Business Student Association, Lambda Theta Nu Sorority and SAGE Scholars. She plans to become an immigration lawyer and will attend law school at UCLA beginning in fall 2006.

Yuriy Teslyar (Stanford University).

Mr. Teslyar emigrated to the U.S. from Russia 14 years ago with his parents and grandmoth-



er. He majored in electrical engineering at Stanford with a concentration in computer hardware. He has worked as a software development

engineer for Amazon.com and a technical intern for Intel Corporation. Mr. Teslyar's American Dream is to create a company which uses technical knowledge and entrepreneurial passion to improve the quality of education in high schools. He intends to earn his MS in electrical engineering at Stanford.



Negin Yamini
(University of California, Los Angeles).

Ms. Yamini's emigrated 10 years ago from Iran to

America with her mother and sister following the Iranian Revolution. She was a double-major in history and Hebrew language at UCLA. Her numerous extracurricular activities during her time at UCLA included posi-

tions with the District Attorney's Office, the Legal Guardianship Clinic, Relief International, and the Office of the Lieutenant Governor. Negin would like to attend law school while continuing her public service in the area of immigration law.

Jeanette Ynfante (Fordham University).

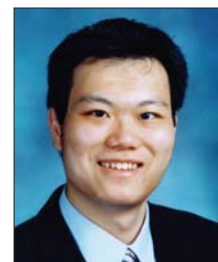
Ms. Ynfante emigrated to the U.S. with her parents and sister from the Dominican Republic in 1993. She grew up in the predomi-



nantly Hispanic area of the South Bronx. She was enrolled in a dual-major program at Fordham in political science and sociology and was a mem-

ber of the Pre-Law Society and Global Outreach. Her American Dream is to be a successful immigration attorney and to create a non-governmental organization which assists immigrants in the process of becoming new Americans. She will use the Merage stipend to finance her law school tuition.

Xiaolong Zhou (Harvard University).



Mr. Zhou emigrated with his parents to the U.S. from China 16 years ago. While in high school, he founded Tutoring for Success, the Miami

region's first summer math and science tutoring program. While attending Harvard as a biochemical sciences major, he founded the Harvard Geographic Society, directed the National Model UN, and directed the ASEAN Regional Forum. His American Dream is to attend medical school in New York City and become a physician who combines Western and Eastern medicine.

Catching Up with Our 2004 and 2005 Fellows

The Foundation is extremely proud of its 2004 and 2005 Fellows. They are an impressive group of bright and thoughtful individuals who are committed to improving the quality of life in the U.S. and the rest of the world. In the paragraphs below, we briefly summarize the progress of many of our Fellows.

2004 Fellows



Beverly Du (Harvard University) is currently finishing her second year at Harvard Medical School. She will begin rotations in the

hospitals in July. She has also been analyzing and compiling the data from research she conducted last summer on health behaviors and health knowledge in rural China. Before completing her medical duties, she will likely complete a masters in public health.



Wonha Kim (Princeton University) went on a medical mission trip to Iguape, Brazil, last summer. After returning from Brazil, she

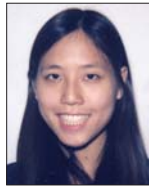
went to Seoul, South Korea, to do research on integrative medicine at the East-West Medical Center at Kyung Hee University. She returned to Johns Hopkins, where she completed her second year of medical school. She started doing clinical rotations in March of this year.



Elizabeth Kwo (Stanford University) is an M.D. candidate at Harvard Medical School. She has extensive

experience abroad, working as a Fulbright Scholar in Taiwan. She has also been involved in projects in Mexico, Ecuador,

and Peru. She created a program that has sent over 140 US students to work in Kanti Children's Hospital in Nepal. Elizabeth would like to run an international nonprofit organization that improves healthcare around the world.



Yanyan Lam (Massachusetts Institute of Technology)

completed her second year of law school at Harvard this year. At Harvard, she

worked closely with the international human rights clinical program, which enabled her to work with international NGOs on cases pending before the European Court of Human Rights and the Inter-American Court of Human Rights. She will be traveling to San Jose, Costa Rica in July to work for a human rights NGO.



Eun Lee (Massachusetts Institute of Technology) is finishing up her first year at Duke Medical School.

Beginning in August, Eun will start clinical rotations. She hopes to become involved in medical journalism by writing freelance articles and getting an internship at a national news agency.



Jenn Ma Pham (University of California, Irvine) is currently finishing up her first year of the Masters in Social Work program at UCLA.

She has been working at St. Vincent's Cardinal Manning Center on Skid Row in downtown Los Angeles as a case manager and coordinator of the Women's Emergency and Transitional Program. Jenn's summer plans include working at St. Vincent's Cardinal Manning Center with Hurricane Katrina survivors in Los Angeles.



Mona Mashayekhi (University of Chicago)

enrolled in the MD/PhD program at Washington University in St. Louis last

fall and has enjoyed getting to know that city. During her first year in medical school, she has focused on exploring human biology (particularly anatomy and pathology). She will work on a research project this summer at the university that will likely focus on the immunology of autoimmune diseases.



Hoang Luat Nhan (University of Washington)

is a second-year graduate student in the neuroscience graduate program at the

University of California, San Diego. Hoang's lab at the Salk Institute for Biological Studies investigates the computations that give rise to visual perception, and the results of her research will help explain how the brain is organized into efficient networks. She was recently selected as a 2006 National Science Foundation Graduate Fellow.



Clara Shih (Stanford University). After working for nine months last year in Google's strategy group, Clara was awarded a

Marshall Scholarship to study at Oxford University. Clara is now finishing a Master's degree in E-Learning, which she hopes will enable her more effectively lead Camp Amelia Technology Literacy Group, a nonprofit that provides technology for education in developing countries. Clara plans to return to the Bay Area this summer and join a small technology startup company.

Catching Up with Our 2004 and 2005 Fellows

2005 Fellows



Daniel Flores (University of California, Los Angeles). Daniel is directing his academic and professional goals towards medicine. Since his graduation from UCLA, Daniel has enrolled in chemistry and math courses at Pasadena City College and has been volunteering at St. Joseph Medical center in Burbank, California. Daniel will be attending California State University, Long Beach in the fall of 2006 to complete premedical requirements.



Mohamad Halawi (University of Houston) is finishing his fellowship at the National Institutes of Health (NIH). He has co-authored two journal publications, including one in *Nature Methods*, and was recognized with an award from the American Association for Cancer Research. Mohamad hopes to take advantage of his NIH experience by writing up his research results before starting his first year of medical school at Duke University this fall.



Qiao Liang (University of New Mexico) will be working in Japan on mathematical modeling of the spread of Avian Influenza from June to August as part of a program directed by the National Science Foundation and the Japanese Society for the Promotion of Science. When she returns to the United States, she will continue her master's program in applied math at University of New Mexico.



Svetlana Meyerzon (Harvard University) has completed her first year at Columbia Law School. She will be interning in the chamber of Hon. Sonia Sotomayor of the 2nd Circuit. She is also looking forward to taking a clinic next semester at Columbia—the Immigrant Children Representation Project—and representing undocumented immigrant children in self-petitions for asylum.



Eric Myukiyehe (University of Washington) was recently awarded two prestigious national fellowships from the U.S. Department of Education and the National Science Foundation. Eric and two of his colleagues also received a grant from the Swedish Government to conduct survey research on wartime and post-conflict experiences in Burundi with ex-combatants and non-combatants.



Onyi Offor (Harvard University) continues work on an immunohistochemistry laboratory at University College Hospital in Ibadan, Nigeria. She is also working in partnership with the Breast Cancer Association of Nigeria on a market outreach program in four urban areas in Nigeria. She will also work on a project to increase breast cancer awareness and care in Anambra state.



Carla Prieto (Columbia University) has spent much of the past year focused on bridge design, inspection, rehabilitation and management in her civil engineering program. In addition, she has continued to be an active

member of the American Society of Civil Engineers and the Structural Engineers Association of New York.



Alina Rekhtman (Princeton University) has been working with street children through a non-profit organization in Salvador da Bahia, Brazil. She engages in artistic education projects using dance, music and other artistic means to reach out to underprivileged youth. She plans to spend another year working with similar grassroots organizations in Rio de Janeiro before returning to the US to pursue her graduate studies in social entrepreneurship and international development.



Mayte Santacruz Benavidez (University of California, Irvine) is finishing up her first year of law school at the University of California, Berkeley. During the summer, she will be “externing” with Judge Consuelo Marshall in Los Angeles. After her eight-week “externship” ends, she will work for UC Irvine’s Student Scholar Transfer Institute.



Cindy Xi (Massachusetts Institute of Technology) has been a Neuroimaging Multicultural Research Fellow at the Boston University School of Medicine Division of Psychiatry and Center for Multicultural Training in Psychology (CMTP) since fall 2005. She is also a student of multicultural issues, particularly in relation to mental health, and plans to attend the University of Southern California School of Medicine beginning fall 2006.

The Debate over Immigration's Impact on U.S. Workers and the Economy

Stuart Anderson, Executive Director of the National Foundation for American Policy (see “What’s Inside” on page one for more biographical details on Mr. Anderson), in a paper commissioned by the Merage Foundation for the American Dream, indicates that the debate over the impact of immigration on U.S. workers and the U.S. economy has intensified in recent years. Competing methodologies produce competing conclusions.

Anderson’s paper reviews recent studies by respected scholars concerning the economic impact of skilled immigrants in the science, technology and engineering sectors. He also analyzes current studies regarding the impact of immigrants, in general, on U.S. workers.

Anderson notes that there is little evidence that U.S.-born workers are harmed by the entry of foreign-born professionals, including scientists and engineers (H-1B workers). Quoting Madeline Zavodny, an economist at the Federal Reserve Bank of Atlanta, “H-1B workers...do not appear to depress contemporaneous earnings growth.” Indeed, according to Zavodny, many of the results (of her study) seem to “indicate a positive statistically significant relationship.” Anderson adds that this means H-1B employment is associated with better job conditions for natives. This could be because H-1B professionals are complementary to U.S.-born professionals.

Wages for foreign-born and U.S. professionals are almost identical and sometimes higher in many science and math fields. Despite sometimes weaker language skills, foreign-born professionals do not appear to work for significantly less money and as a result do not appear to undercut wages. Moreover, according to research completed by Giovanni Peri and cited by Anderson, “the

relatively large positive effect of immigrants on the wages of native-born workers with a college degree or more is driven by that fact that creative, innovative, and complex professions benefit particularly from the complementarities brought by foreign-born scientists, engineers and other highly skilled workers.”

A vigorous debate has ensued concerning the impact of immigration on the wages and jobs of low income high school dropouts and minorities. George Borjas, a Harvard economist, indicated in a recent analysis that the immigrant influx of the 1980s and 1990s lowered the wage rate by 8.2 percent for high school dropouts and 3.8% for college graduates. While his findings were provocative, they have been criticized by many other economists. According to critics, Borjas uses a “static” methodology, one that does not take into account, for example, the economic stimulus caused by immigration, and leads to misleading results. Indeed, although not reported in the media, Borjas himself agrees that if the capital stock adjusts to increased labor supply there is barely a change in the wage of the typical worker. David Card, a University of California, Berkeley economist, indicates, “Although immigration has a strong effect on relative supplies of different skill groups, local labor market outcomes of low skilled natives are not much effected by relative supply shocks.” Diana Furchtgott-Roth, director of the Hudson Institute’s Center for Employment Policy suggests that “foreign-born workers complement rather than substitute for native-born workers because they have a different pattern of education and skills.” She argues that immigrants and U.S.-born workers are not perfect substitutes and contrary to Borjas, physical capital is not fixed and varies with



immigration. Gianmarco Ottaviano, University of Bologna, and Giovanni Peri, University of California, Davis, described immigration as having a “sizeable beneficial effect on the wages of U.S.-born workers.” Immigration, they found, increased the real wages of U.S.-born workers as a whole by approximately 1 percent between 1990 and 2000, and unlike the 8% decline in real wages of high school dropouts found by Borjas, only a 1.2 percent decline in high school dropout wages.

Clearly the debate concerning the economic, wage and job effects of immigration is not over. But it is fair to say that most economists who have looked at the subject seem to agree that there is relatively little negative impact and that there may be an overall positive impact on U.S.-born workers. Hopefully, in the near future economists can reach consensus on methodology and subsequently on findings, permitting policy makers to establish fair and consistent policies concerning immigration.

This paper is available at www.merage-foundations.com.



MERAGE FOUNDATION
FOR THE
AMERICAN DREAM

Merage Foundation for the American Dream
4350 Von Karman Avenue, Fourth Floor
Newport Beach, California 92660

For more information call Marshall Kaplan,
Editor, at 949-474-5882,
mkaplan@meragefoundations.com or
Erik Lee, Associate Editor,
(949) 474-5883,
elee@meragefoundations.com

Issue 5 ■ Volume 1 ■ June 2006

National Advisory Board

The Foundation's National Advisory Board is composed of outstanding Americans, many of whom are immigrants to the United States.

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The Foundation's Partner Universities are outstanding institutions of higher learning in areas of the country characterized by large immigrant populations and significant influxes of immigrants.

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| Boston University | University of California, Berkeley |
| Columbia University | University of California, Irvine |
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| Stanford University | |

