

associate professor of history and urban studies and planning at UC San Diego.

• **Perry Viscosity** JD '87 was recognized as an outstanding young litigator in the *National Law Journal's* annual "40 Under 40" feature. He is co-chair of Latham & Watkins' Orange County litigation department.

ALUMNI PROFILE

Always the Twain Shall Meet

"It was quite a moment," says noted Mark Twain scholar Laura Skandera Trombley PhD '89, describing the experience of seeing herself on the silver screen in the Ken Burns' documentary *Mark Twain*. Sweetening the moment was the fact that the screening took place at the White House, where Trombley had been invited by First Lady Laura Bush to participate in an American author lecture series.

The eventful day might never had happened without USC professor emeritus Jay Martin, a renowned Americanist. "When I entered USC, I thought I'd write my dissertation on British literature," says Trombley. "Because of Jay Martin's influence, I switched to American literature and then concentrated on Mark Twain."

Martin entrusted Trombley with a recently discovered treasure trove of Twain letters, seven of which had never been read by scholars. From these she formed her exciting, but controversial, doctoral thesis: that Twain and his work were hugely influenced by the women in his life. This thesis became the basis of a book: *Mark Twain in the Company of Women*.

She admits that hers is a fairly new interpretation of Twain. "I haven't won over everybody yet," she says. "But that's okay. That's academia."

Her educational leadership, however, has indeed won over the academic community. In November 2001, after a yearlong national hunt, a presidential search committee selected Trombley to be the fifth president of Pitzer College, a private liberal-arts college in Claremont, Calif.

"As new president, I hope to inform people about Pitzer's mission and also to bring the college community together," says Trombley, who previously spent five years at Coe College in Cedar Rapids, Iowa, as vice president for academic affairs and dean of the faculty. The first of many projects she'll tackle will be a capital campaign to recreate residential housing on Pitzer's campus.

Laura Trombley with students in a political science colloquium.



HER NEW POSITION at Pitzer brings Trombley full circle, back to her California roots. It's an ideal fit. Her 6-year-old son, Nelson "Sparkey" Edmond Jr., is enjoying living near his grandparents. And her husband, Nelson Edmond, a teacher and exhibiting artist, is proud to be among the 4 percent of academic presidential spouses who are male. "He loves it," says Trombley.

Despite her presidential duties, Trombley still manages to find time for more personal pursuits, which include an interest in Chinese-American women writers. She is the author of *Critical Essays on Maxine Hong Kingston* and is currently working on her third Twain-related book, *Mark Twain's Other Woman*, about Twain's secretary Isabel Lyon, the "the scarlet woman of the Twain biography."

"Something in Twain made him keep going forward and keep taking risks," says Trombley. "And I find that very interesting." Just like the object of her scholarly obsession, Trombley keeps spiriting forward.

—Laurel DiGangi



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Blake E. Christian MBT is a partner at Holt-house Carlin & Van Trigt LLP, a West Los Angeles-based certified public accounting firm that appeared on this year's top-100 list of accounting firms in *Public Accounting Report*. • **Kelly M. Martin** was elected to the board of trustees of Southwestern School of Law in Los Angeles. Previously she served as deputy mayor of the City of Los Angeles and chief of staff to then-mayor Richard Riordan. • **Pablo Sanchez** is the founder and CEO of High Performance Database Engineering, a consulting firm offering database services nationally. He lives in Colorado with his wife and two sons.

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Julie Dickey joined the on-air team of WMBB-TV's "News 13 This Morning" in Panama City, Fla., as the weather anchor. • **Mike Dickey**, who is Julie's husband, is a partner in the litigation section of the Barron & Redding law firm in Panama City. • **Patrick J. Ford** has been named managing partner of KPMG's Honolulu office. KPMG LLP is a global organization offering auditing, tax and advisory services. • **Dale Frankhouse** started a real estate development company with his wife in Corona del Mar, Calif. The couple has two children, Josef and Adam. • **Matthew Ito** PharmD was promoted to full professor and vice chair of the Thomas Long School of Pharmacy at the University of the Pacific in Stockton, Calif. • **Elizabeth Olson** has been elected president of Trojan Junior Auxiliary. She is currently manager of the National Education Center at OAOHS, a health insurance software vendor located in Woodland Hills, Calif.

TROMBLEY PHOTO: NANCY NEWMAN-BAUER