The Levan Institute for Humanities and Ethics issues a Grand Challenge to every new student who comes to USC: to engage with, understand and internalize the timeless values at the core of our humanity.

In this effort, the Institute collaborates with departments, professional schools and programs across the university to bring students and faculty together with authors and artists, philosophers and practitioners, and the ethical voices of our time.

Each year the Levan Institute selects an annual theme to streamline our programs and encourage provocative and creative discussion. This year our theme was:

**know thyself**

**origins identity authenticity**

Helping students acquire values of moral discernment, *love of truth and beauty*, understanding of self, and *respect* for and *appreciation* of others.
Central to an education in the humanities is learning to articulate one’s own point of view in all of its richness and idiosyncrasy.

Letter From the Director

Since Dr. Norman Levan generously endowed the USC Levan Institute for Humanities and Ethics in 2007, we have reached thousands of students with undergraduate programs, speakers’ series, coffeehouse conversations, workshops, films, and student initiatives across disciplines.

Each year we develop an annual theme that will streamline our programming and encourage provocative discussion and unique and meaningful questions. I want to thank our Levan Graduate Ethics Fellows Joshua Crabill and Alida Liberman for suggesting our theme for 2011/12, “Know Thyself: Origins, Identity, Authenticity.” Central to this theme is the belief that our rituals and origins give shape to our deepest goals and passions. Our moral disagreements are often rooted in our different starting points and traditions. And before others can know our stories, they must be told. We believe that great beauty can be found within ourselves and our histories. We need to sing our songs, recall our legends, articulate our aspirations, defend our ways of life, and reflect on our journey of self-discovery as part of the essence of community.

We have had an extraordinary year and have expanded in every direction. In our mission to cultivate wisdom and moral discernment, we launched several new initiatives, including Performing Wisdom, an inspiring and creative series of student workshops led by Assistant Professor of Classics James Collins, and a new three-year partnership with the Carnegie Council Global Ethics Network that will include live-streaming of joint roundtables and panels at USC that seek to reimagine a global ethic. The Levan Institute also hosted the California Regional Ethics Bowl for the first time here at USC, where 10 teams of undergraduate students came together to debate the ethical dimensions of current events and dilemmas.

I encourage you to visit our website for more information about our programs and partnerships and to be in contact with any ideas you may have for ways we can work together. I look forward to hearing from you.

Lyn Boyd-Judson, Ph.D.
ETHICAL VOICES OF OUR TIME

LEVAN ANNUAL DISTINGUISHED LECTURE

NIKKI GIOVANNI: “KNOW THYSELF”

Wednesday, February 22, 4 PM (Tutor Campus Center, The Forum)

Nikki Giovanni is a world-renowned poet, writer, commentator, activist and educator. As a young poet in the late 1960s, Giovanni gave voice to the passions of the black power movement. Over the past 40 years, her outspoken writing and lecturing have kept her boldly in the intersection of art and politics. One of the most widely read American poets, she prides herself on being a “Black American, a daughter, a mother, a professor of English.” Her focus is on the individual, specifically the power one has to make a difference in oneself, and thus in the lives of others.

VISIONS AND VOICES

DR. PAUL FARMER: “MEDICAL HUMANITARIANISM: POSSIBILITIES AND PITFALLS”

Tuesday, October 18, 4 PM (Bovard Auditorium)

Cosponsors: Keck School of Medicine’s Program in Medical Humanities, Arts and Ethics; USC Pacific Center for Health Policy and Ethics

Dr. Paul Farmer is a medical anthropologist, physician and founding director of Partners in Health. He also holds the title of Presley Professor of Social Medicine and chairs the Department of Global Health and Social Medicine at Harvard Medical School. Dr. Farmer and his colleagues in the United States and around the globe have pioneered novel community-based treatment strategies that demonstrate the delivery of high-quality health care in poor places. He has written extensively on health, human rights and the consequences of social inequality, and is the subject of Pulitzer Prize winner Tracy Kidder’s Mountains Beyond Mountains: The Quest of Dr. Paul Farmer, A Man Who Would Cure the World.

Organized by Pamela Schaff (Pediatrics and Keck Educational Affairs), Erin Quinn (Family Medicine and Keck Admissions) and Lyn Boyd-Judson (Levan Institute for Humanities and Ethics)

“If you don’t understand yourself, you don’t understand anybody else.”

— NIKKI GIOVANNI
LEVAN COFFEEHOUSE CONVERSATIONS ON PRACTICAL ETHICS

Program Director Sharon Lloyd, Professor of Philosophy, Law and Political Science, USC Dornsife

The Levant Coffeehouse Conversations on Practical Ethics promote ethical discourse at USC by bringing together students and faculty from across schools to discuss ethical issues of practical importance. Coffeehouse Conversations are moderated by Professor Sharon Lloyd.

“SELF-KNOWLEDGE: A PERILOUS PURSUIT?”

Wednesday, September 21, Noon–1:30 PM (Ground Zero Café)
The quest for self-knowledge often involves concentrated attention on oneself. Could this inward focus actually prove counterproductive to developing the external interests, attachments and relationships that make our lives satisfying and worthwhile? What does it mean to “know thyself”?

Guest Panelists:
Scott Altman, Vice Dean and Virginia S. and Fred H. Bice Professor of Law, USC Gould School of Law
John Dreher, Associate Professor of Philosophy, USC Dornsife
Jesse Graham, Assistant Professor of Psychology, USC Dornsife
Alida Liberman, Graduate Student of Philosophy, USC Dornsife

“The Authentic Self”

Wednesday, November 9, Noon–1:30 PM (Ground Zero Cafe)
Does our “self” depend in any meaningful way on our ancestral history? Could we reject that inheritance while preserving our identities? Is our identity at any given time nothing more than the result of our life experiences up to that point? Or is there an “essential” self that survives through all the changing causal influences that affect our desires, ambitions and roles in life?

Guest Panelists:
Ara Astourian, Graduate Student of Philosophy, USC Dornsife
Ronald Garet, Carolyn Craig Franklin Professor of Law and Religion, USC Gould School of Law
Rebecca Lemon, Associate Professor of English, USC Dornsife
Ed McCann, Professor of Philosophy and English, USC Dornsife

“MIRRORS AND WINDOWS: UNDERSTANDING ONESELF BY KNOWING OTHERS”

Wednesday, February 8, Noon–1:30 PM (Ground Zero Café)
Can we gain self-knowledge through the study of the lives of other people, historical or fictional? Panels from literature, classics, philosophy and history discuss how learning about the lives of others can affect one’s sense of self.

Guest Panelists:
James Collins, Assistant Professor of Classics, USC Dornsife
Thomas Habinek, Professor and Chair, Classics, USC Dornsife
Greg Thalmann, Professor of Classics and Comparative Literature, USC Dornsife
Hilary Schor, Professor of English, Comparative Literature, Gender Studies and Law, USC Dornsife
Miruna Barnoschi, Inquisitive Undergrad, International Relations, Philosophy and Classics, USC Dornsife

“Having faculty from diverse fields — philosophy, psychology, literature, law and religion — assist students in this process of inquiry is what the Levant Institute for Humanities and Ethics is all about.”

— SHARON LLOYD

“HARD-WIRED: DO WE CHOOSE OUR POLITICS, OR DO OUR BRAINS CHOOSE THEM FOR US?”

Wednesday, April 11, Noon–1:30 (Ground Zero Café)
Recent research in neuroscience suggests that political preferences reflect differences in the very structure of the brain. How does this affect our ability to defend our political affiliations on rational grounds?

Guest Panelists:
Jesse Graham, Assistant Professor of Psychology, USC Dornsife
Dan Schnur, Director, Jesse M. Unruh Institute of Politics, USC Dornsife
Wendy Wood, Provost Professor of Psychology and Business, USC Dornsife
Vanessa Singh, Ph.D. Candidate, Brain and Creativity Institute, USC Dornsife
Ben Rolnik, Senior, Interdisciplinary Studies & Biology, President of the USC Philosophy Club
“I’ve been expanding my cultural horizons.... It’s important for people to learn about art outside of their major and want to create their own expressions.”

UNDERGRADUATE BIOLOGY MAJOR

“SPIRIT OF THE LAW”
Coproduced by the Office of Religious Life
This monthly speaker series features legal professionals discussing how they find meaning and purpose in the law, how they use their law degrees in innovative and creative ways, and how they connect the personal and the professional in their lives.

Elyn Saks, Orrin B. Evans Professor of Law, Psychology, and Psychiatry and the Behavioral Sciences, USC Gould School of Law
Stephen Lee, Assistant Professor of Law, UC Irvine School of Law
Neil Gotanda, Professor of Law, Western State College of Law
Hedieh Mirahmadi, President of the World Organization for Resource Development and Education (WORDE)
Mia Frances Yamamoto, Criminal Defense Attorney, past president of the California Attorneys for Criminal Justice and Japanese Bar Association

“I had the pleasure of working with the Levan Institute on two events this past year, and the events not only inspired me and enhanced my own thinking, but also inspired high-level discussions with other students that continued long after the events themselves.”

— ALEX FULMAN, PRESIDENT, UNDERGRADUATE PRE-LAW SOCIETY
“WHAT MATTERS TO ME AND WHY”
Co-sponsored by the Office of Religious Life
“What Matters to Me and Why” is a program that encourages reflection about values, beliefs and motivations. It aims to help students and others better understand the lives and inspirations of those who shape the University. Presenters are encouraged to talk about choices made, difficulties encountered and commitments solidified.

Elizabeth Garrett, Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs at USC and Frances R. and John J. Duggan Professor, USC Gould School of Law
Reverend Cecil “Chip” Murray, John R. Tansey Chair in Christian Ethics and Senior Fellow at the Center for Religion and Civic Culture (CRCC)
Paul Frommer, Professor of Clinical Management Communication, USC Marshall School of Business
Courtney Surls, Vice President for Development, USC
Lynn Swartz Dodd, Lecturer and Director, Interdisciplinary Archaeology Undergraduate Major, USC Dornsife
Michael L. Jackson, Vice President for Student Affairs and Professor of Higher Education, USC
Priya Jaikumar, Associate Professor, Department of Critical Studies, USC School of Cinematic Arts
Veronica Terriquez, Associate Professor of Sociology, USC Dornsife

“THE SOUL OF MEDICINE”
Co-sponsored by the Office of Religious Life
“The Soul of Medicine” is a speaker series focusing on the personal, spiritual, moral and creative dimensions of the healing arts, featuring faculty, staff and special guests.

Doctors Jean and Todd Foram, a mother and son team of family practitioners, both graduates of USC’s Keck School of Medicine
Father Chris Ponnet, pastor of St. Camillus Catholic Center and chaplain at Los Angeles County-USC Medical Center in conversation with Dr. Dagmar Grefe, manager of Spiritual Care and Clinical Pastoral Education at Children’s Hospital Los Angeles
Christine Driessen, Christian Science Practitioner in conversation with Jo Marie Reilly, Associate Professor of Clinical Family Medicine, USC Keck School of Medicine
Dr. Pam Tarlow, Santa Monica Homeopathic Pharmacy and Professor, Yo San University

College is a time of self-discovery and transition between childhood and adulthood during which students seek to discover who they are and construct who they wish to become.
USC LEVAN/CARNEGIE COUNCIL GLOBAL ETHICS NETWORK PARTNERSHIP

The Levan Institute is a partner of the Carnegie Council for Ethics in International Affairs in its multimedia initiative, the Global Ethics Network. This initiative provides a platform for educational institutions around the world to create and share interactive multimedia resources that explore the ethical dimensions of international affairs.

INAUGURAL USC LEVAN/CARNEGIE GLOBAL ETHICS NETWORK EVENT

Roundtable: How Do We Bring the Rule of Law to Places That Don’t Have It?

Tuesday, March 20, 12:30 PM (Tutor Campus Center Forum)

Moderator:

>> Lyn Boyd-Judson, Director, Levan Institute for Humanities and Ethics, USC Dornsife, and Carnegie Global Ethics Fellow

Panelists:

>> Richard Dekmejian, Professor and Director, Political Science, USC Dornsife
>> Naama Haviv, Assistant Director, Jewish World Watch
>> David Ritchie, Associate Professor of Law and Philosophy, Mercer University, and Carnegie Global Ethics Fellow
>> Edwin Smith, Leon Benwell Professor of Law, International Relations and Political Science, USC Gould School of Law

GLOBAL JUSTICE COLLABORATION WITH UNIVERSITY PARIS 8

The Levan Institute for Humanities and Ethics has joined in an effort to boost teaching and research collaboration between University Paris 8 and the USC Dana and David Dornsife College of Letters, Arts and Sciences. The Levan Institute, along with cosponsors University Paris 8, the USC Center for International Studies and the USC Shoah Foundation Institute, will host a series of annual conferences and joint publications to further these efforts.

GLOBAL JUSTICE CONFERENCE (2011)

Hosted by University of Southern California, April 7–8, 2011

The 2011 conference brought speakers from USC, University Paris 8 and University Paris Ouest to discuss the emerging field of global justice in the social sciences, law, medicine and economics. Speakers discussed the impact of conflicts, human and environmental rights, restorative justice and the reach of international legal institutions.

GLOBAL JUSTICE (II): ETHICS AND PRACTICES OF RESPONSIBILITY (2012)

Hosted by University Paris 8, November 19–20, 2012

This two-day workshop conference will discuss topics of common interest around continuing questions of global justice raised by our first collaborative conference in April 2011 at USC. We aim to move beyond describing problems and toward developing themes of responsibility in creating justice and remedying injustice.

WORKSHOP COLLABORATION WITH USC CENTER FOR EXCELLENCE IN TEACHING

Achieving the Mission Statement: Cultivating Wisdom and Moral Discernment Among USC Students

Noon, March 1, (240 Doheny Memorial Library)

Moderator:

>> Edward Finegan, Professor of Linguistics and Law, Director of USC Center for Excellence in Teaching

Panelists:

>> Alex Capron, University Professor; Vice Dean for Faculty and Academic Affairs; Scott H. Bice Chair in Healthcare Law, Policy and Ethics (USC Gould School of Law); Professor of Law and Medicine (Keck School of Medicine); Co-Director, Pacific Center for Health Policy and Ethics
>> Pat Haden, USC Athletic Director; Former Chairman of the Academic and Student Affairs Committees, USC Board of Trustees
>> Darline Robles, Professor of Clinical Education, USC Rossier School of Education; Former Superintendent of Los Angeles County Office of Education and of the Salt Lake City and Montebello School Districts
TEACHING ETHICS PROGRAM
The Teaching Ethics Program (TEP) is an ethics outreach initiative based on the successful USC Dornsife service-learning model developed by the Center for Active Learning in International Studies (CALIS). Through TEP, USC students have an innovative opportunity to respond to the Levan Institute challenge: to engage with, understand and internalize the timeless values at the core of our humanity.

TEP trains undergraduate volunteers each year to introduce competing ethical perspectives and lead ethics case study discussions in neighborhood high schools. TEP teams are primarily recruited from philosophy classes and supported by USC professors offering credit options as part of their courses.

“CINEMA OF SUBSTANCE” SERIES
Cosponsored by the USC School of Cinematic Arts
This film series showcases meaningful films from around the world that explore who we are and how we might be. The themes of the films are often further examined in audience discussions with award-winning writers and directors.

NOSTALGIA FOR THE LIGHT
Director Patricio Guzmán melds the celestial quest of astronomers and the earthly one of Chilean women in this gorgeous, moving and deeply personal odyssey.

HAPPY
Film screening and evening with Academy Award-winning director Roko Belic, who spoke about his journey in creating the documentary Happy, which explores the secrets behind happiness around the world.

POETRY
On a whim, Mija enrolls in a poetry class at the local cultural center and begins a personal quest to find the perfect words to describe her feelings. Writer-director Lee Chang-dong reveals a striking portrait of a journey of human empathy.

PERFORMING WISDOM
PERFORMING WISDOM: STUDENT WORKSHOPS IN SELF-EXAMINATION AND SELF-FASHIONING
Program Director James Collins, Assistant Professor of Classics, USC Dornsife
These end-of-semester workshops engage students in in-depth dialogue and pose the questions: What are the effects of acting like other people? What are the differences between making and simulating difficult decisions? What are the connections between our principles and the choices we make? How do we explore and remake ourselves through writing, speaking, conversation and deportment?

STRATEGIES FOR THE ART OF LIVING WORKSHOP BY USC THEMATIC OPTION STUDENTS (CORE 102)
Some philosophers don’t just present arguments. Instead, they present the sort of person that adheres to particular arguments. They write literature that explores what makes these sorts of people good and beautiful. Students briefed the audience about their work during the semester with these different literary characters, how self-construction can work in philosophical literature, and then created an experimental performance space in which the audience was able to move and interact with dramatic renderings of philosophical personae.

EURIPIDES’ HIPPOLYTUS, ADAPTED AND READ BY USC STUDENTS OF ANCIENT DRAMA (CLAS 337)
In this event, students offered a dramatic reading of their adaptation of the play followed by reflections on their scholarly and creative engagement with this ancient drama. The play, first produced for the City of Dionysia in Athens in 428 B.C., is full of characters that believe they know themselves until they have to wrestle with appetites, emotions and voices that they had long neglected. Euripides offers a psychologically complex look at how people variously construct and commit to ideas about themselves, and what constitutes virtuous living.

BIRDS
A performative reading and informal conversation about the play Birds by Ancient Greek playwright Aristophanes. The play, first performed at the City Dionysia in Athens in 414 B.C., is a comedy about two men disillusioned by the hustle, politics, war-mongering and responsibilities of Athenian life. They fly off to join the birds and start a new, carefree city. But while trying to protect their new settlement in the sky from Athenian visitors, they end up reproducing much of what was wrong in the city they left.
USC ANNUAL ETHICS CUP COMPETITION

This year the Levan Institute hosted the 2011 California Regional Ethics Bowl Competition. The Intercollegiate Ethics Bowl (sponsored by the Association for Practical and Professional Ethics), now in its 16th year, combines a competitive tournament with a valuable educational experience for undergraduate students. Students explore practical ethical problems and improve their ethical reasoning through case analysis and debate competition.

Ten teams competed this year at USC, debating topics ranging from the ethics of voting rights to the use of sex in advertising.

This year’s winners, University of California-Santa Cruz and California State University-Chico, went on to compete in the National Ethics Bowl hosted by the Association for Professional and Practical Ethics in Cincinnati, Ohio.

USC ANNUAL ETHICS ESSAY CONTEST

The USC Ethics Essay contest aims to recognize the best-written work on ethics by undergraduate USC students. Papers discuss current ethical issues or provide critical case analyses of ethics violations in a professional field.

Awards were granted for each of the following categories:

- **Overall Winner: Best essay submitted in any category**
  - Winner: “Ensuring Ethical Conduct in Clinical Trials” by Yagnaseni Dasgupta (Senior, Psychology and Economics)

- **Organizational Ethics: Ethical issues focused on the functioning of any organization**
  - Winner: “Business Ethics: Shutting the Door” by Jessica García (Junior, Social Science with an emphasis in Economics)

- **Ethics Across Borders: Moral Problems with an international focus**
  - Winner: “The Benevolence of Aggression: A Defense of American Interventionism” by John Stockton (Senior, Philosophy)

- **Professional Ethics: Examination of the ethical component of a profession, or of a specific ethical problem faced by members of a profession**
  - Winner: “Is Animal Testing Ethical?” by Daniel Weisel (Junior, Biological Sciences)

- **Social Justice: Critical analysis of a moral issue of primarily social significance**
  - Winner: “Two Battles, One Sword: Dissecting the Stagnant State of Education and Prison Reform” by Makiah Green (Junior, Major: Creative Writing, Minor: Social Entrepreneurship)
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**Where do our memories live? Who has the power over our narratives and how do we reclaim our stories and our pasts?**

**9/7/11**

*What Matters to Me and Why*

with Elizabeth Garrett

**9/14/11**

*A Constitution for the 21st Century*

Roundtable Panel (Cosponsored)

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**Moderated by**

Lee Epstein, Provost Professor and Rader Family Trustee Chair in Law and Political Science

**Panelists**

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*California Regional Ethics Bowl*
Panelists discussed how artists can use and/or respond to videotaped testimonies and other artifacts of “what happened” historically in the creation of something new and immediate and now. This daylong event focused on artistic work that engages with catastrophes and other shattering events, personal and worldwide, that challenge our sense of normalcy.

2/7/12
Witness and Responsibility  
(Cosponsored)
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2/8/12
Mirrors and Windows: Understanding Ourselves by Knowing Others  
Levan Coffeehouse Conversation

3/1/12
Achieving the Mission Statement: Cultivating Wisdom and Moral Discernment Among USC Students  
(Cosponsored)
“We strive constantly for excellence in teaching knowledge and skills to our students, while at the same time helping them to acquire wisdom and insight, love of truth and beauty, moral discernment, understanding of self, and respect and appreciation of others.”  
—USC Mission Statement
How can USC achieve these goals in meaningful and appropriate ways? How does one teach wisdom and respect?  
USC faculty, teaching assistants and students are invited to engage these questions in this lunch-hour roundtable and workshop.

Moderator
Edward Finegan, Professor of Linguistics and Law, Director of USC Center for Excellence in Teaching

Panelists
Alex Capron, University Professor; Vice Dean for Faculty and Academic Affairs; Scott H. Bice Chair in Healthcare Law, Policy and Ethics (USC Gould School of Law); Professor of Law and Medicine (Keck School of Medicine); Co-Director, Pacific Center for Health Policy and Ethics

3/7/12
What Matters to Me and Why  
with Priya Jaikumar

3/7/12
Stories: Finding Meaning—Discovering Art, Spirituality and Meaning  
(Cosponsored)
This year, the Veritas Forum hosted John Shepherd, founder and president of Mpower Pictures (Bella, The Stoning of Soraya M., and Snowmen), and Dr. Neal Baer, screenwriter behind ER and Law & Order: Special Victims Unit, to engage and discuss the question “What makes stories meaningful, and why?”

3/7/12
Poetry

3/7/12
How Do We Bring the Rule of Law to Places That Don’t Have It?  
Roundtable  
(Cosponsored)

3/20/12
Soul of Medicine  
with Christine Driessen and Jo Marie Reilly

3/21/12
Spirit of Law  
featuring Mia Frances Yamamoto

4/4/12
What Matters to Me and Why  
with Veronica Terriquez

4/11/12
Hard-Wired: Do We Choose Our Politics, or Do Our Brains Choose Them for Us?  
Levan Coffeehouse Conversation

4/24/12
Birds
Performing Wisdom

4/27/12
From Me to You: Conversations of Passion
This USC Philosophy Club program brought together undergraduate and graduate students from a variety of disciplines to host 15-minute micro-seminars on topics of their choosing. Seminars covered a wide range of topics, from “Introduction to Quantum Mechanics” to “Meditation and Self-Mastery.”