Welcome

The Dana and David Dornsife College of Letters, Arts and Sciences is the academic heart of the University of Southern California. Our students and preeminent faculty across the humanities, social sciences and natural sciences are passionate about excellence, the creation of new knowledge and improving the world. As the liberal arts core of a powerhouse research university, USC Dornsife provides the foundation upon which students become critical thinkers, learn to devise solutions and ultimately go out into the world ready to tackle the complexity awaiting them. In these great times of discovery — whether it’s in the library, in the lab or in the community — our faculty are exploring novel connections among their disciplines to push the limits of innovation and our talented young minds are emerging as their generation’s leaders.
Selected 2012–13 Highlights

USC Dornsife’s extramural funding has increased 12% in four years to $74.5 million. USC Dornsife’s research funding from the National Institutes of Health (NIH) has increased by 32% in three years while the NIH Extramural Budget Allocations have remained flat for the same period.

USC Dornsife faculty members received international recognition, including the Guggenheim Fellowship as well as election to the American Academy of Arts and Sciences and the American Association for the Advancement of Science.

In national rankings of graduate philosophy departments, the School of Philosophy surged to No. 11.

Of the approximately 47,000 applications for undergraduate admission USC received, more than 26,000 or 55% were applicants to USC Dornsife.

USC Dornsife students received more than $35 million in support toward tuition, research and travel.

USC Dornsife undergraduate and graduate students were selected for prestigious Fulbright, Mellon Mays and Ford Fellowships as well as Marshall, Boren, McNair and Gilman Scholarships.

USC Dornsife created new majors in environmental science and health; computational neuroscience; geodesign; global political economy; and law, history and culture.

USC students dedicated more than 100,000 service hours to the local community through USC Dornsife’s Joint Educational Project.

The USC Dornsife/Los Angeles Times Poll positioned the College as a leader in independent public opinion polling in California.

Early in the 2013–14 academic year, Distinguished Professor of Chemistry Arieh Warshel received the Nobel Prize in Chemistry for developing the key principles behind computer simulations that are now indispensable in the study of chemical reactions.
Noteworthy Landmarks

USC Dornsife launched its $750 million fundraising initiative as part of the Campaign for the University of Southern California, a multi-year, $6 billion effort to build the university’s endowment. More than $327 million has already been raised toward the goal.

The Center for Social and Economic Research was established to conduct basic and applied research in economics and the social sciences in areas such as financial decision-making. The center formed the Development Portfolio Management Group headquartered in Arlington, Va., to help clients throughout the world get expected results from their economic development investments.

The new Dornsife Neuroscience Pavilion was opened allowing Brain and Creativity Institute researchers to image the human mind in action while exploring the arts with performances in a world-class auditorium.

Dean Steve Kay formed a Sustainability Task Force, which is charged with crafting an inclusive, interdisciplinary vision of the future of sustainability at USC Dornsife.

Coupled with professional mentors and a career leadership course, the Gateway Internship Program was created to encourage USC Dornsife undergraduates to explore career pathways through paid internships at companies such as Sony Pictures Entertainment, Guardian Group, SunAmerica, and Partner Engineering and Science.

Housed in USC Dornsife, the USC Shoah Foundation — The Institute for Visual History and Education along with USC’s Institute for Creative Technologies and design firm Conscience Display collaborated to transform Holocaust survivors into 3-D holograms that can engage in dialogue with future generations.
Brief History

1880 The College of Liberal Arts is founded along with the university, which opens its doors with 53 students and 10 teachers.

1924 The School of International Relations, the second oldest international relations school in the U.S. and the third oldest in the world, is established.

1964 The Ahmanson Center for Biological Research is founded and includes research projects in bacteriology, biology, chemistry, pharmacy and psychology.

1994 USC Distinguished Professor George Olah is the sole winner of the Nobel Prize in Chemistry for his research in the field of hydrocarbons.

2000 Time magazine and the Princeton Review choose USC as “College of the Year” citing USC Dornsife’s Joint Educational Project and its model of service learning as the main reason they chose USC.

2011 The USC Dana and David Dornsife College of Letters, Arts and Sciences is named.

2013 USC Distinguished Professor Arieh Warshel receives the Nobel Prize in Chemistry for developing powerful computer approaches to understand chemical processes.

Before 1895, USC’s official color was gold and the College of Liberal Arts had its own color — cardinal. In 1895, both colors were adopted as USC’s official colors.