



College Town

Higher Education in Pleasant Hill



Spring 2008—Featuring John F. Kennedy University

Pleasant Hill is proud to be the home of several institutions of higher education—institutions which empower students with the knowledge and skills they will need to improve not only their lives, but also their community and the world. This first edition of our new “College Town” insert highlights one of those institutions—John F. Kennedy University. The university is located at 100 Ellinwood Way in a modern, energy-efficient “green” environment.

John F. Kennedy University: Changing lives one student at a time

Speaking in California in the spring of 1962, President John F. Kennedy said: “Every great age is marked by innovation and daring—by the ability to meet unprecedented problems with intelligent solutions. In a time of turbulence and change, it is more true than ever that knowledge is power...”

More than 43 years ago, John F. Kennedy University opened in Martinez with just 59 students in a single building... an old mortuary, to be exact. A committed group of educators shared a vision inspired by the late President Kennedy: to provide new opportunities in higher education for working adults—men and women who, despite family, work, and civic responsibilities, were determined to earn the benefits of advanced education for their future. JFKU was a pioneer in the Bay Area in its focused commitment to adult students. Indeed, no comparable opportunities existed in California’s educational system.

Harry Morrison, a prominent academic leader in the East Bay area, founded the University. He did so with the eager encouragement of his wife Georgia Morrison, businessmen, public officials, and others who saw the logic of preparing working adults for new career challenges in the emerging high-technology, knowledge-intensive California economy.



“America’s 35th president and the contributions of the Kennedy family to public life in our era are honored by this University,” explains JFKU President, Steve Stargardter. “We carry forward the highest ideals of the Kennedy era, such as the conviction that



education is America’s most catalytic investment; the commitment to opening educational opportunity to all Americans; optimism toward a future shaped by informed citizens; and dedication to making ideals real and effective through knowledge. These principles still shape JFK University’s programs and planning.”

Today, JFKU has grown to enroll more than 1,800 students in schools of Education and Liberal Arts, Law, Management, Professional Psychology, and Holistic studies. The University operates a home campus in Pleasant Hill with satellite sites in Campbell, Berkeley, and East County. More than 29,000 students have advanced their education at JFKU; 12,000 have earned JFKU undergraduate, graduate, and professional degrees.

Now, in the 21st century, adult education has become a priority of colleges and universities across America, driven by the workforce requirements of new industries, new technologies, and new global markets. History and experience have ratified JFKU’s pioneering model of education.

The pace of innovation has remained undiminished. Graduate programs have been built in new fields such as entrepreneurship, museum studies, sport psychology, and holistic health. In established fields, such as management and law, JFKU has carved special niches for the talented, experienced adult learner who values



President Steve Stargardter

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Five schools offer continuing and transformative education

Innovative approaches to education have characterized JFKU from the start. Counseling psychology students staff mental health centers in Pleasant Hill, East County, Sunnyvale, and Oakland, working with individuals who otherwise could not afford help; sport psychology students work in inner city schools to teach students life skills for coping with challenges; supervised law students gain extensive hands-on experience litigating cases and assisting elderly citizens who have been the victims of financial scams; and MBA-degree students learn entrepreneurship by working in business start-ups.

At JFKU, higher education is the chosen pathway for committed, determined individuals to greater satisfaction in work, family life, civic responsibilities, and personal growth. No one with a desire to learn is alone in these ambitions. The University offers access to the foremost practitioners: entrepreneurs, artists, master teachers, judges, psychologists, scholars, and dozens of other professionals eager to share their expertise.

Five Schools and Continuing and Extended Education programs at JFKU are united in their mission to advance adult education through undergraduate, graduate, and professional programs that share a career-oriented perspective, emphasis on teacher-practitioners, and concern with effective practice settings.

1 School of Liberal Arts

The School of Liberal Arts serves three distinct educational purposes. First, it offers adult students at the undergraduate level a chance to complete their BA degree in a setting that values and builds on their prior learning (inside and outside the classroom) while preparing them for new opportunities in the workplace or in graduate school. Adult students who have sometimes been frustrated by circumstances in earlier academic efforts discover a challenging curriculum, a talented and encouraging faculty, and a new-found joy in learning. Second, the Department of Museum Studies, one of the leading programs in the country, trains highly committed Master students to play major roles in the sweeping change that is impacting the museum world today. JFKU graduates go on to serve in virtually every museum in the Bay Area and across the globe. Third, the credential and masters programs in the Department of Education prepare students for elementary and secondary school teaching in the diverse urban environment of the greater Bay Area.



Education & Liberal Arts dean, Susan Kwock, talks with adjunct professor Tom Donovan.

2 School of Management

The School of Management offers both graduate and undergraduate degrees in traditional areas such as the Master of Business Administration and Bachelor of Science in Business Administration and newer directions such as Career Development

and entrepreneurial studies. In all fields, faculty are business and management professionals working in the Bay Area. In all programs students blend study with intensive practice. Students in entrepreneurial studies intern in businesses throughout the region, including start-ups assisted by the Contra Costa Business Incubator program. Business and management professionals not enrolled at JFKU benefit from lecture series, workshops, and forums sponsored by the school on topics from entrepreneurship to taking advantage of new global markets.

3 School of Law

The School of Law achieved the second highest bar-pass rate for first time test takers in the state of California, tied in ranking with Stanford University. The school has enabled thousands of working adults to study law by offering flexible scheduling and admission criteria. The school's Elder Law Clinic in Pleasant Hill not only assists seniors with financial disputes as a community outreach, but also builds the student's education in law around the importance of



Law professor Chris Kanios leads a discussion in his Torts class with first-year students

meeting a client's needs and ably representing clients in court. Professors are prominent judges and successful attorneys practicing in the Bay Area. Supervised by faculty, students can qualify to litigate court cases; many have hundreds of hours of experience litigating for real clients before they graduate. JFKU law graduates are distinguished by skill and commitment in mediating the experience of ordinary citizens with our justice system. Many are drawn to county, city, and other government posts around the state where citizens' lives meet the law.

4 School of Professional Psychology

The Graduate School of Professional Psychology is among the University's largest—and first to offer a doctoral degree. Students studying for the Master in Counseling Psychology, leading to state licensing in Marriage and Family Therapy, deliver thousands of

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hours a year of supervised service to clients in University counseling centers in Pleasant Hill, East County and Sunnyvale, as well as many other agencies in the greater Bay Area. Students also counsel in local public schools, an initiative that provides psychological counseling staff that schools otherwise could not afford. The Psychology Doctorate



Professor Alette Coble-Temple gathers with doctoral students in the School of Psychology.

(PsyD) program emphasizes a distinctive multi-cultural perspective. The School's innovative Sport Psychology program, one of the country's first, has initiated programs in Oakland inner-city schools, the Orin Allen Rehabilitation Center in Byron, and Mt. Diablo High School in Concord. The Master's Program in Organizational Psychology provides the training to allow the students and graduates to positively impact agencies and organizations throughout the Bay Area.

5 School of Holistic Studies

The School of Holistic Studies draws upon a growing understanding of how body, mind, and spirit interact; the school offers degree programs in counseling psychology, holistic health education, transformative arts, transpersonal psychology, consciousness studies and studio arts. Its rigorous programs require a foundation of study in world religions and paradigms of consciousness: master's thesis; personal growth work; and an ongoing spiritual practice such as meditation, yoga, or Tai Chi. Students in the counseling programs provide service in the University's Oakland Counseling Center under faculty supervision. As one of the University's largest schools, Holistic Studies continues to operate its Arts Annex and classes in Berkeley for students of the arts and consciousness program.

Continuing & Extended Education (CE) at JFKU is the entrepreneurial arm of the University. Designed to address a variety of emerging 21st century professional development needs, we offer onsite and online courses and certificate programs to over 2,000 participants annually in the areas of leadership and management, personal enrichment, and licensure recertification for healthcare professionals and attorneys. CE's emphasis is individually focused, professionally relevant, and socially purposeful.

CE's courses and certificate programs are of superior quality and present rare blends of innovation and tradition, teaching and training, and access and excellence. Our expert faculty, practitioner-scholars who care deeply about the wellbeing of our students, are innovative in scope and offer applications that transcend the classroom. Likewise, CE's organizational partnerships are underscored by a collaborative spirit: we work with a variety of private, public and social sector organizations in the Bay Area and globally. Through innovative relationships, CE courses further distinguish JFKU's reputation as a leader in socially engaged education.

The JFK University Elder Law Clinic: Helping Seniors Fight Financial Abuse

Free legal assistance can help to protect elders against financial mistreatment and can vindicate their rights when abuses take place. To meet this need, the JFK University School of Law has established an Elder Law Clinic at its home campus in Pleasant Hill.

"Our mission is to provide access to free legal services to the low-income, elderly population of Alameda, Contra Costa, and Solano counties," says Virginia George, executive director of the Elder Law Clinic. "Our services are absolutely free and are available to anyone 60 years of age or older." No other law school or free legal clinic in the Bay Area has a clinic that provides specialized pro bono legal services dedicated to financial abuse matters affecting the underserved elderly population.

The Clinic provides elders with legal assistance to deal with incidents of financial or material exploitation in two ways:

■ **One-on-one legal services:** JFKU law students and staff work with clients to resolve their legal issues during the clinic's operating hours. Because of the great need for these services, we have exceeded our objectives and opened more than 100 new cases in 2007, logged over 1,000 phone calls from seniors needing assistance, and provided thousands of hours of free legal services to clients.

■ **Public education events:** Law students hold information events to alert elders to potential financial abuses. The aim is to educate seniors to help them avoid future abuse. Topics include: 1) how to recognize consumer fraud directed at elders, such as predatory lending schemes or annuity scams, 2) how to choose and work with a contractor, or 3) how to deal with health care and home health care providers.

Training Future Lawyers

The Elder Law Clinic also serves the needs of seniors in our community by training students who wish to serve the elderly population after they graduate and become lawyers. Students are eligible to join the Clinic after they have completed two years of law school, which includes courses in contracts, torts, civil procedure, evidence, criminal law, and property.

Students are supervised and receive ongoing training during clinic hours and when working in the clinic office with the clinic director. Students receive academic credit for both the training and clinic.

For more information about Clinic services or to schedule an educational seminar, please call (925) 969-3341.



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education rooted in practice, taught by seasoned professionals, and offered on schedules that accommodate busy adults.

University faculty are active practitioners in their fields. With a core of 57 core faculty, JFKU draws on the experience of more than 750 adjunct faculty, leaders in their professions, who share their expertise with students in law, management, psychology, holistic studies, the liberal arts, and other fields.



Students, who average 37 years of age (and range from 20 to 70), are able to complete an undergraduate degree, often after years of interrupted education. Others are able to earn one of more than a dozen graduate or professional degrees, thanks to flexible accommodations in programming and scheduling that are JFKU's hallmark.

All of the University's programs, including undergraduate liberal arts, emphasize integration of theory and practice. Opportunities for internships, service, and other experiences in fields like litigation, counseling, or teaching, give education at JFKU a career orientation that motivates students and meets needs of future employers.



JOHN F. KENNEDY UNIVERSITY

*Transforming Lives,
Changing the World*

JFKU's Community Counseling Center: A local mental health resource

The Pleasant Hill Community Counseling Center, located in the YMCA complex on Taylor Boulevard, is a tangible expression of JFK University's commitment to community service.

For over 34 years, the center has offered low-fee individual and group counseling to people of all ages. This important mental health resource strengthens the social fabric of Contra Costa County, providing services that public agencies cannot afford to offer.

"Our services are high-quality and are accessible to anyone who needs help," explains Center Director Diana Methfessel. "We work with clients of all ages and ethnicities to make personal growth, transformation, and healing all possible."

The Center offers services in two ways:

- Clients come to the Center for treatment
- The Center provides services to children and youth in local schools.

The Center currently treats over 5,000 clients per year, providing nearly 20,000 hours of direct counseling and supervisory training.

Counseling is provided by students enrolled at JFKU's Graduate School of Professional Psychology who are studying to become licensed California Marriage and Family Therapists. Once licensed, many graduates begin work as professionals in local hospitals, managed care facilities, government mental health agencies, and private practice.

The Center offers individual counseling for adults and youth, couples counseling, child/family therapy, group therapy, and referrals for acute crisis intervention. *Treatment is offered on a sliding scale, and no one in financial need is denied service.* Unlike other mental health service providers, there are no limits on how long a client can be treated.

"The Community Counseling Center provides both **intervention and prevention** services," says Gail Kinsley-Dame who oversees the MA Counseling Program at JFKU. The University also operates centers in Oakland, Sunnyvale, and East County. "We intervene to prevent our clients from initiating or resuming behaviors such as violence or drug use, which not only negatively impacts their own life, but also the quality of life in the community."

The Center is currently raising funds to upgrade and enhance the Center's inventory of therapeutic children's games. Games are key counseling tools for helping children to express their feelings and experiences. Many of the Center's games are old and badly in need of replacement. These expenses are not a current part of the Center's budget. For more information about mental health services or about supporting the Center, call (925) 798-9240.