International House
Berkeley

To foster intercultural respect and understanding, lifelong friendships, and leadership skills for a more just and peaceful world.

An Extraordinary History
International House is like a ship. It does not belong to New York or Paris or any other great city in any part of the world, but it belongs to all of us who appreciate its purpose...Just as now, when we go on an adventure, we do not hamper ourselves with too many trunks and other pieces of baggage, so we do not carry onto this ship our trunks of worn-out prejudices and ideas about one another, but come on it free from encumbrances and ready for an adventure in living with folk.

–Mrs. Florence Edmonds, 1928

**ORIGINS**

International House Berkeley was part of the larger “International House Movement” founded by Harry Edmonds who, as a young man working for the Young Men’s Christian Association in 1909, had a chance meeting with a Chinese student. Edmonds’ casual “Good morning” on the steps of the Columbia University library provoked the startled response: I’ve been in New York three weeks, and you are the first person who has spoken to me. Moved by this experience, Edmonds investigated the situation of foreign students in New York City. Attempting to counter the loneliness and isolation of these students, Edmonds and his wife, Florence, started to have teas and Sunday Suppers in their home. By 1911, this practice led to the development of the Cosmopolitan College Club. By 1919, the Club included over 600 students representing more than 65 countries, and its activities consisted of excursions, social events, and housing assistance.

Convinced of the need to find a place where foreign and U.S. students could live together and thereby promote international understanding, Edmonds encouraged John D. Rockefeller Jr. to build International House in New York City. Funded by Mr. Rockefeller at a cost of $3 million, it opened in 1924 as a residence and program center, which served about 500 students. As its first director, Edmonds saw it as a place where people of diverse national and cultural backgrounds—without restrictions as to color, race, creed, or sex—could share the common experience of everyday life; a place where person-to-person contact would contribute to combatting ignorance, prejudice, and misunderstanding.

The immediate and exciting success of International House New York spurred Rockefeller to extend the idea. In 1926, Edmonds traveled west to evaluate possible locations for a second International House. Berkeley, California, was selected because the Bay Area was the U.S. point of entry from Asia and claimed the largest number of foreign students on the West Coast (in those days about 200).

John D. Rockefeller Jr.’s gift of $1.8 million to the University of California resulted in the opening of International House Berkeley in 1930. In a letter to University of California President Robert Gordon Sproul, Rockefeller outlined his reasons for the gift:

*The idea of the establishment of this institution on the Pacific Coast was suggested by the success of a similar one on the Atlantic Coast, in New York City, which has become well and favorably known throughout the world. By bringing together in unfettered cooperation the educated young people of all lands, many of whom will in years to come be leaders in their several countries, and by giving them the full opportunity for frank discussion on terms of equality, there is being performed, I believe, a service for the well-being of the world, the importance of which is difficult to over-value. International House is a laboratory for a new kind of experiment—the day-to-day practice of international fellowship among men and women.*

The Berkeley House, while owned by the university, was leased to a separate corporation whose Board of Directors, men and women of standing in the community, would be responsible for seeing that the purposes of the institution would be fulfilled.

Later in the ’30s, Rockefeller established similar institutions in Chicago and Paris. He hoped that contact between the Houses would facilitate an exchange of ideas and experiences that would assist the carrying out of a kindred purpose.
RESISTANCE TO INTERNATIONAL HOUSE IN BERKELEY

Allen C. Blaisdell, Edmonds’ former assistant in New York, was appointed in 1928 to be the first executive director of the Berkeley I-House. Blaisdell was a Phi Beta Kappa graduate of Pomona College, who developed his cross-cultural awareness during a teaching assignment in Japan. Soon after his appointment, Blaisdell encountered considerable resistance in the community. There was resistance to men and women living under one roof; there was hostility toward foreigners; and the notion that people of color would live with “whites” in an integrated setting was, to many, simply incredible. Many Berkeley landlords protested the construction of the House, fearing an influx of foreigners.

More than 800 people gathered in Berkeley to protest racial integration in the proposed International House. At that meeting, Delilah Beasley, a Black reporter for the Oakland Tribune, passionately defended the concept to a disgruntled and stunned audience. And it was Beasley who stood up to the protests of property owners who feared that I-House would cause Berkeley to be overrun with Blacks and Asians.

Allen Blaisdell noted that one of the purposes of the House was to draw foreign students—particularly Chinese, Japanese, Filipinos, and Indians—out of their semi-ghetto housing situations and into an international community.

When Harry Edmonds came to Berkeley to establish a site, he chose Piedmont Avenue, in part, because it was the home of fraternities and sororities, which then excluded foreigners and people of color. By proposing the site on Piedmont Avenue, Edmonds sought to strike bigotry and exclusiveness right hard in the nose.

Originally, the north side of the campus, an area ravaged by fire, was suggested, but Edmonds decided that this was the “back door” to the campus and insisted that

International House must be at the “front door.” Here on Piedmont Avenue, the House faced the Pacific and so brought a symbolic joining of West and East.

OPENING OF I-HOUSE BERKELEY

International House officially opened on August 18, 1930, with single rooms for 338 men and 115 women, primarily graduate students. It was the largest student housing complex in the Bay Area and the first coeducational residence west of New York City at the time, the University itself would not officially recognize coeducational housing. But because I-House was managed by a self-supporting corporation legally independent of the University, the coeducational concept became a reality.

The intercultural housing facility also raised fears in the community about “mixed marriages.” And, indeed, many of the first interracial and cross-national marriages in the area were “born” at I-House.
THE 1930S & EARLY 1940S

In the ’30s, I-House was one of the very few places in the Bay Area where Black people could gather comfortably in an integrated setting. When the barbers on campus refused to cut Black students’ hair, Allen Blaisdell protested and got the practice changed.

Many of today’s popular International House programs had their beginnings in the early years: “Sunday Suppers,” discussion groups, and speakers, for example. In the mid-1930s, a folk dance program began, and an elaborate yearly festival attracted people from all over the Bay Area. For decades, I-House alumni spoke with deep affection and respect for staff member Eugenie Carneiro, who was responsible for the festivals.

This time also witnessed the beginnings of I-House ties with Rotary Clubs and other community organizations. An “Understanding Through Hospitality” program was started by Estelle Carlson in the early 1940s to introduce foreign students to American life. Students visited families at home for the holidays and went on excursions to farms, factories, schools, and city council meetings. Local clubs were instrumental in helping organize such activities and in developing the first I-House resident scholarships for international students.

WORLD WAR II

As World War II approached, the House took on special meaning. University President Sproul, who was also President of the I-House Board, noted, ...All the forces of darkness, not even those led by Hitler... could prevail against I-House principles: There are no inferior people, there is no master race set apart from common humanity. Friendship still has a truer, juster speech than that which rings in the clash of arms or the clink of traders’ coins.

Sproul’s words to an I-House audience in the fall of 1941 were later echoed in the House itself after war broke out. Harold Gilliam, former resident and later feature writer for the San Francisco Chronicle, writes:

I remember watching the lights go out all over the Bay Area during air-raid blackouts. There we were, Americans, Japanese, Germans, Europeans, Asians, Africans, students whose homelands were on both sides of the war – literally and figuratively holding hands in friendship as the candles flickered and the news flashes of fighting came in from Honolulu, Manila, Singapore, and London.

This period was particularly difficult for students who were Japanese citizens. Because the U.S. Government froze funds and travel for Japanese nationals, they were unable to return home or provide for themselves here. Rising above national conflicts, I-House set up a bureau to help these young people reach their homes as soon as government regulations permitted. The bureau also helped them with their finances by locating employment opportunities.

In 1943, International House was rented to the U.S. Navy and renamed “Callaghan Hall.” It was occupied by 800-900 Navy students (nearly double the pre-war occupancy), most of whom were not allowed to use the elevators so that they could stay in shape! I-House, in turn, rented for its traditional students four or five fraternity houses, and organized customary programs and a central eating facility.
Moving to the fraternities caused I-House residents to give up the privacy of single rooms. Yet the sharing of rooms in close quarters seemed to promote greater understanding. Staff members wrote in the 1945 International House Quarterly of special friendships formed across culture and race:

A Chinese girl from Hawaii, a Black girl from the deep South, and a white girl requested to live together and set the pattern for other international rooms. For three terms, this first group lived together, and their room was always a center of activity.

Following the War, the Navy returned the building to I-House. The large infusion of returning U.S. veterans threatened to force a reduction of the foreign student program at the university. International House helped alleviate the problem by doubling up veterans with foreign students at its own facility. This took pressure off the university to reduce the number of students from abroad. University President Sproul addressed a meeting of the National Association of Foreign Student Advisors on this issue. Citing the example of International House Berkeley, he argued that it was not a question of the veterans or the foreign students, but both.

1946–1953 “THE GOLDEN AGE”

Of this uplifting and welcome post-war period, an I-House Board member writes:

The International House years 1946-53 are frequently referred to by residents of the time as “The Golden Age.”

The expression comes not from the fact that the residents of this period were rich—far from it. Many were World War II veterans living on the GI Bill of $125 per month, and even though a double room at I-House cost only $200 per semester, kitchen and dish washing jobs were at a premium and essential if these residents were to make it financially.
So, what made those years “Golden”? Friendships made on shared ski trips to Yosemite; the all-night conversations between British and Indian students who had gone through the pain of Indian independence; the heated discussions of the problem of the Middle East, which resulted in free speech becoming an established principle of the House; the men and women who met at the House and later became husband and wife; the patio talk that often lasted from lunch to the dinner hour; language tables and Council meetings where communication was often louder than it was perfect; the Festivals where students of six different countries danced the tarantella and hundreds of campus and community people came to watch, enjoy, and mingle.

The experience of living at International House influenced many in the way they have lived their lives and viewed the world.

—International House board member

So few foreign students had been studying in the U.S. between 1942-46 that to exchange ideas on a friendly international level was new and exciting for everybody. The International House motto “That Brotherhood May Prevail” was taken seriously and considered a personal and individual responsibility.

Scores of these “Golden Age” friendships have continued for over seven decades and have encircled the globe. The experience of living at International House influenced many in the way they have lived their lives and viewed the world.

THE INTERNATIONAL HOUSE ASSOCIATION

The successes of the Rockefeller-funded I-Houses in New York, Berkeley, Chicago, and Paris produced enthusiastic alumni who began to form groups around the world. November 10th, the International House of New York’s anniversary day, had become International House Day, an annual occasion for alumni of the Houses to gather in cities such as Stockholm, Oslo, Mexico City, Peking, Port-au-Prince, and Copenhagen.

By 1947, these alumni groups had become part of a large umbrella organization, the International House Association. Berkeley Executive Director Emeritus W. Sheridan Warrick describes the activities of the Association:

Founded under leadership that included David Rockefeller, the IHA sought to work toward the brotherhood of man by gaining better knowledge and understanding of the life and culture of all people and to cooperate with the International Houses and other organizations devoted to international understanding and world peace. By 1952, the IHA claimed forty-four chapters in twenty-seven countries.

Although IHA chapters around the world continued to be active for some years, escalating costs forced the central organization to terminate its activities in 1961. The International Houses Worldwide organization now carries on this important work of connecting I-Houses throughout the world.

THE LATE 1950S

In June 1957, the Berkeley House became the focus of a feature article in Holiday, then a well-known national magazine.

Written by an Armenian who had visited I-House, the article captures the magic and warmth of international living at the time:

In the evening, I would take my tray to one of the regional tables in the dining room and practice French or German or Spanish. And after dinner, there was always some interesting activity that increased my knowledge of the culture and thinking of other peoples. One night, Scandinavian students put on their school caps, and I sang with them a gay drinking song of Uppsala. Another evening, I watched Japanese perform their coal-miners’ dance, then do a hilarious skit about their family mores.

On another, I listened to a debate between Americans and representatives of the British Commonwealth:

“Resolved, That the United States be allowed to rejoin the Empire,” with Americans upholding the affirmative
and Commonwealth students the negative. The latter insisted that any country which uses tea bags cannot possibly be considered for admission to the Commonwealth.

With the nostalgic feeling of being one of them, I mixed with the foreign students. Bengu Oskay, a Turkish girl, sometimes poured my coffee or tea. “Sabahiniz hayırlı olsum,” “May your morning be felicitous,” I would greet her. “Allaha ismarladık,” “I leave you to God,” she would say when I left the dining room, or when we parted after a chat in the Great Hall. I came to America from Istanbul, where she was born; she had lived in my hometown, Trebizond. I had never talked with a Turkish girl before; it was impossible in my homeland. But there were no barriers between Turks and Armenians here.

THE 1960S AND 1970S

In 1961, Allen Blaisdell, who served the House for 31 years, retired. W. Sheridan “Sherry” Warrick, appointed as I-House’s second executive director, had previously served as the Berkeley campus foreign student advisor, assistant dean of students, and as a member of the History Department at the UC Davis campus. Like Blaisdell, Warrick continued to serve as the foreign student advisor while managing House affairs. Whereas the ‘60s brought considerable turbulence to the campus during the “Free Speech” and anti-war movements, the House remained relatively quiet. There were, of course, the usual debates, which included intense discussions about the campus controversies. But the House itself was not directly embroiled in the campus conflicts, perhaps because it was already a “Free Speech” institution.

One resident from 1964 to 1966 observed that the campus crisis had significant impact upon the views of many residents. On the one hand, some from abroad were shocked and dismayed to witness what they perceived as police abuses in a democratic society; others were amazed to see a degree of free expression unknown in their societies.

With world politics and controversies a central concern of students, I-House became an extraordinary place from which to view the momentous events of the time. An alumna from 1968-1969 writes:

“What I learned in the library and from my professors came alive when I returned “home” each evening to International House. Over the dinner table, I remember having lively political discussions about Sihanouk with a member of his family, discussing the Vietnam conflict with students from South-East Asia, hearing of the Biafran war from an Ibo Ph.D. candidate. Around the TV each evening, students from over sixty countries listened to Walter Cronkite conclude: “And that’s the way it is.” But I learned from my I-House friends that maybe it was not necessarily ‘that’ way.
The spirit of the '60s, which encouraged more student involvement in campus administration, was reflected at I-House. Residents were invited to serve for the first time as observers at Board meetings. By the early '70s, representative residents became Board members with full voting privileges.

During this period, the Resident Council gained a significantly broadened role. Whereas its activity had been limited to assistance in the shaping of resident programs and activities, it now provided input for the formulation of House policies.

Until the late '60s, male and female sleeping quarters were strictly segregated, the men in the east part of the building, and the women in the west, on the third and fourth floors. While females had restricted visiting privileges in the male quarters, men were barred from visiting the female section.

Then, the present library was divided into two sections, the west wing, serving as a women's lounge, and the east wing, reserved for male relaxation. But “the times they were a changing.” A group of residents ingeniously removed the doors separating male and female sleeping quarters. Soon after, the male and female lounges were integrated. The result: the renovated library we know today.

Until the late '60s, I-House had provided maid service; rooms were cleaned regularly and beds were made daily. But growing resident sensitivity to the issue of privacy, together with escalating residential cost led to the elimination of maid service.

Another major event occurred in 1964 when the House received a gift of $300,000 from David Rockefeller. While most of the funds were earmarked for renovations and capital improvements, about $35,000 was set aside, pursuant to Mr. Rockefeller's suggestion, to launch a community fundraising program. Today's Development/ Alumni Relations Office owes its initial inspiration to the generosity and vision of Mr. Rockefeller.

The mid '70s saw the decline and eventual cessation of Sunday Suppers, a House tradition and ritual which did not respond to student tastes of the time. It was not until the early '80s that the tradition begun by Harry Edmonds in 1911 was revived at the Berkeley House.

In 1974, the House tradition of free speech came under attack. A number of controversial programs about the Middle East were felt by some to be culturally and politically offensive. This provoked a lively debate about what kinds of presentations and programs were suitable at International House. In the end, the I-House Board of Directors reaffirmed the principle of free speech while underlining the crucial House policy of encouraging mutual respect and tolerance in the expression of differing views.

As in the past, the House welcomed distinguished visitors and speakers. Among those who came to I-House were U.N. Secretary General U Thant; former U.S. Ambassador to the U.N. Adlai Stevenson; Senator Edward Kennedy; former California Governor “Pat” Brown; the then future
THE 1980S & THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY

Toward the end of the ‘70s, the House began to prepare for its 50th anniversary, the occasion of the largest fundraising drive in the institution’s history. Under the dedicated leadership of Board member Bill Slusser, the House Board, administration, and alumni raised almost $2 million in two years. The 50th anniversary capital campaign, which included a $500,000 gift from the Chevron Corporation, was driven by the need for capital improvements, code corrections, and renovations. The result was the renovation of all public rooms and administrative offices. In addition, the Great Hall and Auditorium underwent extensive renovation, painting, and seismic reinforcement. The anniversary was formally celebrated in 1980 with the visit and speech of I-House alumnus and world renowned economist John Kenneth Galbraith.

As the Berkeley House entered its sixth decade, its relationships with other International Houses were broadened. In addition to its ongoing communication with the Houses of New York and Chicago, the Berkeley House began to participate in a new series of international conferences with the leaders of Houses in the U.S., France, Great Britain, Canada, Australia, and Japan. These international conferences have promoted an exchange of ideas and the establishment of other international houses worldwide.

After 26 years of service, W. Sheridan Warrick retired in September 1987. In recognition of his long and dedicated service, the Regents of the University of California bestowed Warrick with the honorary status of executive director emeritus.

In late 1987, Joe Lurie was appointed I-House’s third executive director. A former Peace Corps volunteer in Kenya, Joe subsequently directed programs in Africa and Europe for the School for International Training and served as Vice President and COO for AFS Intercultural Programs. The year 1989 was highlighted by a visit and concert by famed balladeer Burl Ives, himself an alumnus of I-House, New York. He charmed residents and alumni with his songs and reminiscences of I-House New York, where he once served as night watchman. The House also welcomed over 100 of the finest young musicians from the U.S. and the Soviet Union. The Soviet-American Youth Orchestra’s performance and stay at the House permitted residents to experience glasnost up close.

The end of the decade witnessed an expansion of fundraising efforts, which focused on the need to increase financial aid for needy residents. Two generous grants from the Bernard Osher Foundation permitted the House for the first time to extend needed financial assistance to U.S. nationals, especially multicultural students.

As a result, residents from 60 countries now had a better opportunity to understand U.S. diversity while increasing numbers of U.S. residents from multicultural backgrounds were exposed to other cultures. A young Chicano resident, for example, helped to dispel stereotypes and ignorance about Chicanos among residents from Latin America. At the same time this young man—an Osher grant recipient—was introduced through his Japanese roommate to a host of new ideas and perspectives.

Financial assistance for residents from abroad was given a boost at the first fundraising gala in House history. The 1989 celebration, which honored alumnus W. Michael Blumenthal—former U.S. Secretary of the Treasury—netted over $40,000, most of it earmarked for resident scholarships. When Mr. Blumenthal returned to I-House for this event, he went straight to the kitchen, proudly showing his family where he once worked and washed dishes with Ali Bhutto, who later became Pakistan’s first Prime Minister.
Despite protests, International House opens its doors as the first coeducational, interracial living center west of the Hudson River. Dedicated to intercultural friendship and peace, I-House is the second of four Houses funded by John D. Rockefeller Jr. and founded by Harry Edmonds. Allen Blaisdell is the first Executive Director of I-House, serving from 1930 to 1961. Throughout his tenure, he fights racial discrimination and bravely denounces the internment of Japanese Americans during World War II. I-House is one of the very few places in the Bay Area where people of diverse ethnic backgrounds can gather comfortably in an integrated setting.

**August 18, 1930**

The Coffee Shop (now known as the I-House Cafe) is a popular place to meet people from around the world.

**1930**

There were many activities when we mixed with all residents... dances on Friday night, folk dancing with a professional teacher, and the remarkable festivals produced by Eugenie Carneiro. We even had an I-House chorus.

**1930s**

W. Sheridan Warrick is appointed Executive Director following the retirement of Allen Blaisdell. Throughout the turbulence of the '60s and '70s, Warrick maintains I-House as a home for peace, understanding, and free speech.

**1950s**

Joe Lurie, a former Peace Corps volunteer, is appointed the third Executive Director. He inaugurates gala fundraising celebrations, inspires a PBS documentary, and writes an I-House history. His favorite maxim illustrating I-House's important mission is: The stranger sees only what he knows.

**1952–55**

Students from around the world watched as the Berlin Wall came tumbling down. I realized how many of us at I-House had taken down the walls within ourselves. The world was not only changing on the screen – it was changing through us at I-House.

Bonnie Wasserman (IH 1989-90)

**1961**

Scholarship funding is spurred by the 60th and 65th anniversary galas honoring David Rockefeller and Arun Sarin (IH 1975-78). Joe Lurie initiates summer Elderhostel programs.

**1988**

Joe Lurie leads the successful $10.6 million 75th Anniversary Campaign to fund scholarships, renovations, and programs. Steven Rockefeller is honored at the 75th anniversary gala.

**1989**

Martin Brennan is appointed the fourth Executive Director. The UCB alum and former ambassador brings more than 30 years of international affairs experience and initiates Navigating Cultures, the first for-credit UC class offered by I-House.

**1990–96**

Despite the economic downturn, I-House awards 20% of residents with scholarships to ensure cultural and socio-economic diversity, made possible by the generosity of I-House alumni and friends.

**2004 - 07**

Transforming one of the last public spaces at I-House that was not accessible to those with mobility challenges, the Clarence E. Heller Patio Access Ramp is completed in August.

**2007**

Global Homecoming features presentations by CILP, an international fashion show, and opportunities for alumni and residents to mingle over international cuisine prepared by residents and the Dining Commons staff.

**2015**

Through the support of donors and a grant from Eric (IH 1976-80) and Wendy (IH 1978-80) Schmidt, the Dining Commons Transformation Project (DCTP) is completed in August. The renovations increased energy efficiency, upgraded equipment, and provided more engagement between residents and kitchen staff.

**2017**

**2018**
International House is “drafted” by the U.S. Navy, renamed “Callaghan Hall” and is occupied by 800-900 Navy cadets—nearly double the pre-war occupancy.

During the Callaghan Hall years, I-House residents live in five fraternity houses. This is the first time I-House residents shared rooms and many enjoy the close friendships of roommates.

The AFSC and ACLU ask residents to test a Berkeley ordinance prohibiting restaurants and bars from refusing service to people of color. Residents get establishments fined and others closed. No bar or restaurant would dare refuse service again.

Many students are veterans, some are refugees, resistance fighters, and Holocaust survivors.

1943–46
Students remove the doors separating the men’s and women’s sections of the House, and Warrick chooses to ignore the transgression. Soon after, the men’s and women’s lounges are integrated, forming today’s library.

In 1974, the I-House tradition of free speech comes under attack after controversial programs on the Middle East provoke debate about programs at I-House. The Board reaffirms the free speech policy and the traditions of mutual respect.

Alumni and friends support the 50th Anniversary Capital Campaign, resulting in renovations to the Auditorium, Great Hall, and administrative offices.

1943–46
During the Callaghan Hall years, I-House residents live in five fraternity houses. This is the first time I-House residents shared rooms and many enjoy the close friendships of roommates.

1946–47

As a new access ramp is constructed, residents Victor Pineda (IH 1999-2000) and Daniel Florio (IH 1993-96) become activists for disability rights and serve on a U.N. committee promoting the rights and dignity of persons with disabilities worldwide.

1969

Rotary World Peace Scholars release doves at a Celebration of Peace in remembrance of 9/11/2001. Being Middle Eastern, following 9/11, I was subjected to a lot of hate. My experience with my American roommate was soul changing. At I-House, fear of “the other” is shattered, and hate turns into understanding.

-Zahra Makoui (IH 2002-03)

1970s

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1980
The first nine Gateway Scholarship recipients begin their Ph.D. studies at UCB while living at I-House through an unprecedented partnership with campus.

1997
The beloved tradition of Sunday Supper, established in 1910 by I-House founder Harry Edmonds, continues today. Held four times each year, Sunday Supper includes a speaker and entertainment provided by talented residents.

2002
In July 2012, Dr. Hans C. Giesecke begins his service as the fifth Executive Director of International House. His focus is on making the I-House residential experience a top highlight of their time at Berkeley.

2003
CILP, The Robertson Center for Intercultural Leadership & Programs launches as a center for training and research to advance leadership, understanding, and collaboration across cultures for corporate, non-profit, government, and education sectors.

2009
In keeping with tradition, the Program Office hosts their signature Coffee Hour event virtually, where residents could chat while enjoying coffee no matter where in the world they were. Despite limited in-person social interactions during the Covid-19 Pandemic, I-House strives to provide a sense of community.

2012
In August 2020, Shaun R. Carver is appointed as the sixth Executive Director of International House, navigating I-House through the unprecedented closure due to Covid-19 and major building improvements in preparation for reopening.

2013
International House re-opens in August 2021 after closing for over a year in order to protect staff and students during the Covid-19 Pandemic.

2020

2021

In August 2020, Shaun R. Carver is appointed as the sixth Executive Director of International House, navigating I-House through the unprecedented closure due to Covid-19 and major building improvements in preparation for reopening.

International House re-opens in August 2021 after closing for over a year in order to protect staff and students during the Covid-19 Pandemic.
THE 1990S

The first gala was to set the stage for the 60th Anniversary Celebration in 1990, when I-House welcomed and honored David Rockefeller for his family’s vital contributions which made the I-House idea a reality. Members of the Rockefeller family were joined by relatives of I-House founder, Harry Edmonds.

The 1990s were marked by an emphasis on securing significant outside support to strengthen financial aid, intercultural, and building renovation programs. Thanks to a notable increase in giving from alumni, along with major support from a variety of foundations and corporations, the House was successful in implementing a variety of new initiatives. Consistent with its commitment to socioeconomic diversity, the financial aid program grew from about 30 recipients annually in 1989 to over 100 by the turn of the century.

On the programmatic side, our intercultural collection of books, videos, and other materials grew in important ways. These materials helped fuel an expanded speakers program, bringing residents to local schools and civic organizations. Annual international festivals involving performances, cultural displays, and food from around the world were very popular, attracting thousands of visitors from the community.

The most ambitious and necessary work during the 1990s and the first few years of the 21st century was to begin a comprehensive, aesthetically sensitive renovation of our aging facility. From 1995 through the summer of 2003, about 75% of the building was renovated, which included seismic safety improvements, provisions for internet access in all resident rooms, enhanced access for the physically challenged, and major improvements to the dining room.

The 75th Anniversary was toasted in 2005 by alumni, friends, and two of three Executive Directors who guided the house over three-quarters of a century: Sheridan Warrick (top row with bow tie 1961-1987) and Joe Lurie (front row, 4th from right, 1988-2007).

THE 2000S

The beginning years of the 21st century were marked by the production and release of a national television documentary about the history and influence of the House over seven decades. It was seen on public television outlets throughout the United States.

The events of September 11, 2001 underscored the continued importance of the mission of International House in the 21st century. Residents of this era were responsible for helping create new security systems within the House and creating a debate club that explored important themes of the times, ranging from conflicts in the Middle East to Bay Area legislation on same-sex marriages. As a direct result of 9/11, the offices of Services for International Students and Scholars, long housed within I-House, were expanded to support UC Berkeley students from outside the U.S. who were confronting new challenges navigating visa and immigration services.

75 YEARS OF CULTURAL UNDERSTANDING


Under the guidance of the Board of Directors and a Campaign Leadership Committee, the Anniversary Campaign sought an unprecedented $10.6 million
in contributions from alumni, friends, corporations, and foundations, in order to pursue four crucial objectives for the future of the House. These were the aims: to preserve and protect the building for new generations; to provide scholarships to ensure continued socioeconomic as well as geographic diversity among residents; to support diverse ongoing cross-cultural programs; and to invest in technological and communications resources for residents and alumni in service to the House’s mission.

The principal campaign focus was to preserve the building so the traditions and transforming impact of cross-cultural living experiences at International House would flourish in the decades ahead. Six million dollars of the campaign’s goal was dedicated to efforts to replace original piping and ventilation systems servicing the restroom and shower facilities throughout the House, while simultaneously improving amenities for persons with disabilities. A resident room-naming opportunity was introduced to encourage supporters to participate in the campaign, as was a brick-inscription program for the International House Café patio.

Additional Anniversary Celebrations brought together hundreds of alumni and friends at the House. A special Valentine’s event in 2006 drew dozens of couples from a compiled list of over 1,000 documented marriages among I-House alumni throughout its history. The 75th Anniversary Gala in 2006 welcomed Steven C. Rockefeller, grandson of House benefactor John D. Rockefeller Jr., who highlighted how timely the mission of the House remains and its relevance in his work on the worldwide Earth Charter Initiative.

In July 2012, Dr. Hans C. Giesecke began his service as the fifth executive director of International House.
Dr. Giesecke’s principal focus was on the I-House residential experience. The Robertson Center for Intercultural Leadership and Programs was launched in 2013 as a center for training and research to advance leadership, understanding, and collaboration across cultures. Through the support of I-House Board Vice Chair Emeritus Peter Robertson, I-House Programs were incorporated into CILP, and the combined efforts operated as the Robertson Center for Intercultural Leadership and Programs. CILP is a functional department within I-House with a charter to strengthen and enhance the preparation of the next generations of international leaders for many years to come.

In recent years, CILP's service offering has expanded to include practical training and lifelong learning opportunities in innovation and leadership in global diversity, equity, and inclusion. CILP training has served I-House residents, alumni, non-profits, businesses, educational institutions, and governmental agencies.

Through the support of donors and a challenge matching grant from Eric Schmidt (IH 1976-80) and Wendy (Boyle) Schmidt (IH 1978-82), the Eric and Wendy Schmidt Dining Commons received extensive renovations in the mid 2010s to increase energy efficiency, upgrade outdated equipment, and provide more engagement between residents and kitchen staff.

The Clarence E. Heller Patio Access Ramp was completed in 2017, transforming one of the last public spaces at I-House that was not accessible to those with mobility challenges. Global Homecoming events, preserving the legacy of the Edith Coliver Festival of Cultures, featured presentations by CILP, crowd-favorite international fashion shows, and opportunities for alumni and residents to mingle over international cuisine prepared by residents and the Hospitality team. Rounding out the decade, in 2019 the Program Office launched the first I-House resident storytelling podcast, From All Corners.

THE 2020S - THE TENTH DECADE

With the onset of the COVID-19 global pandemic, the Board of Directors, the senior management team, and the dedicated staff of International House Berkeley worked tirelessly to keep I-House open and available for the housing and dining needs of our diverse community through the 2019-20 academic year. On July 17, 2020, the Board of Directors unanimously decided to suspend I-House operations temporarily in order to protect and maintain the health and safety of the residents and staff.

In August 2020, Shaun R. Carver was appointed the sixth executive director of I-House, with a wealth of experience to the position. With over twenty years of leadership in international education and a lifetime of living and working in intercultural environments, he was committed to maintaining the I-House community through crisis, reopening safely, and leading the way into our tenth decade.

The year 2020 was bittersweet as the House celebrated the 90th anniversary of its opening, and noted artist David Goines created a beautiful commemorative poster. The continuing prevalence and uncertainty of the pandemic led to the extension of the temporary closure of I-House for the entire 2020-21 academic year. Many staff were sadly but necessarily laid off or reassigned elsewhere on campus because of the closure.

I-House worked to connect continuing and prospective residents impacted by the closure through such innovations as a virtual Coffee Hour, Zoom salons with the executive director, and the first-ever virtual Global Homecoming to maintain the I-House community during
the closure. Many necessary health and safety upgrades and revised protocols were put in place during the closure, including the establishment of an isolation wing on the second floor in the space formerly occupied by the Berkeley International Office. The financial impact of closure was formidable, yet the generosity of alumni and friends enabled I-House to survive, though the challenge of rebuilding our reserves is now established as an imperative for the future.

In fall 2021, after a remarkable year of upheaval, resilience, renewal, and reimagining, I-House reopened to welcome a complement of new and returning residents from 64 countries and 86 areas of study to create and experience the magic of I-House anew. I-House embarked upon a Global Community Initiative seeking to facilitate connections between alumni, and between alumni and residents, with an engagement and mentoring platform ihberkeleyconnect.org.

**THE LEGACY**

As national frontiers blur, and as walls and curtains between nations come down, diverse peoples are being thrust together to an extent never imagined. Looking to the 21st century, International House is likely to welcome increasing numbers of students from different ethnic backgrounds and cultures for decades isolated by ideology, geographic, or religious conflict. Together, under one roof, they will join an international community and will be, like a former resident observed, forever changed:

*We came to grips with each other as real entities, not images on travel posters. We had to deal with the realities of our own ethnocentrism, and not abstractly either ... one in which we were bent, hurt, delighted, enlightened, CHANGED ... in short, one in which we grew.*

Harry Edmonds’ chance encounter with a lonely Chinese student in 1909 helped create an institution where university students from around the country and across the seas could find a vibrant international home where, as a Turkish resident states, *you never feel like you are a foreigner.*

Now, in the tenth decade after its establishment, I-House Berkeley counts among its residents the children, grandchildren, nieces, and nephews of former residents. They had heard from relatives about the Sunday Suppers, national festivals, language tables, distinguished speakers, intercultural discussions, and Coffee Hours. These I-House traditions of international fellowship will form the basis of their House memories and the stories they will tell to their children.

**I-HOUSE ARCHITECTURE & FURNISHINGS**

The architect responsible for International House Berkeley was George W. Kelham, who played a leading role in the construction of San Francisco’s Palace Hotel, Public Library, Civic Center, and Federal Reserve Bank. International House was Kelham’s essay in Spanish Colonial Revival, a style chosen because it was thought to be indigenous to California. Much of the architecture and design of the House reflects the Moorish influence upon Spanish culture. Some specific reflections of Spanish influence include: the iron chandeliers in the Great Hall and dining room; the domed tower; the balconies; the dining room’s sunken patio; and the extensive use of painted tile.

The decorative painting and furnishings of the House also reflect a Spanish style with Moorish influences. The Great Hall’s ceiling was originally hand painted to resemble the fir or pine wood ceilings commonly found in Spain. And the Home Room ceiling is said to be an adaptation of that in the anteroom to the capitol chapel in the Cathedral of Toledo, Spain.
In the Chevron Auditorium, tiny patterns in black and white upon the rafters and beams are painted replicas of those found in the finest mother-of-pearl and ebony ceilings of Spain.

Since 1990, on average, over $1 million has been invested annually in restoration or renovation of the House.

THE I-HOUSE EXPERIENCE

Hundreds of testimonials from former residents speak to the transforming power of the I-House experience. John D. Rockefeller Jr.’s prophetic vision of a House with influence that would extend beyond the campus, the state, and the country into many nations is aptly suggested by alumnus Dr. Abdelkader Abbadi, former U.N. Deputy Director of Political and Security Council Affairs:

I-House is an institution which prepares generations of young men and women for a world characterized by interdependence in practically every field, by nations and peoples increasingly stretching their hands towards each other across oceans and frontiers. I owe a great deal to I-House which prepared me so well for an exciting and challenging task at the United Nations.

TOWARD I-HOUSE’S CENTENNIAL
A Message from Shaun Carver, Executive Director

The world has changed radically since 1930, yet International House is more relevant than ever as we move toward our centennial. Changing the age-old patterns of distrust, lack of mutual respect, and the attendant societal ills of conflict, racism, and intolerance inspires all of us to preserve and to expand the I-House movement. I-House’s mission to foster intercultural respect, understanding, lifelong friendships, and leadership skills to promote a more just and peaceful world is indeed both a powerful catalyst for change and a set of ideals worthy of preservation. I-House relies on philanthropic support from alumni, foundations, corporations, and friends to provide room and board scholarships for students with financial need, preserve our historic home, strengthen program offerings, and position for the future. I-House is such a powerful idea, with an almost 100-year track record of compelling excellence in opening minds and broadening perspectives among the next generation of leaders from throughout the world.

As a key part of my position, I have the pleasure of listening directly to the residents, alumni, friends, and supporters who visit I-House or write in with their valuable insights, remembrances, and gifts to keep the I-House dream alive today, tomorrow, and forever.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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Shaun R. Carver, Executive Director
June 2022
Notable Alumni

Among the tens of thousands of individuals who have lived at International House, there are many who have achieved prominence in areas of intellectual, political and social life. Today’s residents share meals in the dining room, relax in the Great Hall, and participate in events as did these distinguished alumni, some of whom are listed below with positions they hold or have held:

Trail Blazers

Daima Lockhart Clark (IH 1938-39)- Scholar of African philosophy and religion
Edith Simon Coliver (IH 1940-03)- First woman Field Office Director for the Asia Foundation. The annual Festival of Cultures at International House was endowed by Coliver and is dedicated in her memory
Maggie Gee (IH 1950-01)- Physicist at Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory, one of the first Chinese-American women pilots
Sergio Alejo Rapu Haoa (IH 2001-03)- First native islander to serve as governor of Easter Island
Wendell Lipscomb (IH 1947-08)- First African American to complete residency at Kaiser Hospital, psychiatrist, trainer of Tuskegee Airmen
Hugh Macbeth, Jr. (IH 1941-44)- Lawyer and Advocate of Japanese Americans
Pauli Murray (IH 1944-45)- Attorney, poet, first African-American woman Episcopalian Minister
Sandee Pandey (IH 1992)- Recognized for his commitment to transforming India’s marginalized poor
Victor Santiago Pineda (1999-20)- Disability rights activist
Emmett Rice (IH 1947-48)- Berkeley’s first African-American firefighter and later a member of Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve Board
Wendy Schmidt (IH 1978-80)- Business woman and philanthropist
Julianne Cartwright Traylor (IH 1968-69)- Chair of Amnesty International USA, first African-American woman to hold this position
Khatharya Um (IH 1983-88)- Associate Professor of Asian Studies, UC Berkeley, first Cambodian woman in the U.S. to earn a doctorate
Delbert Wong (IH 1940)- First Chinese American Judge in the continental U.S.

Nobel Laureates

Melvin Calvin (IH 1937-08)- Nobel Prize in Chemistry 1961
Owen Chamberlain (IH 1940-01)- Nobel Prize in Physics 1959
Willis Lamb (IH 1931-38)- Nobel Prize in Physics 1955
Julian Schwinger (IH 1939-40)- Nobel Prize in Physics 1965
Glenn Seaborg (IH 1934-35 non resident member)- Nobel Prize in Chemistry 1951
Sir Geoffrey Wilkinson (IH 1946-50)- Nobel Prize in Chemistry 1973

Royal Families

Haakon Magnus (IH 1995-98)- Crown Prince of Norway
Laurent Benoit Baudouin (IH 1997)- Prince of Belgium

Ambassadors

Ali Abdullah Alireza (IH 1941)- Ambassador of Saudi Arabia to the U.S.
Martin Brennan (IH 2007-2012)- I-House Executive Director
John Kenneth Galbraith (IH 1931-32)- Professor of Economics at Harvard, author, and Ambassador to India
Robert C.F. Gordon (1931-02)- U.S. Ambassador to Mauritius
Heraldur Kroyer (IH 1941-42)- Ambassador of Iceland to the U.S.
Abdul Majid (IH 1934-40)- Ambassador of Afghanistan to U.S.
Michael Okeyo (IH 1960s)- Ambassador of Kenya to the U.S.
Andres Petricevic (IH 1960s-70s)- Bolivian Cabinet Member and Ambassador to the U.S.
Joao Baptista Pinheiro (IH 1940s)- Ambassador of Brazil to the U.S.
Theogene Rudasingwa (2005-06)- Ambassador to the U.S. for the Republic of Rwanda and VP of Global Affairs at the Pangea Global AIDS Foundation
Kenneth Taylor (1957-59)- Canadian Ambassador to Iran
Irving Tragen (IH 1943-47)- Diplomat and 2010 Citation Award Winner
Andrew Young (IH 1983-85)- U.S. Ambassador to Burkina Faso

United Nations Staff

Abdelkader Abbadi (IH 1963-67)- U.N. Deputy Director for Political Affairs, United Nations
Jan Egeland (IH 1983)- U.N. Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs
Takehiro Nakamura (IH 1990-92)- U.N. Environment Programme Officer
Sadako Nakamura Ogata (IH 1956-57)- U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees

Public Service

Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, Prime Minister of Pakistan, non-resident member and dining room staff
W. Michael Blumenthal (IH 1947-49)- Secretary of the Treasury, U.S., former dining room staff colleague of Ali Bhutto (above)
Jerry Brown (IH 1960-61)- Governor of California, Mayor of Oakland
Cho Soon (IH 1960-61)- Mayor of Seoul, Korea and Former Deputy Prime Minister
Jeymoon Chung (IH 1955-56)- National Assemblyman and Chair of Foreign Relations Committee, Korea
Vernon Ehlers (IH 1956-58)- Representative to Congress from Michigan
Adriana Gianturco (IH 1947-49)- Director of the Department of Transportation in California
Laura Castillo Sena de Gurfinkel (IH 1958-62)- Minister of Education, Venezuela
Pyoung Hoon Kim (IH 1956-57 and 1991-92)- Senior Protocol Secretary to the President, Republic of Korea
Oona King (IH 1989-90)- Member of Parliament, U.K.
Tetsuo Kondo (IH 1954-55)- Minister of Labor in Korea
Wissanu Kreangam (IH 1970)- Deputy Prime Minister, Thailand
Robey Lal (IH 1967-68)- Country Manager for The International Air Transport Association (IATA) in India.
Mauricio Cardenas Santa Maria (IH 1987)- Minister of Economic Development, Colombia
Milton Marks (IH 1949)- California state Assemblyman and Senator
Sudarmo Martonagoro (IH 1950-52)- Foreign Minister of Indonesia
Widjojo Nitisastro- Minister of State, Indonesia
Ogbonnaya Onu (IH 1977-80)- Governor of Abia, Nigeria, and presidential candidate
Sir Desmond Rea (IH 1966-67)- Chairman of the Northern Ireland Policing Board
Elsie Gardner Ricklefs (IH 1938-39)- Chair of Hupa Tribe, California
Martin Rosen (IH 1953-55)- Co-founder and President, Trust for Public Land
Emil Salim (IH 1962)- Indonesian Minister for Population and Environment, Professor of Economics, University of Indonesia.
James C.Y. Soong (IH 1960s)- Governor, Taiwan Provincial Government
Vicenzo Visco (IH 1968)- Minister of Finance, Italy
Pete Wilson (IH 1960)- Governor of California
Laura Zegna, (IH 1970s)- Chair of Italy’s Special Olympics Organizing Committee

Law

Upendra Baxi (IH 1965)- Professor of Law and Vice Chancellor at the University of Delhi; Vice Chancellor at the University of South Gujarat; and President of the Indian Society of International Law
Rose Bird (IH 1960-61)- Chief Justice of the California Supreme Court
Barnet Cooperman (IH 1946-47)- Judge L.A. Superior Court
Wolfgang Hoffmann-Riem (IH 1964-65)- German legal scholar, Professor Emeritus at the University of Hamburg, former judge of the Federal Constitutional Court of Germany and Recipient of the 2008 Order of Merit of the Federal Republic of Germany
Adrian Kragen (IH 1930-33)- Professor of Law, UC Berkeley, argued cases before the Supreme Court
George Kraw (IH 1972-76)- Advisory Committee of the Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation
Ernst Pakuscher (IH 1955-56)- Chief Judge of the Federal Patent Court in Germany
Stefan Riesienfeld (IH 1935-37)- Professor of Law at UC Berkeley
Leigh Steinberg (IH 1973-74)- Leading sports attorney
Sanford Svetcov (IH 1961-63)- Partner with the Appellate Practice Group of Lerach Coughlin, San Francisco
Wakefield Taylor, (IH 1930s)- California Court of Appeal in San Francisco
Raymond Terlizzi (IH 1962-64)- Magistrate Judge of the District of Arizona

Business

Moshe H. Alafi (IH 1949-50)- Director of Molecular Devices at BrainScope
J. Dennis Bonney (IH 1954-55)- Vice Chairman, Chevron Corporation
Charlene Wang Chien (IH 1972-74)- President, First International Computer, Inc., Taiwan
Choong Kun Cho (IH 1955-58)- President of Korean Airlines
Parish Choksi (IH 1975-77)- Executive Vice President, ATEL Capital Group
Jan Fandrianto (IH 1981)- President, Sipura Technology, Inc.
David Fischer (IH 1990-91)- Vice President, AOL Europe
Jawahar Gidwani (IH 1973-76)- Chairman and CEO of KARMA2GO, LLC
Richard Goldman (IH 1941-42)- Founder of Goldman Environmental Prize and founder of Goldman Insurance Services
Kazusue Konoike (IH 1973-82)- President, Konoike Construction Co., Ltd., Japan
Kakutaro Kitashiro (IH 1970-71)- General Manager, IBM Asia Pacific.
Simon Lewis OBE (IH 1981-82)- Director of Communications and Public Policy, Vodafone
Andre Manoliu (IH 1974-76)- Managing Director, GrowthPlans LLC
Hans Raising (IH 1948-49)- Founder and Chairman, Tetra Pak
Arun Sarin (IH 1975-78)- CEO of Vodafone
Hamid Savoj (IH 1990-91)- Senior Vice President, Magma Design Automation
Eric Schmidt (IH 1976-80)- CEO of Google
Kaya Tuncer (IH 1959-62)- Turkish-American mega-builder, entrepreneur and philanthropist
Leigh Steinberg (IH 1973-74)- Leading sports attorney
George H.B. Verberg (IH 1970-71)- President of the International Gas Union

Arts and Entertainment

Yoshi Akiba (IH 1973)- Founder of Yoshi’s Jazz Club and Japanese Restaurant in the Bay Area
Charles Ferguson (IH 1973)- Director and producer of the Academy Award-winning documentary Inside Job and the Academy Award-nominated No End In Sight: The American Occupation of Iraq. Charles Ferguson is International House’s 2011 Alumnus of the Year.
Dietrich von Bothmer (IH 1940)- Distinguished Research Curator of Greek and Roman Art, Metropolitan Museum of Art
Tshewang Dendup (IH 1990s)- Starred in the film, Travelers and Magicians about Bhutan
Wilton Dillon (IH 1949-50)- Senior Scholar Emeritus at the Smithsonian
Yoshiko Kakudo (IH 1961-62)- Curator of Japanese Arts, de Young Museum of San Francisco
Ermenegildo Zegna (IH 1970s)- Italian fashion designer

Science

Mario Bancora (IH 1946-52)- Director of Argentina’s Atomic Energy Commission
Hans Peter Duerr (IH 1953-56)- Director of the Max Planck Institute
Drew Gaffney (IH 1967-68)- Space Shuttle Astronaut, Professor of Medicine at Vanderbilt University
Saul Griffith (IH 1994-95)- Australian-American Inventor
William Haseltine (IH 1963-68)- CEO, Human Genome Sciences
Wilmot Hess (IH 1949-50)- NASA official and Associate Director of the Department of Energy
Alan Pasternak (IH 1959-64)- Energy expert and staff scientist, Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory
Cyril Ponnampuruma (IH 1959-61)- Director of the Chemical Evolution program, NASA Ames Research Center
Rafael Rodriguez (IH 1946-50)- Costa Rican botanist and artist, specializing in orchids
David Scheuring (IH 1957-61)- Founding Director, Yolo Land Trust and Director of the Cache Creek Conservancy
Mohammed Ahmed Selim (IH 1938-43)- Head Engineer for the High Dam in Egypt
David Shirley (IH 1953-62)- Director, Lawrence Berkeley Laboratory
Theodore Taylor (IH 1946-49)- Atomic weapons scientist who campaigned against nuclear weaponry
Chien Shiang Wu Yuan (IH 1936-42)- Considered by many to be the greatest woman physicist

Literature and Journalism

Amir Aczel I (IH 1972-76)- Author of Fermat’s Last Theorem, Descartes’ Secret Notebook, The Mystery of Aleph
Marianne Likowski Alireza (IH 1941-1943)- Author of At the Drop of a Veil, published in 1971
Angelika Blendstrup (IH 1970-72)- Business communications consultant and author of They Made It! How Chinese, French, German, Indian, Israeli and other foreign born entrepreneurs contributed to high tech innovation in the Silicon Valley, the U.S. and Overseas
Arlene Blum (IH 1967-68)- Author and leader of the first all-women’s ascent of Annapurna
Gray Brechin (IH 1970s)- A historical geographer, journalist and television producer, taught geography at Berkeley
David Brock (IH 1973-82)- Author of Blinded by the Right: The Conscience of an Ex-Conservative
Sandy Close (IH 1961-64)- Executive Director, Pacific News Service
Founded in 1928, International House Berkeley opened its doors in August 1930 to welcome scholars from around the world and throughout the US. Since then, tens of thousands of individuals have benefited from residential and cultural programs and services shaped by the House’s mission:

To foster intercultural respect and understanding, lifelong friendships, and leadership skills for a more just and peaceful world.