

Palo Alto Rotary Pinion

February 8, 2021

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President BEN THRELKELD convened our club's quarterly Membership Campaign Meeting on February 8, 2021. Distinguished visitors included Palo Alto Mayor Tom DuBois, Vice Mayor Pat Burt, and Martin Shell, VP and Chief External Relations Officer at Stanford.... The meeting drew nearly 120 participants.

Our newest Rotarian is JEFF YEN, his classification "Physics," sponsored by JON STOUMAN. Jeff earned his bachelor's degree at Berkeley and his PhD at Stanford. He's co-founder and CEO of Etherdyne Technology.

SHERRI SAGER'S Thought for the Day was that 2020 has entered our vocabulary as a "swear word," code for crisis and discord. Sherris suggested that we "reinvent normal" with a new sense of what we value, slowing down to appreciate family and friends, seeking more compromise and greater consensus.



As explained by REBECCA GERALDI, our Hands-On project in March will be an at-home "build" of learning kits for RAFT, the Resource Area for Teaching, which provides transforming learning experiences for more than 150,000 students. More information on February 22....



GLORIA HOM reported that we'll celebrate Chinese New Year at our Happy Hour at 5:30 pm on February 10....



TRISH BUBENIK urged us to start buying tickets for our March 29 fundraiser, "Hats Off to Rotary." The price, \$100 per Zoom connection, will also cover a gift bag filled with party supplies. It's the most significant way that we raise money to support local charities, fund international projects and grant vocational scholarships.... TRISH then gladly joined the President's Club to mark the 53rd anniversary of her first date with David....



HAL MICKELSON joined as well, to honor George P. Schultz, who served two American presidents in four Cabinet-level positions. "He showed how much can be achieved by building bridges. He was a champion of truthfulness and decency."



Our speaker, Dr. Marc Tessier-Lavigne, was introduced by DIANA DIAMOND. Dr. Tessier-Lavigne received undergraduate degrees from McGill University and at Oxford, where he was a Rhodes Scholar. He earned a Ph.D. in physiology from University College London. He held faculty positions at UCSF and Stanford before becoming a senior vice president for research at Genentech. He was president of Rockefeller University in New York from 2011 until appointment as president at Stanford in 2016.

Dr. Tessier-Lavigne said that he wanted the University under his leadership to focus on "boldness, inclusivity and a commitment to improving the world...." The COVID crisis has taught Stanford three significant lessons: There's a need for far greater urgency in accelerating the application of knowledge, such as in hastening trials of new therapies. Education and health care have been forced overnight to become more accessible in entirely new ways. Finally, Stanford's public mission and its relationship with the community have changed. "Pre-COVID, the ease of travel meant that we were less appreciative of local resources than we now must be." Stanford has established an Office of External Relations led by Megan Fogarty to strengthen its links to the community as a "fully engaged neighbor." Added Dr. Tessier-Lavigne: "We at Stanford share the commitment to service that you exemplify here at Rotary."



From MTL's answers to our questions: Stanford must become "more intentional and visible" in serving the world beyond the campus, for example through online instruction.... The COVID epidemic has had a severe impact on small colleges that rely on tuition income to fund operations. As many as 10% of such colleges may exit, eliminating close-to-home opportunities for an underserved constituency.... To ensure that the University is open to students regardless of their financial status, it is now Stanford's policy that undergraduates from US families with annual income under \$150,000 will attend tuition-free, and those from families with income under \$75,000 will receive free room and board as well. In addition, tuition is scaled downward for families with incomes between \$150,000 and \$250,000. As a result, students with financial need can attend Stanford for less money that would be required for UC or Cal State.

Upcoming programs: February 15: Dark (Presidents' Day); February 22: Walter Moore, Peninsula Open Space Trust.