

csun magazine

FALL
2024

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Inclusive Innovation

CSUN advances
accessibility for people
with all abilities. 14







Rise

On Our Way

Remember your first day on campus? We sure do: Late-August heatwave, brand-new shoes, backpack, full water bottle, high hopes and butterflies in our stomach. Matadors brought all that and more to the first day of the 2024-25 school year. Here, students move along busy Jacaranda Walk, looking east toward the Arbor Grill and Jacaranda Hall. The lush canopy of green Jacaranda trees provides welcome shade to new and returning students and faculty.

#firstimpression

In one word, how would you describe your experience here at CSUN? First year students describe their first impressions of our school now that they're on campus.

Learn more about CSUN and join the conversation on social media:
[@csun_edu](#) on TikTok.

CSUN is...

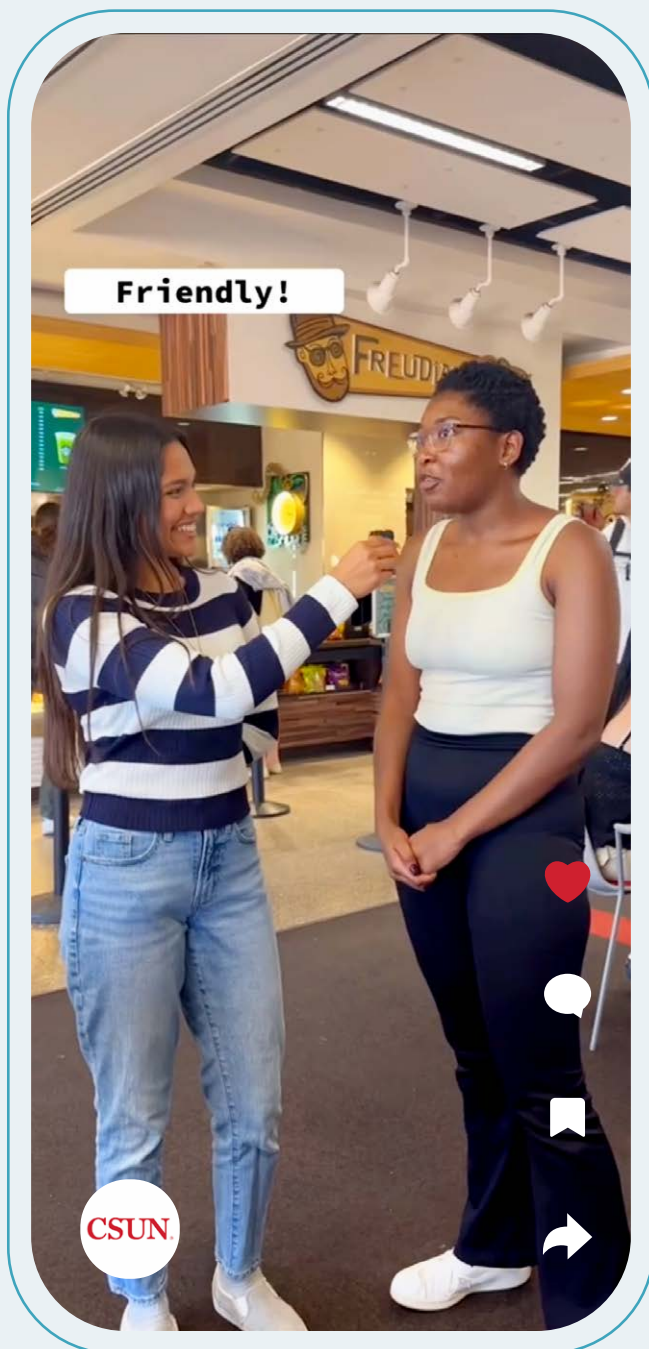
FROM THE VIDEO

-  "Amazing!"
-  "Fun!"
-  "Very Diverse!"
-  "Lively!"
-  "Huge!"

FROM THE COMMENTS

@DrSteven10 🇺🇸
Whole loads of stuff to do! ❤️❤️❤️
Gooooo Matadorssss

@ovoirina 🇺🇸
Livelyyyyy 🙌🙌🙌🙌🙌



ASHOSHA HAQUE '26
interviews a fellow
student at the
University Library.

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CSUN is a recognized leader in advancing inclusion and accessibility for people with disabilities.

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Inclusive Excellence

When it comes to advancing inclusion and accessibility for people with disabilities, CSUN is a recognized leader.



At CSUN, everything we do is about enabling human potential — academically, professionally and personally. With *four* decades of national leadership as the host of the annual CSUN Assistive Technology Conference (ubiquitously known as The CSUN Conference) and the wealth of tools and resources available to students right here on campus via Disability Resources and Educational Services (among many other noteworthy programs), CSUN is committed to advancing inclusive opportunities, experiences and spaces that empower everyone in our community to participate and thrive.

People of all abilities contribute extraordinary talents, perspectives and achievements across every part of our community and drive the conversations that advance inclusion and access. In this issue of CSUN Magazine, we share some of the ways our students with disabilities are supported in using their talents and perspectives to achieve their highest aspirations — and how faculty and staff are sparking the development of new and innovative assistive technologies to advance accessibility around the globe.

The CSUN Conference, scheduled for March 10-14, 2025 in Anaheim, is the premier event of its kind *anywhere*, attracting more than 4,500 visitors in 2024 to its lectures and exhibit hall.

Exhibitors at recent conferences have shared innovative research and products in the beta-testing stage, from the use of artificial intelligence (AI) in robotics to a suitcase designed to help its user navigate through an unfamiliar airport or city.

This issue also features a deep dive into what makes our Gen Z Matadors tick. Those among us who were born between roughly 1997-2010 are known as tech savvy, socially conscious, and deeply concerned about the environment and mental health. In this feature, you'll meet several proud Matadors and learn what *they* think defines their generation.

To our entire Matador community — no matter your generation — thank you for all the ways you engage with CSUN. Together we are creating a more inclusive, just and equitable future for us all.

With gratitude,

Erika D. Beck, Ph.D.
President

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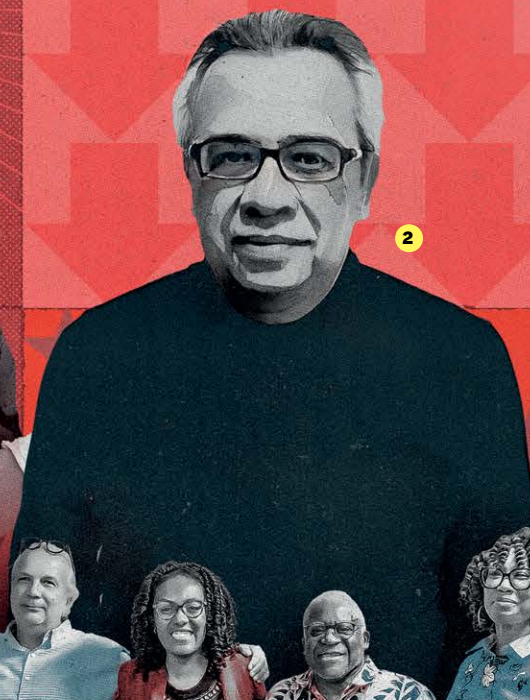
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This *is* News from Northridge *CSUN*



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ILLUSTRATION BY MAX-O-MATIC



ALUMNI

Paralympic Promise

Bridge Wins Gold, Whitmore Finishes Fifth at 2024 Paralympics

CSUN alumnae **Katie Holloway Bridge '08** (Sociology) and **Jamie Whitmore '98** (Criminology and Corrections) made Matador Nation proud at the 2024 Paralympics in Paris in September. Bridge, a CSUN Women's Basketball alum, won gold as a member of the women's Sitting Volleyball team for the third straight Paralympics. Whitmore, a paracyclist and CSUN Track & Field alum, captured fifth place in the women's C1-3 road race in Paracycling.

Bridge helped Team USA to a 3-1 victory over China in the gold medal game Sept. 7. The former Matador standout finished with the second-most points on the team, with 15. She previously was named MVP of the women's tournament at the 2020 Paralympics in Tokyo, and she won gold in Rio de Janeiro in 2016. Bridge is a five-time Paralympian.

For more on Bridge and Whitmore, visit csun.edu/magazine and CSUN Newsroom.



**KATIE HOLLOWAY
BRIDGE**
Sitting Volleyball
Gold medal



JAMIE WHITMORE
Paracycling
5th place



Who We Heard

We welcomed Julio back to campus, got inspired by the London Philharmonic and met our teen crush, Josh.



9.19

Julio César Ortiz

Julio César Ortiz, an alumnus and 20-time Emmy award-winning journalist, was the keynote speaker at New Student Convocation, Sept. 19 at the University Library Lawn. Ortiz '00 (Journalism/Speech Communication) is a reporter for KMEX - 34 Univision Los Angeles. As a student, he founded the first-ever, 30-minute weekly Spanish newscast in the CSU system.

09.28-29

Reeve Carney and Javier Muñoz

performed in Randy Newman's musical, "Faust," in an original concert at The Soraya. Good and evil battled it out in an American retelling of the classic story. Newman's only musical highlights the songwriter's unmatched wit.



CSUN #s

9 top public school among regional universities in the West, per *U.S. News & World Report*.

7 on the AASHE 2024 Sustainable Campus Index among master's institutions.

3 in the nation for awarding bachelor's degrees in the cultural, ethnic, area, gender and group studies, and communication, journalism and related programs, according to the *Chronicle of Higher Education*.

9 CSUN is one of the nation's Top 10 universities for social mobility, according to the *Wall Street Journal/College Pulse 2025 Best Colleges in the U.S.* — ranking No. 9. The ranking was developed in collaboration with research partners College Pulse and Statista.



COMMUNITY

Faculty Unveil Research on Reparations for Black Angelenos

Several CSUN faculty members kicked off the fall semester by unveiling the results of their extensive research on the range of discrimination experienced by L.A.'s Black citizens over the past 100 years. At an Aug. 27 campus event, researchers discussed their report, "An Examination of African American Experiences in Los Angeles," in which they documented a dozen different categories of harms to the Black community over the past century. The report is part of the work assigned to The Reparations Advisory Commission, a blue-ribbon task force established in 2021 by city officials. The commission's objectives include developing and recommending the format and goals of reparations for Black citizens, as well as seeking opportunities to fund the reparations.

ARTS

Break a Leg!

CSUN Debuts New Major in Dance

Dance is art, imagination, collaboration and the physical expression of the human existence. CSUN students can now earn a Bachelor of Arts degree in dance, beginning this fall.

"This new degree was inspired by our students who love dance and want to complete a degree that will prepare them for a career in dance," said kinesiology professor Paula Thomson. CSUN still offers a Bachelor of Science in kinesiology with a dance option and a minor in dance. Thomson pointed out that many of its alumni have gone on to become well-regarded professional dancers and choreographers.

EMERGING
CSUN students perform in 2023 as part of the annual spring dance concert.



LEE CHOO

NEST-ing on Campus

Centralized Space Will Help Students Soar

CSUN students soon will have a one-stop campus location where they can access help with food or housing, emergency funds and other basic needs — all the things they need to focus on their goals and thrive. The Valera NEST (“Nurturing Environment for Students to Thrive”) is scheduled to open its doors during the 2025-26 school year. The centralized resource for CSUN’s basic needs programs and services is taking shape in a renovated space in the University Student Union (USU) — providing students in need of necessities with the stability and support they need to thrive in the classroom.

On May 3, CSUN ceremonially broke ground on the new space and celebrated donors and other supporters who stepped up to make this important project happen. The renovated space was made possible by donors Debbie and Milt Valera ’68 (Journalism), Hon.D. ’23 and Barbara ’74 (English) and Rick Levy ’74 (Political Science), as well as Assemblywoman Pilar Schiavo (D-Chatsworth), who helped secure \$6 million in the California state budget for the project.

CSUN’s USU also contributed reserve funds to help realize the project. The Valera NEST is the vision of USU Executive Director Debra L. Hammond, who’s retiring Dec. 31, after more than 30 years at CSUN.

While the university already offers a variety of support services — the CSUN

Food Pantry, Cal Fresh Outreach/Healthy Living, Matty’s Closet, Basic Needs Care Coordinators, financial assistance such as the MataCare Fund, and more — the Valera NEST will centralize all these student resources in one attractive and very accessible location. It’s the first of its kind in the California State University system, said William Watkins ’74, vice president for Student Affairs and dean of students.

Milt Valera spoke poetically about the project, which he called a place for all things nourishing and nurturing. “When we learned recently that the original name of the Basic Needs Suite was being changed to Valera NEST, we felt an immediate sense of added responsibility and even a little bit of pressure,” he said. “A Nurturing Environment for Students to Thrive — NEST — is not a place or a commitment to be taken lightly.”

In recognition of the Levys’ impactful philanthropic support, the Valera NEST community kitchen will be named in memory of Ila Levy, Rick Levy’s mother. Barbara Levy noted the meaning behind the kitchen’s name and its namesake, her mother-in-law, Ila Levy, a first-generation American who was a nurturing force in her community and believed in the power of higher education. Barbara Levy said she envisioned the Valera NEST as a home away from home for students. —*Jacob Bennett*

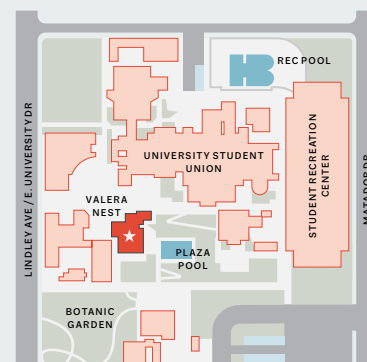
SPECS

7,300 square feet of space

2025–2026 School Year open to campus



The Valera NEST will include student resources such as the CSUN Food Pantry, emergency housing assistance, food assistance programs (i.e. CalFresh Outreach) and Matty’s Closet, which provides clothes for job interviews, conferences or other professional opportunities.





Who We Heard



10.10

London Philharmonic

The London Philharmonic Orchestra returned to The Soraya for the first time in a decade, accompanied by American violinist Randall Goosby, on Oct. 10. The orchestra is known for their work on the first Lord of the Rings film, "The Fellowship of the Ring."



11.14

Josh Peck

Actor, social media sensation and former Nickelodeon teen star ("Drake & Josh") is scheduled (at press time) to give the AS Big Lecture, a perennial favorite event for Matador students, at the Plaza del Sol Performance Hall.

TOP: LUIS LUQUE; BOTTOM: COURTESY OF JOSH PECK



"LA CAUSA" (THE CAUSE)

Top: Helen Chávez, Dolores Huerta, Kathy Lynch and Jon Lewis picket at a vineyard, Delano, ca. 1966. **Bottom:** William King carries a Huelga-NFWA sign, with marchers on the road to Sacramento, 1966.



ARTS

Spotlighting Sacrifice

Exhibition Spotlights 'Hope and Dignity' of the Farmworker Movement

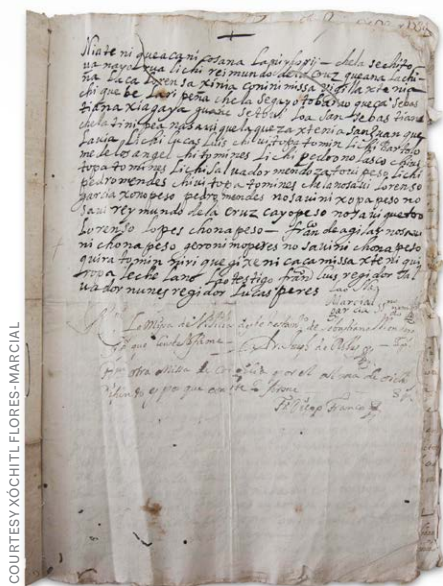
They risked their lives in the fight for a better economic future for farmworkers—and the fight for recognition that the men, women and children who picked produce in America's fields were human beings and deserved to be treated with respect.

"Hope and Dignity: The Farmworker Movement," curated by CSUN's Tom & Ethel Bradley Center, captures the faces of hundreds of men and women who made up the movement. The exhibition runs through Jan. 26, 2025, at the Museum of Social Justice in downtown Los Angeles.

"The farmworker movement was a labor movement, but it was also a civil rights move-

ment," said journalism professor José Luis Benavides, director of the Bradley Center. "It's the combination of both of those things that made the farmworker movement so impactful during the 1960s and probably one of the most important movements for the Chicano/Latino community in the United States in the 20th century."

The exhibition focuses on the early years of the farmworkers' struggle, marked by a historic grape strike, boycotts, a march from Delano to Sacramento, early efforts to organize workers in Texas, and César Chávez's fast calling for nonviolence and sacrifice.



COURTESY XÓCHITL FLORES-MARCIAL

A Zapotec will (c. 1675), attributed to Sebastiana de Mendoza—studied by CSUN associate professor Xóchitl Flores-Marcial.

Holly Jerger

Art Galleries Director

Mike Curb College of Arts, Media, and Communication

Holly Jerger joined CSUN as director of the campus Art Galleries in 2023, and she immediately jumped in to produce exhibitions that highlight the university community and its academic pride points (for example, collaborating with the departments of Chicana/o Studies and Art & Design for a Día de los Muertos celebration that shares curriculum and art from the departments). Jerger and Erika Ostrander, exhibitions coordinator, work with a team of seven or eight student assistants during the school year.

“I’ve always liked the shared, collaborative, nature of exhibition development,” said Jerger, who came to CSUN after 17 years at L.A.’s Craft Contemporary. “Folks come together with a shared vision. Doing the install is always the funnest part for me because it’s where all of these ideas and plans you’ve been making for months become real. They become physical. ... Working with students has been particularly rewarding. I find the students here to be incredibly creative and hard-working.” At CSUN, Jerger aims to increase the Art Galleries’ public programming and community outreach. — *Olivia Herstein*

For Jerger’s heavy, essential installation tools, a heavy-canvas toolbag is just the thing. It’s easier to schlep to and from her car, and from the Art Galleries to smaller, satellite galleries around the vast campus.

CULTURE

Overlooked History

National Archives Honors Prof’s Effort to Preserve Indigenous Languages

Associate professor of Chicana/o studies **Xóchitl Flores-Marcial’s** work to document and preserve the Indigenous languages of Mexico has received recognition from the National Archives.

Flores-Marcial is a member of a transnational team of researchers that has received a \$90,000 grant from the Archives’ National Historical Publications & Records Commission to support the creation of a collaborative digital edition of Colonial Valley Zapotec texts and other resources. These resources can be used by scholars and members of the general public around the world interested in studying and understanding Indigenous life in what is now known as the Oaxacan region of Mexico, from as early as the 16th century.

“There is an old saying: To the victor goes history,” said Flores-Marcial, a historian of Zapotec Indigenous communities who teaches in CSUN’s College of Humanities. “By preserving and making these texts and languages available digitally, we are offering an opportunity for historians, scholars and our own students to learn about what life was like for the Indigenous people who lived in southern Mexico, primarily in the state of Oaxaca—a history that was often overlooked because of Spanish colonialism, until recently.”

The project, *Ticha*—named for the Zapotec word for “word”—is based at Haverford College in Pennsylvania. In addition to Flores-Marcial, its team includes researchers from the University of Florida, Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, U Penn, UT Austin, University of New Mexico, University of British Columbia, and UC Riverside.





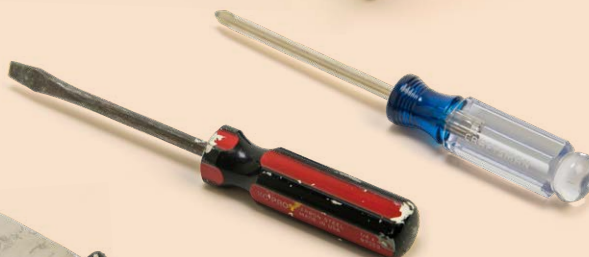
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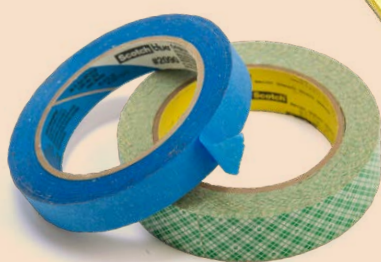
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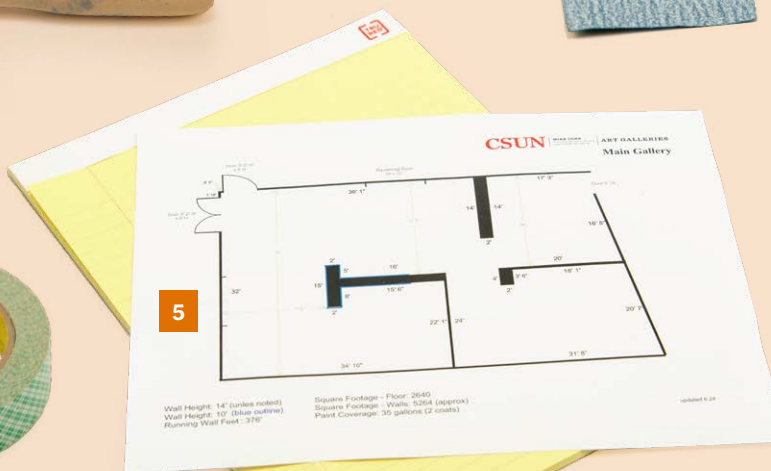
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5



6



Gallery Tools

- 1 **MINI-LEVEL** Not gonna lie. We (editors) coveted this cute, little level.
- 2 **DRILL** A high-quality, cordless drill is a gallery professional's best friend and must-have.
- 3 **"QUAKE HOLD" PUTTY AND MUSEUM WAX** are dabbed behind the art piece's frame to secure it in place, to keep it from moving on the wall over time — whether it's during a quake or, more commonly, vibrations from people walking across the gallery's floors.
- 4 **PAINT SCRAPER AND SANDER** "We build up a lot of paint layers on gallery walls, so when you pull out a screw, it puckers the wall out. [Before you install something new], you sand or flatten it out, fill it with spackle, let it dry and then come back and sand it smooth. Then, you'd have to at least do some touch-up painting."
- 5 **A FLOOR PLAN/MAP** helps Jerger, Ostrander and team map out the show in the gallery space.
- 6 **NITRILE, DISPOSABLE GLOVES** "Even if your hands are clean, the oils can transfer to materials and leave fingerprints [on the art]."

On View This Fall

"Before You Now: Capturing the Self in Portraiture," through **Dec. 5**.

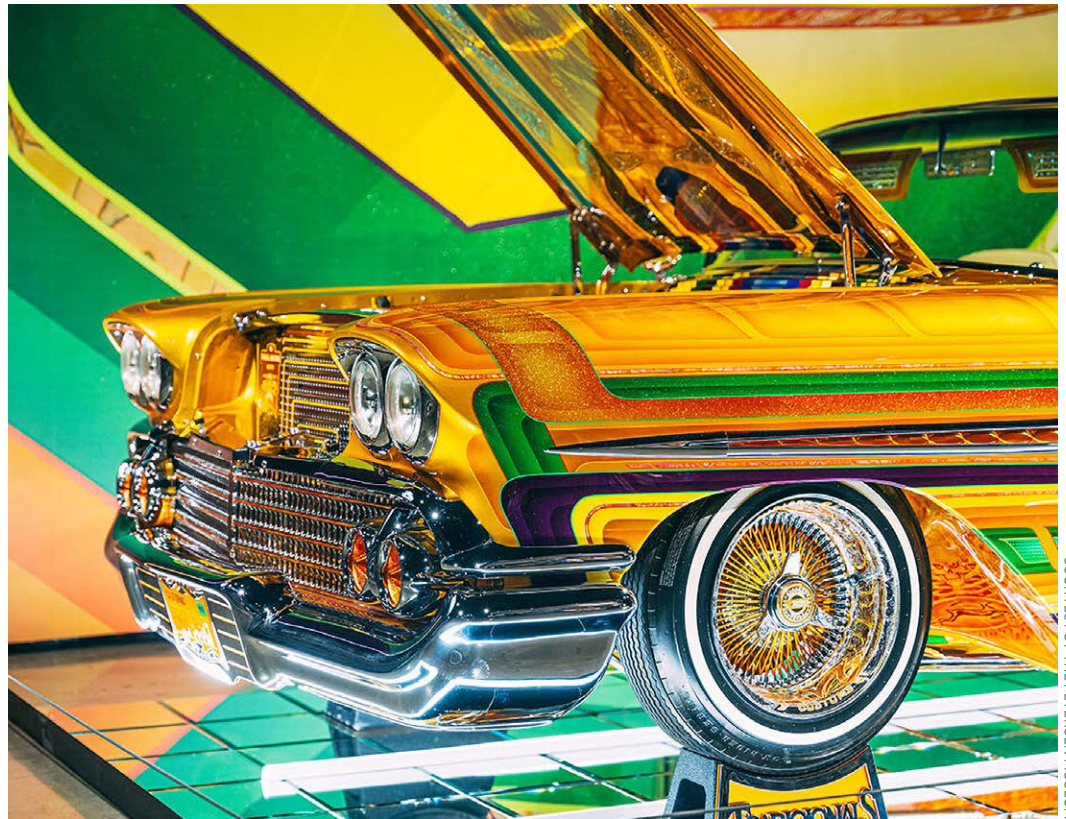
"Seeing and Being Seen," a juried exhibition of portrait-based artworks, **Oct. 28-Dec. 12**.

The CSUN Art Galleries serve the campus and Los Angeles-area audiences through innovative contemporary art exhibitions and related programs. The multifaceted and culturally relevant exhibitions of professional and student artists reflect the diverse communities that make up CSUN and greater L.A. As one of the few art institutions in the San Fernando Valley, CSUN Art Galleries are a unique regional resource where visitors can connect in person with art, artists and each other. For more information, visit csun.edu/art-galleries or follow [@csun_art_galleries](https://www.instagram.com/csun_art_galleries) on Instagram.

Nearly \$1M in Federal Funding Supports Strength United's Community Policing

Strength United, a chartered center of CSUN's Michael D. Eisner College of Education that provides trauma-informed mental health services to survivors of domestic violence, has received \$963,000 in federal Community Project Funding. Congressman Tony Cárdenas (D-Pacoima) presented the check Oct. 8 at Strength United's Family Justice Center in Van Nuys, to support the Domestic Violence Community Policing and Advocacy Project. The initiative will enhance law enforcement's investigational capacity, expand advocacy services, and provide education on trauma-responsive care and strangulation crimes.

The Family Justice Center provides 24/7 crisis intervention, long-term support and prevention for individuals of all ages who experience or witness child maltreatment, domestic violence and sexual assault. Strength United is dedicated to ending abuse, empowering families, and developing leaders through specific case programs, counseling, advocacy and prevention.



COURTESY OF THE PETERSEN MUSEUM

TAKE A LITTLE
TRIP WITH ME
1958 Chevrolet
Impala "Final Score"

CULTURE

Rolling Art

Prof Curates 'Love Letter' to Lowrider Craftsmanship

Denise Sandoval, CSUN professor of Chicana/o studies, called the latest exhibit she co-curated with Los Angeles' Petersen Automotive Museum a "love letter" to the craftsmen and craftswomen who have created some of the world's most distinctive lowriders. The "Best in Low" exhibit, which runs through April 2025, celebrates the intricate and labor-intensive work that goes into creating these custom vehicles.

"People forget that lowriders really are pieces of art," said Sandoval, who is considered one of the world's leading scholars of lowrider culture. "This exhibit is about highlighting the high level of customization skills within the lowrider community. No previous exhibitions have really focused on the craftsmen and women who do this amazing work. Other exhibits have leaned into the history, the culture and the car clubs. This time, we're leaning into the car itself. In many ways, this is a love letter to the men and women who make lowriders so special."

The exhibit, she said, highlights the regional diversity of the lowrider culture. It includes cars and motorcycles from Southern California, Northern California, New Mexico, Texas and Japan. It also features cars owned and worked on by women.



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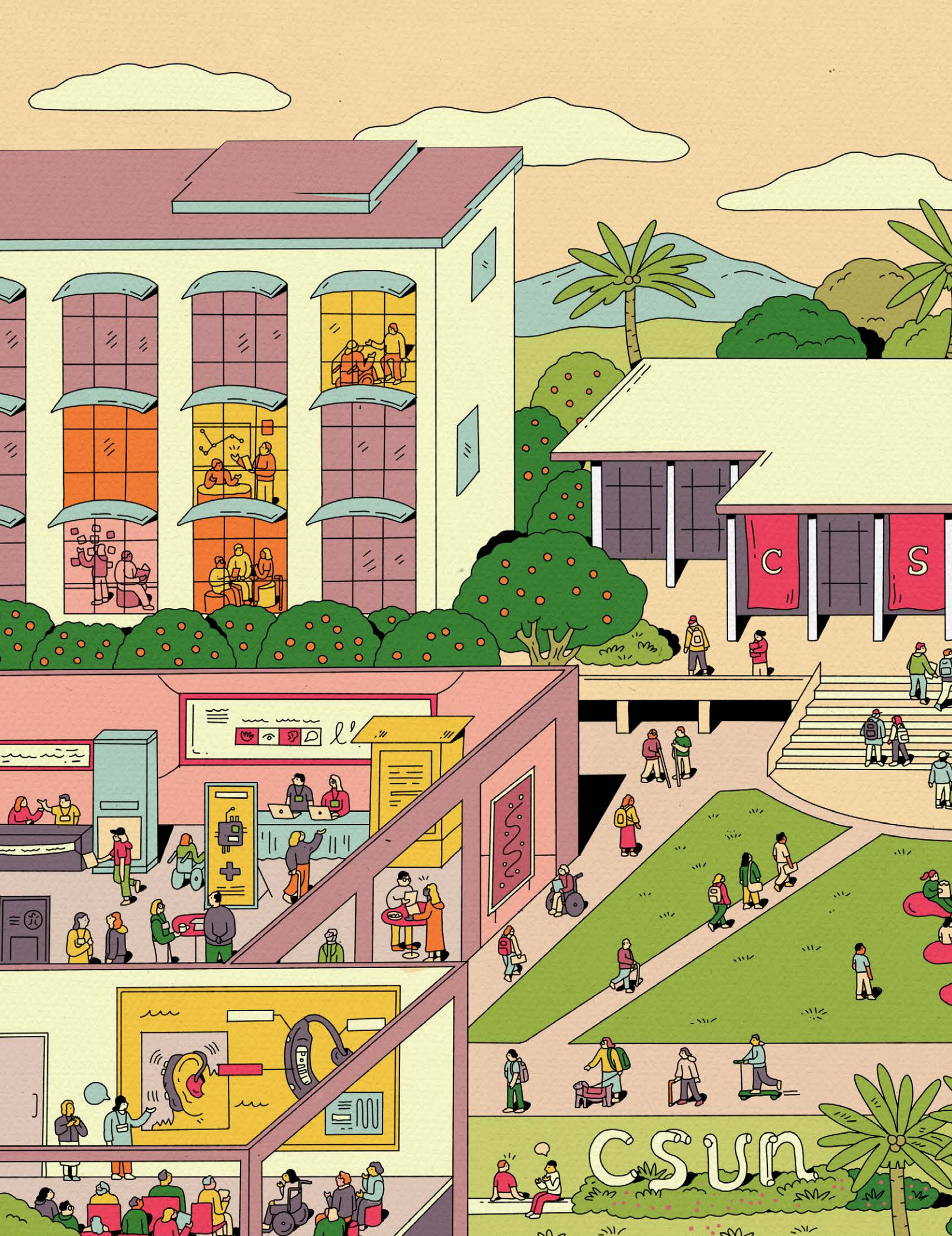
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Rudy Pereira,
CSUN Alumni
2024 Distinguished Alumni Honoree

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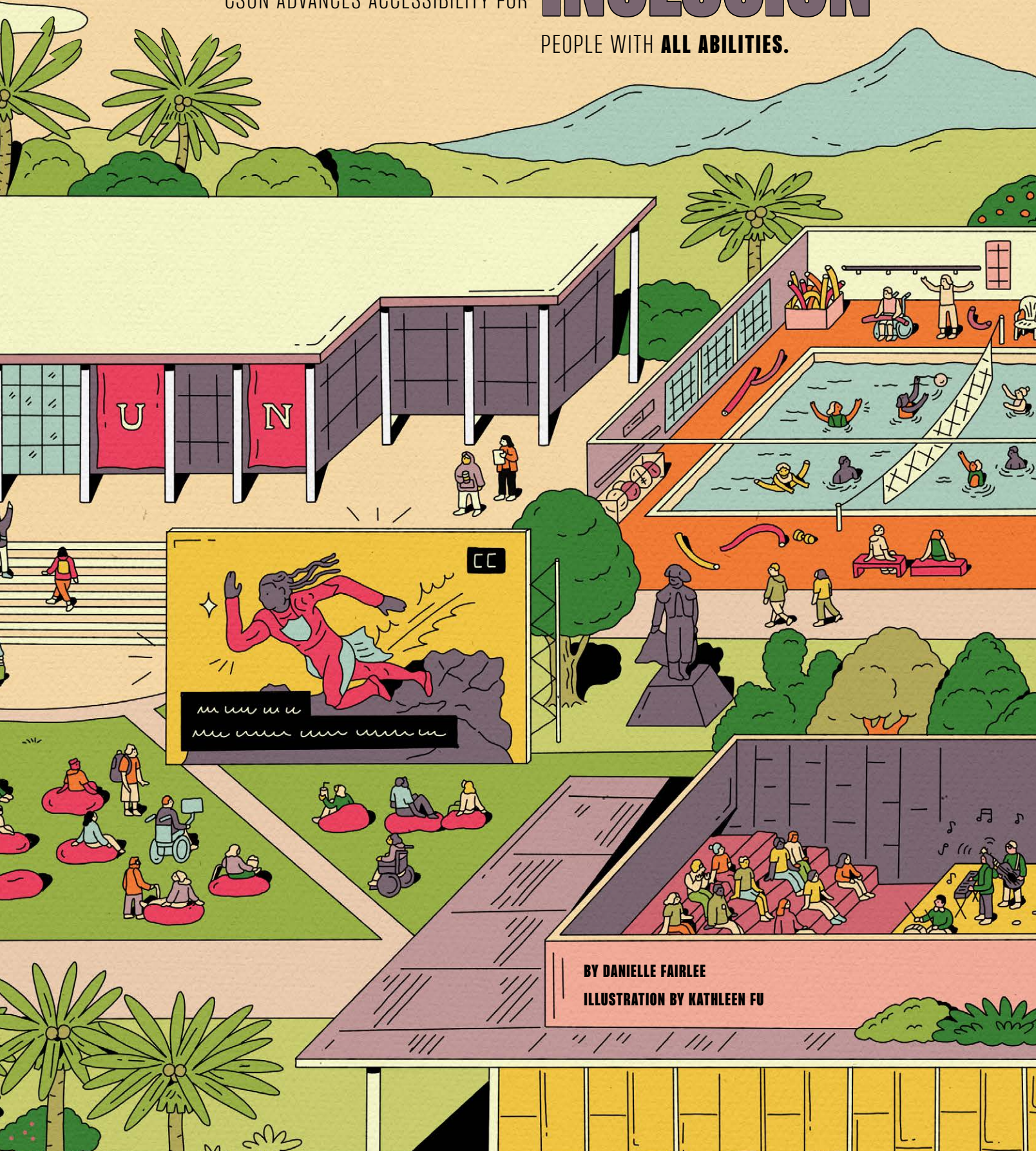
PREMIER AMERICA CREDIT UNION



WHERE INNOVATION MEETS INCLUSION

CSUN ADVANCES ACCESSIBILITY FOR

PEOPLE WITH **ALL ABILITIES.**



BY DANIELLE FAIRLEE

ILLUSTRATION BY KATHLEEN FU

When it comes to advancing inclusion and accessibility for people with disabilities, California State University, Northridge is a recognized leader, thanks in part to its premier assistive technology conference, ASL/English Interpreter Program, support services for students with disabilities, physical activity programs for local children and adults with special needs, and a new minor in disability studies.

Whether empowering students to overcome challenging circumstances to succeed and graduate — or sparking the development of new and innovative assistive technologies to advance accessibility around the globe — CSUN leaders strive to make the world a more inclusive and accessible place.

40 YEARS OF LEADERSHIP ON ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY

IN EARLY 2025, the university will host the 40th annual CSUN Assistive Technology Conference. The event grew out of the need to connect academics, researchers and developers working in the burgeoning field of assistive technology — namely, devices, equipment and technology — to help individuals with disabilities perform certain tasks.

“What we are about is pushing the world toward an inclusive place for all people with abilities and disabilities to live barrier free,” said Julia Santiago, managing director of the Center on Disabilities, which hosts the conference.

Assistive technology includes tools such as screen readers and navigation aids, hearing aids and wheelchairs, speech-recognition and -generation software, and even virtual companions. According to Santiago, artificial intelligence (AI) is revolutionizing the field as developers look to make assistive technology more personalized and responsive.

The CSUN Conference, scheduled for March 10-14, 2025, has grown to be the pre-

mier event of its kind across the globe, attracting more than 4,500 visitors in 2024 to its lectures and exhibit hall in Anaheim, Santiago said. Research presented at the conference is compiled for the center’s annual publication, *The Journal on Technology and Persons with Disabilities*.

“We bring together stakeholders across the field of accessibility and technology,” Santiago said. “We span a huge, comprehensive, diverse stakeholder group — from researchers and academics to Fortune 500 companies, to the users themselves as well as practitioners.”

Exhibitors at recent conferences have shared innovative research and products in the beta-testing stage, from the use of AI in robotics to a suitcase that could help a traveler with disabilities with navigation through an unfamiliar airport or city, she noted.

“Thought leaders come together to share their ideas and engage with the community to help figure out trends and what is to come,” Santiago said. “It is one of the few opportunities where an educator might meet with AI designers or accessibility engi-

neers for a large company, for a learning experience that may translate beyond the one niche area in which they work.”

The exhibition hall is open to the public, so the conference attracts many individuals

“CSUN has been inclusive since before inclusiveness and diversity were trending.”

with disabilities, who engage with developers and vendors throughout the exhibits.

“To have this opportunity to engage with each other is one of the biggest things,”



Sony Truly Wireless
Earbuds LinkBuds

Sony Off-Ear Design
Wireless Headphones
Float Run



Santiago added. “A lot of people design and build and have great ideas, but if you don’t take the user into consideration, you’re likely to miss the mark.”

Dave Moon ’89 (Graphic Design), CSUN professor of art and design, is a regular attendee at the Assistive Technology Conference and works to incorporate accessibility into design and teaching.

“This conference began 40 years ago, meaning CSUN has been inclusive since before inclusiveness and diversity were trending,” Moon said. “We have been gearing our university toward making sure that everyone is welcome and included for a long, long time. Because of this, inclusivity is part of my DNA, part of who I am as a teacher and, hopefully, as a human being.”

Moon said he’s particularly interested in how design and technology can ensure mobile applications and websites are accessible for all users. At recent conferences, he’s enjoyed learning about the use of robotic companions to combat loneliness and isolation in elderly populations, he added.

“Japan’s really been advancing research and assistive technology to support companionship,” Moon said, noting the large number of exhibitors who attend from across the world.

Kate Tipton ’21 (M.A., Educational Technology), program manager for CSUN’s Universal Design Center, recommends that students, alumni, faculty and staff attend the conference.

“It’s one thing to talk about access,” Tipton said. “It’s another thing entirely to be immersed in it, to see what access and inclusion could look like. The conference is my glimpse into the world we’re trying to build. From it, I bring a deeper understanding of accessibility back to my work at CSUN.”

PREPARING ASL INTERPRETERS FOR SUCCESS

FOR STUDENTS who want to master American Sign Language (ASL)/English interpretation, CSUN’s Interpreter Education Program within the Department of Deaf Studies in the Eisner College provides training and field work opportunities.

“The mere presence of our ASL Interpreter Program within a Deaf studies department does a lot to make the world a better place,” said Deaf studies professor Jonathan Webb, who coordinates the ASL/English interpretation track. “It certainly creates a focal point of resistance against systems that would try to make us believe we are all the same.”

Webb said deaf and hard-of-hearing people need skilled ASL interpreters in a multitude of settings, from doctors’ offices to courtrooms and performances (*see sidebar, p. 19*).

“ASL interpreters are needed everywhere communication is happening — everything from substance abuse classes and social services to Scout meetings,” he said.

At CSUN, ASL interpreter training includes field work and volunteer opportunities.

“Because we are a Deaf studies program, we produce interpreters who are ready to go to work,” Webb said. “They are typically snatched up and hired right away. They have the processing skills and the ability to engage in the really complex act of interpretation.”

At a Hispanic-Serving Institution (HSI) like CSUN, students in the ASL/English interpretation program sometimes develop trilingual interpretation skills, with many interpreting from Spanish to English to ASL. Webb likens this skillset to advanced juggling. He also trains ASL/English interpreters at CSUN who speak Armenian, Vietnamese and other languages.

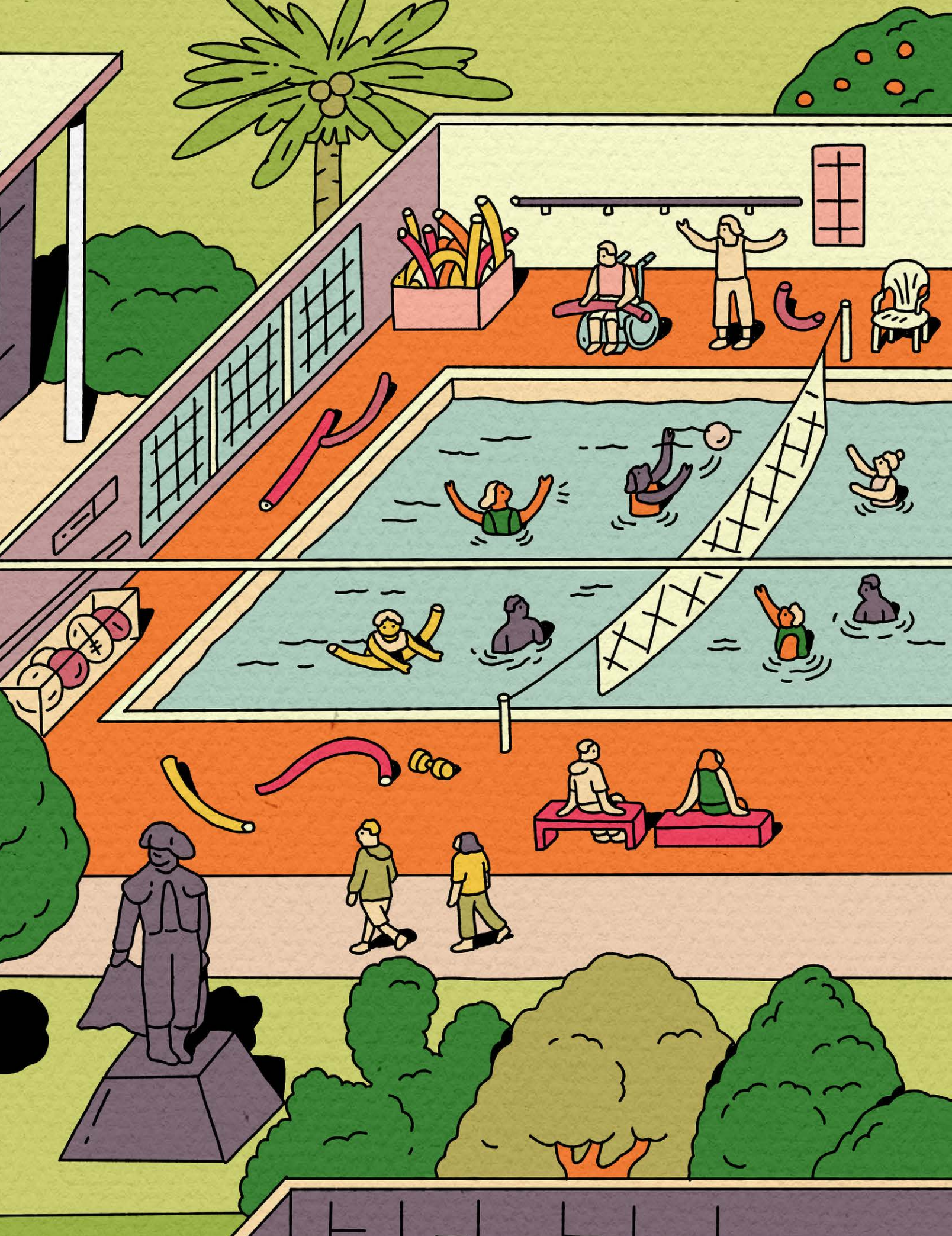
“Juggling three languages is very challenging initially, but it can lead to exceptional interpretation skills when mastered,” he said.



DID YOU KNOW?

Marvel’s First Deaf Superhero is a Matador

In her role as Makkari in Marvel’s 2021 film “Eternals,” alumna **Lauren Ridloff ’01** (English) broke stereotypes as a woman of color who is deaf, playing the superhero character. The Tony Award nominee (“Children of a Lesser God”) also played Connie on AMC’s “The Walking Dead.” Ridloff was honored with CSUN’s Distinguished Alumni Award in 2022.



"I tell my students, 'As much language as you have and as fluent as you are in that language, that's what is going to determine your success.'"

HELPING INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES MOVE & THRIVE

INCLUSION MEETS fun and movement at CSUN's Center of Achievement through Adapted Physical Activity. There, kinesiology undergraduates and graduate students are paired with individuals with disabilities from the campus and nearby communities, including CSUN students, faculty and staff, as well as local children, adults and seniors with special needs. The kinesiology students help their clients implement adapted physical activity programs to enhance their health and wellness. The center, next to Redwood Hall on Lindley Avenue, is in its 53rd year on campus. For many clients, the program is a welcome social escape.

"We offer more than physical rehabilitation," said Taeyou Jung, executive director of the center and professor of kinesiology in CSUN's College of Health and Human

"You see the students
revising their career
plan into human services
fields like health care and
rehabilitation, instead of
having the goal to work with
professional athletes."

Development. "For many of our clients, this may be the only chance for them to get out of the house and interact with other people. It becomes a big support group for each other."

Pre-pandemic, the Center of Achievement served approximately 500 clients. The center closed for almost two years during COVID shutdowns but offered virtual exercise programs, Jung said.

The center is rebounding from the pandemic closures and now serves approximately 250 adults and

Are ASL Interpreters Having a Cultural Moment?

In recent years, several ASL interpreters have gone viral on social media, including Justina

Miles, the interpreter for Rihanna's unforgettable 2023 Super Bowl halftime show.

"There is a bit of a cultural moment and heightened awareness of ASL interpreters," said professor Jonathan Webb, who coordinates the ASL/English Interpreter Program in CSUN's Department of Deaf Studies.

He credits the phenomenon in part to the COVID pandemic, with its daily news conferences and briefings that put ASL interpreters on TV screens, computer monitors, phones and other mobile devices around the world, as well as to the Black Lives Matter movement, for stressing the importance of having "Black hands interpreting for Black people," he said.

But he cautioned hearing people to remember that performance interpreting is for deaf and hard-of-hearing people first. "We have to be careful that ASL interpreters are not fetishized," Webb said. "We have to center the needs of deaf individuals."

Within the Deaf community, there's a fair amount of debate about when interpretation of a performance becomes more than just interpretation, he added. For Webb, who's served as an ASL interpreter for productions at the Hollywood Pantages Theatre, there's a fine line between interpretation and performance.

"I should not be portraying characters in a way that pulls the audience to me instead of being tuned into what's really going on, on stage," he said.



DID YOU KNOW?

CSUN Inspired a Sign-Language Barbie

In the late 1990s, Mattel consulted with representatives from CSUN's NCOD: Deaf and Hard of Hearing Services to create a Barbie doll who teaches American Sign Language. Now popular with collectors (prices on eBay range from around \$50 to \$250), Sign Language Barbie featured Barbie as a teacher, with classroom accessories for teaching ASL.

nearly 30 children with special needs who attend classes, Jung said. He and his staff are working to recruit more kinesiology students and clients to expand the programs, he added. “We are gradually getting the participants back,” Jung said.

In the center’s aquatic therapy pools (also known as the Brown Center), kinesiology students help individuals with various

"It's one thing to talk about access. It's another thing entirely to be immersed in it, to see what access and inclusion could look like."

disabilities and chronic health conditions work on strength, flexibility, cardiovascular endurance, balance and gait. The students also help children with special needs work on their water safety, and adapted swim and motor skills. The water’s buoyancy allows them the freedom to move in ways they may not be able to outside of the pool.

For some kinesiology students, the experience in the center’s training program can be life changing, Jung said.

“You see their attitude change,” he said. “You see them revising their career plan into human services fields like health care and rehabilitation, instead of having the goal to work with professional athletes or becoming a personal trainer.”

The center’s service-learning component helps build inclusion into the field of kinesiology, Jung said. Students get hands-on experience applying what they learn in class to work with people with disabilities.

Over the years, Jung said, he’s seen countless success stories. One memorable example is Megan Ngo ’22 (Computer Science). Ngo, who has cerebral palsy, attended the center’s adapted physical activity programs while earning her undergraduate degree. In 2022, she was named the Wolfson Scholar, the university’s top award for a graduating senior. She’s currently working



toward her MBA in CSUN’s David Nazarian College of Business and Economics, aiming for a career in assistive technology (see sidebar).

In classes with other center clients, Ngo said, kinesiology students helped her work on walking and balance. “I had fun working with new students each semester and seeing them build confidence working with us,” she said. That’s all part of the mission for Jung.

“I get to see my students’ growth and my clients’ happiness,” he said. “When the clients come to our center, they’re all smiling and having fun, which is very different from when they are at the hospital or at a doctor’s appointment.”

Thanks to its emphasis on fun, inclusive, accessible physical activity for people with disabilities, the Center for Achievement has impacted thousands of local clients and their families, as well as the “numerous working physical therapists, nurses, medical doctors, occupational therapists and others who went through our training program,” Jung said.

TRAINING FUTURE LEADERS

IN KEEPING with its commitment to inclusion and accessibility, the university recently launched a new minor in disability studies, the first of its kind at a California State University. Commencing this fall in the College of Humanities, the 18-unit, interdisciplinary program includes core classes and electives drawn from more than 20 departments across the university.

“Disability studies examines the social, cultural, historical and political structures that inform disability,” said English professor Leilani Hall, director of the new program. “From a humanities perspective, of course, this means that we are interested in the lived experience of individuals with disabilities — studying disability as a social construct rather than a confining medical diagnosis.”

The university also trains future leaders who want to make the world a more inclusive and accessible place via a variety of majors and specializations, including Deaf studies and special education in the Michael D. Eisner College of Education — as well as through Tseng College’s two master’s de-

gree programs in assistive technology, and the Center on Disabilities' Assistive Technology Applications Certificate Program.

SUPPORTING MATADORS

FOR CSUN STUDENTS seeking access or accommodations to support their academic, professional and personal goals, Disability Resources and Educational Services (DRES) provides a wealth of resources and assistance. Additionally, CSUN's NCOD: Deaf and Hard of Hearing Services provides more than 150 students with ASL interpreters, transcription or assistive technology, and other academic and social support each year.

"Students come to us for communication access," said Cathy McLeod, director of NCOD. "We provide them access services so they can get their education and finish their degree. It's a communication bridge."

NCOD uses 80 service providers, including ASL interpreters and captionists, to serve more than 700 courses per year, McLeod said. It provides interpreters for extracurricular activities, clubs and campus-wide events, with the goal of enriching deaf and hard-of-hearing students' campus life experiences and well-being. ❧

At left: Students study and relax in the lobby of Bayramian Hall, home to CSUN's Disability Resources and Educational Services (DRES), University Counseling Services and a wealth of other resources.

Empowering Assistive Technology Careers

Megan Ngo '22 (Computer Science) is no stranger to assistive technology. The 24-year-old graduate student and Valley native has cerebral palsy and communicates by typing into a laptop for playback.

Assistive technology "has been helping me all my life," said Ngo, currently pursuing her MBA in CSUN's David Nazarian College of Business and Economics. In her Los Angeles Unified School District classrooms, she received help "adjusting to new devices from first grade to when I graduated high school."

At CSUN, Ngo accesses accommodations and support, including use of an adjustable table in class that allows space for her electric wheelchair. As an undergrad, she also attended the adaptive physical ac-

tivity program at the campus' Center for Achievement.

All of this "made me bloom and become confident in who I am today," said Ngo, who was named CSUN's 2022 Wolfson Scholar, the university's top award given to a graduating senior. "There wasn't a time when I didn't feel supported by my friends and faculty."

As a graduate student and in her future career, Ngo said, she hopes to develop assistive technology that makes the world more accessible for other people with disabilities. "I really want to address how some technology still lacks inclusivity, even though it is advertised as accessibility," she said. "I have been disappointed countless times when I tried new features that did not work for me."

Her dream assistive technology would be "a voice assistant that people like me can use, where it can learn my speech patterns and improve itself over time." Ngo says virtual assistants like Siri and Alexa have not worked for her.

"I wish they would improve through testing them with a wider range of the disabled community, from mild to extreme," Ngo said, adding, "there is still a long way to go before [these technologies are] usable for a wider range of people, especially the disabled community."

Ngo attended the CSUN Assistive Technology Conference in 2024. "It was such an eye-opener," she said. "I mainly attended sessions about web accessibility and learned things that will help me as a student. By learning about assistive technology, it will become second nature for us to integrate it throughout our professional careers."

She already plans to attend the 40th anniversary conference in March.

Megan Ngo '22 celebrates her Wolfson Scholar award with Houssam Toutanji, dean, and CSUN President Erika D. Beck, in 2022.



A Portrait of Gen



BY **Olivia Herstein**

PHOTOS BY **Ringo Chiu** AND **Sonia Gurrola**

Gen Z is locked in, brilliant and devoted to family.

AS AMERICANS, WE love to analyze our generational differences. We tend to label, blame, laud or parse each generation — from baby boomers' and millennials' dominance, to Generation X's outsized impact on popular culture and fashion. At CSUN, we're driven by student success and attuned to serving students.

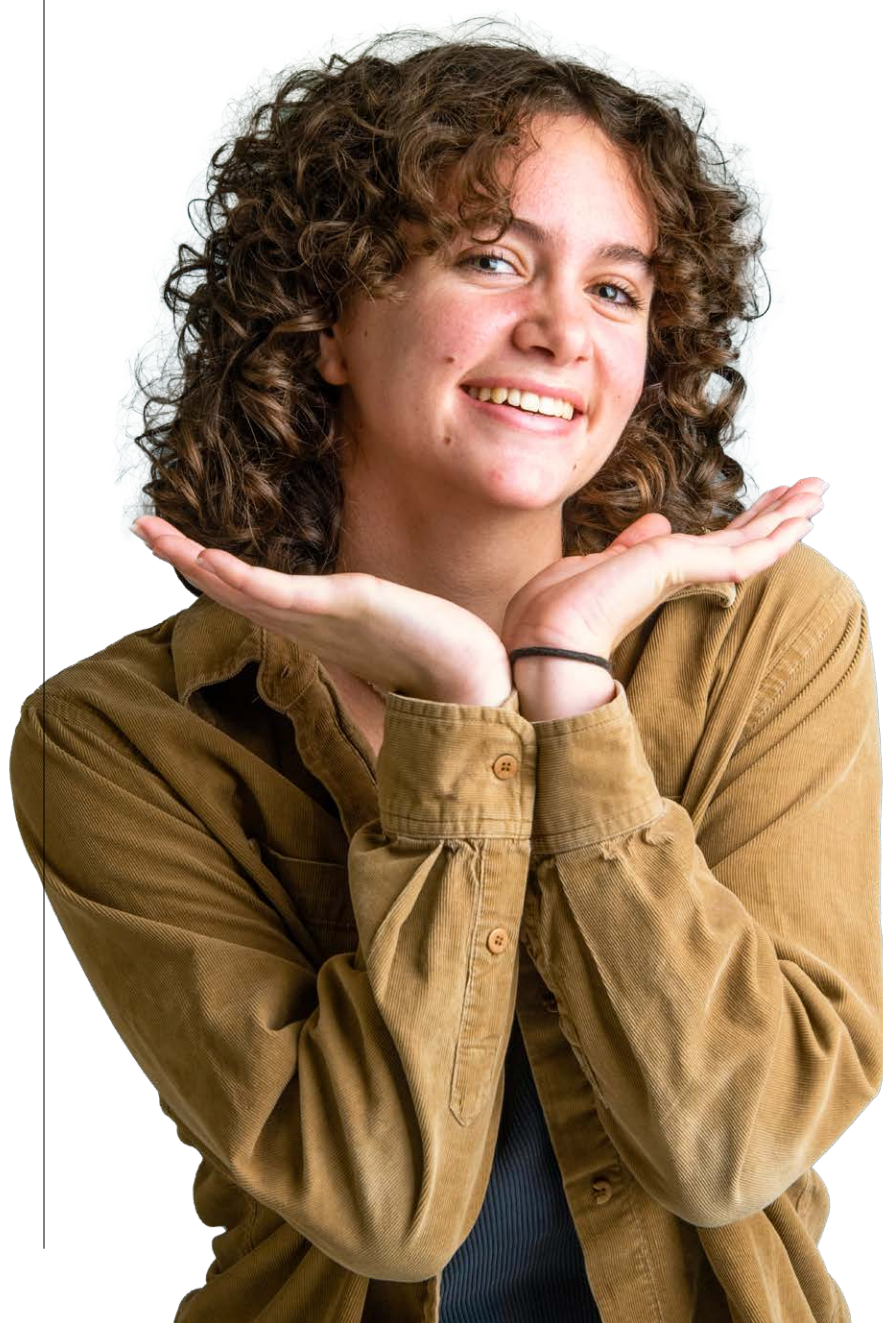
Part of this mission means collecting detailed data, learning about and adapting to each new generation of Matadors. Generation Z — those born between approximately 1997-2010, according to the Pew Research Center — arrived in force on the Northridge campus around the 2015-16 school year, and they've been a powerful, complex force shaping the university and communities ever since.

It's tough to define Gen Z with just a few descriptors, CSUN faculty note, because it's a generation bisected by a pandemic. We're just beginning to understand these impacts. Faculty, advisors and parents have noted marked differences between "elder

Gen Z" — the students who enrolled at CSUN in the years before COVID — and "younger (or current) Gen Z" — particularly those who graduated from high school and/or began their college journey in the midst of the global pandemic.

This fall, as first-time freshmen and transfer students poured nervously onto campus, CSUN welcomed the Class of 2028, nearing the tail end of Gen Z. They're locked in, they're brilliant, they're devoted to family.

In celebration of Gen Z's impact at CSUN — and all they will go on to achieve (or already have achieved) after graduation — meet several proud Matadors and learn what *they* think defines their generation.



: Ready to Explore, Often Unsure of Themselves

NAME McKenna Brown

AGE 19

YEAR Sophomore

MAJOR Creative Writing

“ I often struggle with Imposter Syndrome because I don't always feel the age that I am. Though I am in my second year of adulthood, on the inside, I still feel like I have so much more growing up to do. This feeling made it difficult to grow accustomed to the college lifestyle at first, lowering my confidence levels and making me feel like I didn't belong. Luckily, time brought familiarity, and familiarity brought comfort rather than the feeling of being an imposter. As I begin my sophomore year, I have begun to realize that we are all in this together, and I am hardly the only one who is feeling this way. Of course, I have a lot of growing up to do, I haven't even been alive for two decades!”

: Social Media / Digital Native

NAME Ruby Durant

AGE 22

YEAR Senior

MAJOR Journalism/PR

“ I grew up constantly watching YouTube videos and fascinated with all things pop culture. Now, as a public relations major, I plan to work in social media marketing and publicity after college. In my classes, I learn how to navigate the media and how to reach audiences, preparing me for my career. Social media provides a level of awareness and reach that we have not seen before. It has given me access to current events, news and self expression, and it has given marginalized communities voices and acknowledgment. Social media deserves to be seen as a resource rather than a weapon.”





: Open About Mental Health

NAME_ **Jesus Yanez**

YEAR_ **Sophomore**

MAJOR_ **Psychology**

“ [I’m] a first-generation Mexican college student, majoring in psychology.

[The psychology courses] have impacted my views on mental health, with my own family and those close to me ... allowing me room to fully discuss my problems [with] them. From my thought process to the actions. This allows me to reflect on the way I could walk through a problem next time.

At CSUN, I have felt more welcomed. [This] allows me to express myself, and I’ve been able to form a safe space for me.”



: COVID— Impacted

NAME_ **Adriana Ayala**

AGE_ **22**

YEAR_ **Senior**

MAJOR_ **Business Marketing**



“ I was part of the high school graduating Class of 2020, so I was primarily impacted by COVID when it hit that year in March. I was expecting to finish high school strong, with my academics and enjoying all the senior activities with friends — the traditions, as we all completed a big section of our lives as teenagers. The change from seeing my friends at school to staying at home and looking through a screen really impacted my life — it changed me [into] a quiet person. As a teenager transitioning to adulthood, COVID really put a ‘pause’ on me, as I [was] trying to discover who I am as a person. I couldn’t really accomplish that indoors, not making any connections.

Returning to [in-person] school was nerve-racking because I was in my own little space for so long, it really ‘washed down’ my personality. That had an impact on the college experience I was hoping for. ... I have come to realize that with time and persistence — putting myself out there, with all the opportunities CSUN has to offer with its clubs or just making friends — I would [adjust] to social settings. Although COVID delayed some of the experiences I hoped for in my personal life, it made me cherish things such as connections with people and exploring the outdoors.”



: Career Focused

NAME_ **Jacob Benjamin Gonzalez**

AGE_ **25**

YEAR_ **Junior**

MAJOR_ **Theatre Arts**

“ School has been the main thing keeping me motivated and dedicated to studying and practicing theatre. I didn’t know what to do when the COVID-19 quarantine happened. So, I turned to education, and it’s led me the furthest — and [made me] the happiest I’ve ever felt in making a big decision, in my life.

I have done things to help me with my acting career by studying at CSUN, but CSUN is one of the things that keeps the fire of passion burning [for me] to keep on going.”

: Sustainability—Minded

NAME_ **Raul Peña**

AGE_ **21**

YEAR_ **Senior**

MAJOR_ **Biotechnology**

“ I have taken many science classes in which I have learned about climate change and how to become more sustainable. Those classes made me more aware of what an unsustainable life I had been living. During my time at CSUN, I have reduced my carbon footprint as much as possible — and I have been able to make new friends through events and activities that help contain climate change.”



Sustainability is a longtime pride point for CSUN. Learn more about the Institute for Sustainability, clubs, activities and more at csun.edu/sustainability.

Z

:Representation Matters

NAME_Irina Hayrapetyan

AGE_21

YEAR_Junior

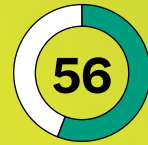
MAJOR_Business Marketing

“As an Armenian, I come from a community that has historically felt like it is constantly fighting for its place in the world. Our experiences have often been shaped by a sense of resilience, and seeing CSUN embrace and celebrate our heritage feels like we have gained a powerful ally. The university’s commitment to creating spaces where we are not only recognized but also celebrated has made a profound impact on me and many others in the Armenian community.

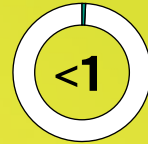
Gen Z is unique because we are more connected to the world and each other than any generation before us, and we are not afraid to challenge the status quo. We prioritize inclusion and social justice, making sure that all of our voices are heard. At CSUN, we are making a difference through leadership and activism, pushing for fairness, mental health support and sustainability. From supporting groups like the Armenian Students Association to creating more inclusive spaces, we’re not just asking for a seat at the table—we are building longer tables where every voice is heard and valued.”

Gen Z at CSUN by the Numbers

(percentages, for CSUN Student body)

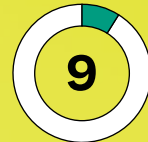


% ARE LATINX/HISPANIC



% ARE VETERANS

Number is approximate.



% LIVE ON CAMPUS

A

Who's Next?

Here comes Generation Alpha

The first of Generation Alpha (those born between approximately 2010-24) are in middle school, followed by a whole lot of tweens, pre-teens and younger kiddos. If you’ve ever heard parents and teachers complain about a “skibidi toilet,” you’re well aware—and, likely, slightly baffled by—this next gen. Most of Gen Alpha, like their Gen Z elders, are COVID-impacted and digital/social media natives. What their defining traits will be when their college days arrive, only time will tell. See you in a few years, Gen Alpha Matadors! 🌟



**Advocate / Veteran / Mother
/ Daughter / Student /
Mentor / Partner / State
Senator / Councilmember
/ Community Organizer /
Governor / Ambassador /
Executive / Human Rights
Activist / Educator / Founder
/ Volunteer / Mediator /
Motivator / **Changemaker** /**

Matador alumnae serve their state,
city and communities, in public and in
more quiet ways. **Here are just a few.**

BY MARQUITA BROWN

CSUN ALUMNAE ARE shepherding positive change in ways that ripple across their communities, California — and far beyond.

They're advocating for human rights and other causes. They're shaping laws locally and nationally. They're leaders.

Whether they attended CSUN as undergraduates or graduate students, their experiences on campus helped shape who they are and how they lead today. In this presidential election year, where women and the gender gap have been center stage, read on to learn more about three alumnae and how their experiences as Matadors shaped them as changemakers.

California State Sen. Caroline Menjivar

'15 (Sociology)

LONG BEFORE she was sworn in as a state senator representing California's 20th District and known for her advocacy for LGBTQ+ rights, Caroline Menjivar was a Matador undergrad.

But she didn't have the typical college experience.

When Menjivar enrolled at CSUN, she already had served as a U.S. Marine from 2009-13 and in the Reserves until 2016. She worked full time as an emergency responder while also taking a full course load.

"As soon as class was over, I was straight back to work in an ambulance," she said.

Menjivar did homework during lulls in her shifts as an emergency medical technician. Between calls, she drove the ambulance to Starbucks to use the Wi-Fi. She typed papers while sitting on a gurney and pored over her notes while waiting with a patient who needed a hospital bed.

She never considered quitting school. The Marine Corps had instilled in her determination and perseverance. She doesn't give up when encountering an obstacle. "If I want to be successful down the road, I have to go through these troubling times," she said of her mindset, as a student and even today. "But it's only temporary."

She also knows the value of an education.

"Regardless of my relationship with my mom or my parents, education was always instilled in me as the way out. You couldn't be successful without having a higher education," said Menjivar, 35, who grew up in the San Fernando Valley. "And I saw that with my mom, utilizing the ZIP codes of the homes that she cleaned so we could be in better schools that weren't our home school."

Menjivar faced housing insecurity when she was 19 and attending community college. Still, she said, she was determined to succeed.

"I need to do this," she thought at the time. "I need to be successful." And at that moment, I was like, 'I need to do this because I want it for my mom.'"

When her active duty ended, Menjivar completed her associate degree and transferred to CSUN, majoring in sociology. She was thrilled to be back in the classroom in the community where she grew up.

It wasn't typical, but Menjivar's CSUN experience impacted her life. She found a mentor in one of her professors, Terry Hatkoff, who suggested Menjivar consider becoming a social worker. Hatkoff also suggested Menjivar consider a Master of Social Work program and wrote Menjivar a letter of recommendation for the program at UCLA.

"To this day, I've stayed in touch with her," Menjivar said of Hatkoff, who is now retired. "Hearing her teaching was really what opened my eyes to injustices."

She cleared barriers to get to graduation day, but she faced more before crossing the stage in front of CSUN's University Library.

Menjivar had invited her girlfriend, now her wife, to the graduation ceremony along with close friends who are LGBTQ+ — and, Menjivar said, her mother wasn't happy.

"This was gonna be a huge moment for



me. I was going to be the first in my family to graduate from college," Menjivar recalled. "I had gone through all these barriers. I remember ... when I had the conversation with her, and I said, 'You're not coming to my graduation.'"

None of Menjivar's family attended her CSUN graduation, but her friends did. And they helped with one last obstacle she faced before crossing the stage: Her shoes ripped during the ceremony processional, as she walked across the grassy Library Quad.

"My friend gave up her shoes and walked around barefoot for the whole ceremony so that I could have shoes," Menjivar said. "So, it was just like the cherry on top to the culmination of my access to higher education."

“
I **need** to do this,
I need to be
successful.

Honorary Degree Recipient

Irene Tovar

'69 (Social Science), Hon.D. '22

FOR A long time, Irene Tovar thought she would be a teacher.

Her parents had lived through the Mexican Revolution, sparking her interest in history. She also wanted to tackle the high dropout rate in Pacoima, the San Fernando Valley neighborhood where she grew up. She saw education as a way to break the cycle of poverty for her family and others in her community.

"I was very fortunate to be very rich, with two parents who may not have had the money — but who really were committed to education and their value system, which has influenced me all my life," Tovar said.

Tovar's parents emphasized *ser humano*, that "the most valuable thing in this whole universe is a human being." They taught her to do everything possible to respect human dignity.

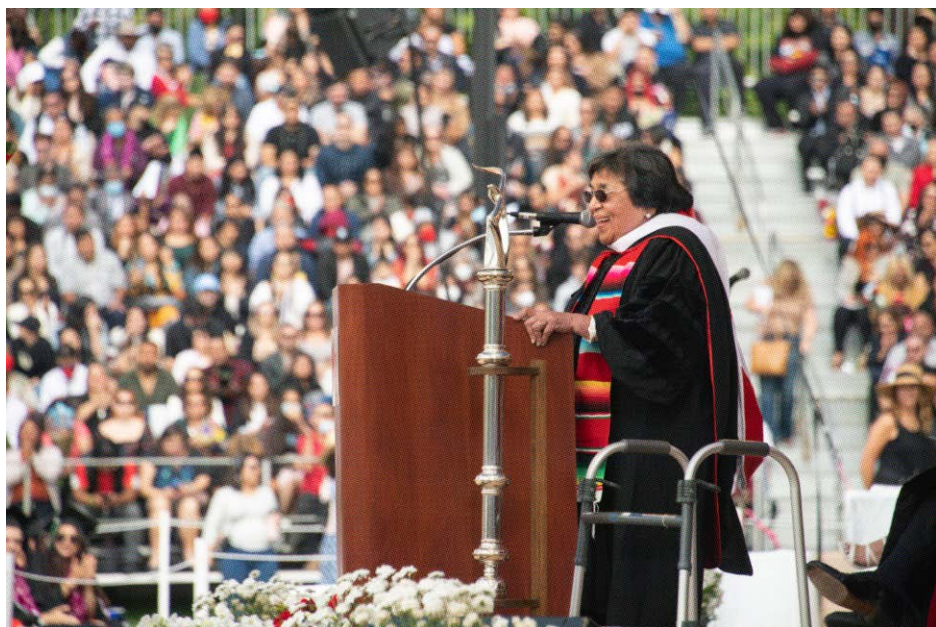
"They saw the degradation of human dignity, and they saw the ugliness of inequality and the ugliness of despair," Tovar said.

In the 1960s, as the Civil Rights Movement roiled the country, Tovar also witnessed firsthand the struggles to protect human rights. In that environment, as a first-generation college student, she pursued higher education, making good on her parents' sacrifices.

"I was a student of the times — the beginning of the questioning of justice and everything," Tovar said. "I thought I wanted to be a history teacher, motivated by my father and mother's constant talking about history and its implications."

After earning an associate degree at Los Angeles Valley College, she transferred to San Fernando Valley State College — now CSUN — to complete her bachelor's degree. A state college, she said, was the best option to "give me, a poor kid, an opportunity to change their life."

Tovar wanted to pay it forward, to change other lives through education, too. She helped start what is now the Latin American Civic Association of the San Fernando Valley. Tovar and others launched the organization by raising money to hire a preschool teacher to provide English lessons for local children. Initial demand for the program was so great, "there was a line



“

The most **valuable** thing
in this whole universe is a
human being.

all around the block of parents who wanted to do it," Tovar recalled.

The association administered the first Head Start program in the Valley, and at one point, Tovar was its executive director. By the 1970s, her advocacy caught the attention of then-Gov. Jerry Brown, who appointed Tovar to the State Personnel Board. She was the first Mexican-American and first minority to sit on the board.

Fast forward to the 21st century, where Tovar has not slowed down: At 86, she's still a passionate, active advocate for affordable housing and early childhood education for underserved communities. In 2022, in recognition of her groundbreaking work and lifetime of civic service, CSUN awarded her an honorary doctorate.

When asked what motivates her and gives her hope despite current challenges, Tovar pointed to the past.

"I lived [in] a world where those rights were not there," she said. "That, in a way, is my blessing because I was at the end of its ugliness. And then came the light of the civil rights movement. It was a struggle. I saw it, and I know the benefit that came out of that."

Some programs, like Head Start and the Educational Opportunity Program, gave families hope "that if they got an education, they would succeed and break the cycle of poverty," Tovar said. "I saw that, I felt it, I lived it. I didn't want any other child to go through what I went through."

Los Angeles City Councilmember Imelda Padilla

'19 (M.P.A. Public Sector Management)

IMELDA PADILLA was in third grade when she fell in love with local government.

Her class took a field trip to Sun Valley Park & Recreation Center for a press conference and photo op, for the grand reopening of the community pool, which had been closed for several years — plus the unveiling of a brand-new water slide. At 8 years old, she realized: “There’s always somebody in charge.” There was even someone in charge of making local parks better.

“That’s really what motivated me to find out who’s in charge of things in my neighborhood,” Padilla recalled earlier this year. “When I don’t like how something looks, I push myself to figure out how I can make it better.”



Padilla also looked to her own family for examples of community activism. Her older sisters were involved in local beautification efforts led by then-Los Angeles City Councilmember Richard Alarcon. Their mother was involved in church-led service projects and their brother’s Little League team.

Padilla, the fourth youngest of five children, followed their lead and began focusing on community service. She got involved with neighborhood councils in L.A. to clean

up the city, picking up trash and removing graffiti. Her family also inspired her work to increase mentorship opportunities and open doors for boys and young men of color.

“I do have a brother that’s incarcerated, and that really has been my motivation upon returning from college — to do more work supporting young people,” said Padilla, 37. Her family’s experience is one reason she founded Adelante Hombre Latino Youth Summit in 2010. Around the same time, then-President Barack Obama launched the My Brother’s Keeper Initiative in 2014, in response to the 2012 killing of Trayvon Martin. There was “finally” a conscious effort to support “Black and brown boys,” Padilla said. “And here I was, somebody who just wanted to make sure that families in my neighborhood never had to experience what me and my family experience every time we have to drive out to the desert [correctional facility] and visit my brother.”

Padilla was already steeped in community activism when she enrolled in CSUN’s Master of Public Administration program, in the Tseng College. One deciding factor: The program was conducive to working professionals’ schedules, with classes held at night and on weekends, she said.

The program “gave me some practical tools on how to run a successful team and invest in their professional capacity,” Padilla said. She learned how to be a better leader and how to help her team better serve the community.

During the pandemic, Padilla considered stepping away from public service. She already had spent most of her 20s as a community activist, pushing for a higher minimum wage and initiating a county-level initiative for women and girls.

She thought about pivoting to writing short stories or political jokes. She wondered whether she could have a major impact outside of politics.

“I had a conversation with God,” Padilla said. Wrestling with whether she was making the right decision, she asked for a sign of whether she should return to public service.

In 2022, the same day Padilla publicly debuted her writing, news broke of a scandal engulfing the Los Angeles City Council. Someone had secretly recorded council members making racist remarks and leaked the audio, spurring an uproar that led to one resignation (and demands for others), and a special election for the newly vacant 6th District seat.

Padilla took it as her sign. She ran for election in 2023 and won. In March 2024, she was re-elected to serve a full term.

Recently, Padilla came full circle, hosting an event at Sun Valley Park, this time as an elected official with a team tasked with helping her enact bold, positive change.

“To me,” she said of her work, “It’s just like a continuation of where I was meant to be.” ❧

OTHER LEADERS TO WATCH

The list of Matador women in civic service, and elected and appointed office (past and present) is longer than a Valley summer heatwave. Here are just a few more who make us proud:



Nicole Avant '90
(Speech Communication), former U.S. ambassador to the Bahamas



Wendy Greuel, executive-in-residence for CSUN’s David Nazarian College of Business and Economics, former city controller and city councilmember for Los Angeles.



Mary Haddad '19
(Sociology), M.P.A. '20 (Administration and Leadership), communications manager for Agoura Hills



Mia Jackson (1997-2000), associate director of city-county coordination, L.A. County Department of Health Services



Anita Shandi '05
(Management), public safety manager, city of West Hollywood

Athletics



Coaching 'The World's Game'

Meet New Head Coach Gina Brewer

There's a new face on the Matador pitch. Early this year, CSUN named Gina Brewer as Women's Soccer head coach. A forward and former Pac-10 champion with the University of Washington and veteran coach at the Division I level, Brewer is looking forward to leading the Matadors to victory — and, hopefully, a Big West Conference Championship.

Most recently, Brewer served as an assistant coach at UCLA in 2023, where she helped lead the Bruins to the Pac-12 Championship and a 16-2-1 record.

From 2011-19, she amassed more than 70 wins and became the longest-serving head coach in program history at Division II Hawaii Pacific University. She served two years on the coaching staff at Santa Clara University, 2021-22, contributing to the Broncos' journey to the second round

of the NCAA women's College Cup, and back-to-back West Coast Conference championships before her triumphant year with UCLA.

Getting acquainted at CSUN, Brewer has high hopes for these Matador women — especially as women's collegiate sports garner greater attention. CSUN Magazine sat down with the coach just before the season kicked off.

Q: What does it mean to you to become the new head coach of Matador Women's Soccer?

Gina Brewer: I'm super excited. I've played against CSUN [as coach at] the different universities I've worked for, and I always thought it was a fantastic school and kind of a hidden gem. It's a really special place that not everyone knows about, but once they know about it, everyone loves it and speaks highly about it. I'm really thankful to be here.

Q: What changes are you bringing to the team? Are you bringing any fresh approaches?

GB: We're going to have a fun, attacking [offense] style and presence. In the past, they were very defensive minded ... We're going to work on being organized defensively, but we're also going to look at how we're attacking with flare — and creative [ways] to be dangerous going forward. Off the field, we're trying to make it a fun and enjoyable student-athlete experience. We're focused on being as positive with the

Women's Soccer Head Coach Gina Brewer instructs her Matadors at their first scrimmage game, before the start of the fall 2024 season.

players as we can and doing fun activities — going to the beach for a bonfire and s'mores night, taking the team bowling and doing a ropes course. Going above and beyond to make it fun and enjoyable, so it's not all business.

Q: What part of your previous experience will best translate to your new role?

GB: My experience as a head coach at the Division II level helped me prepare for this opportunity because you have to wear a lot of hats and get your hands in everything, because you don't have as much support staff. And these last couple of years, I was at Santa Clara University under Jerry Smith, one of the legendary coaches in women's soccer — he was a fantastic mentor. UCLA was a great experience for the level of professionalism and holding an elite standard — that's what I'm looking to bring to the CSUN program, and we can do it.

Q: What's the most valuable thing you've learned while coaching?

GB: The [players] don't care how much you know until they know how much you care. The human being is more important than the player, [so] you have to care about the person first and the soccer player second. If you truly do that and you get to know your student-athletes — their background, their families, their favorite foods — it really helps when it comes to having a good understanding of each other on the soccer field.

Q: Do you have a team-building philosophy?

GB: Communication and collaboration. For team building, you have to specifically communicate about all these different things — body language on and off the field, respect and cheering for your teammates. We try to have it be player-led. It's collaborative. We have meetings every day until school starts; the first half [of each meeting] is team-building, and the second part is soccer and technical stuff. Every day, we'll be focusing on uniting.

Q: What are you looking forward to with the team?

GB: I'm looking forward to just being able to spend time with a great group of players and creating that environment that we think is the most enjoyable.

Q: What does soccer mean to you?

GB: It's the world's game. You can go to any country and people speak the language of soccer. You may not even be able to talk to other people, but you get a ball out and there's already a connection. To me, soccer just means connection and bringing people together. Although it's competitive, it unites people and countries.

Q: What do you hope for the future of women's sports, especially soccer?

GB: It's starting to get supported around the world. It's a powerful movement to support women and women athletes, and soccer is one of the sports that's helping lead the way. We're in the midst of a really exciting time of women's sports — it's more respected than it used to be. Student-athletes have the opportunity. If they want to continue playing beyond their college careers, there's places for them to play now. It's a time where it's exploding, and the sky is the limit. —*Ruby Durant*



New Coach Angie Ned Leads Women's Hoops

In late spring, CSUN Director of Athletics Shawn Chin-Farrell announced Angie Ned as the next head coach of Matador Women's Basketball. Ned takes the helm after spending the past nine seasons as associate head coach and recruiting coordinator at California Baptist University, where the Lancers won the Western Athletic Conference (WAC) regular season and tournament championships in 2023-24 and 2020-21.

Her Northridge debut marks a return to the Big West, where she was a decorated student-athlete and then director of basketball operations at UC Irvine.

The Matadors tipped off the 2024-25 basketball season with a home game vs. Utah State on Nov. 6. Season and single-game tickets are now on sale. For more, visit [GoMatadors.com](https://gomatadors.com).

Men's Basketball Hopes Soaring

Expectations are high for Matador men's hoops this season, which tipped off Nov. 6 on the road, at Stanford. Head Coach Andy Newman, in his second season with CSUN, returns after his squad won its first Big West Tournament game in 10 years. The men's home opener is scheduled for Nov. 17 vs. Life Pacific at Premier America Credit Union Arena. Season and single-game tickets are now on sale. For more, visit [GoMatadors.com](https://gomatadors.com).

Knight Finishes Ninth in Nation at Olympic Trials

Matador Track & Field's Trey Knight placed ninth overall in the hammer throw at the 2024 United States Olympic Trials this past summer in Eugene, Ore.

Knight closed a historic first season with CSUN at his first Olympic Trials, held at Eugene's storied Hayward Field. His best throw came on his third and final attempt June 30, a toss of 73.57 meters. He missed the cut for the finals (the top eight advance) by just 3 inches. The top three in the final round qualified for the Olympics in Paris.

Knight, a junior and native of small-town Ridgefield, Wash., was named a First Team All-American in the hammer throw, finishing sixth overall at the 2024 NCAA Outdoor Championships. He also was named Big West Field Athlete of the Year and won the Big West hammer throw title. In the school record book, Knight now holds the hammer throw record of 76.99 meters, set this past season at the Mt. SAC Relays.

"It's truly been a magical year for us," said Matadors Assistant Coach Dan Lange. "Trey's growth and development as an athlete and a person has been nothing short of phenomenal. None of this would have been possible without the support of Coach Johnson and the rest of the CSUN staff. We're looking forward to next season!"



TREY KNIGHT competes in hammer throw at the Olympic Trials at Eugene, Ore., in late June 2024.

Matador Matters

Updates from Alumni



Snapshots

On Oct. 19, CSUN celebrated our **2024 Distinguished Alumni Award** honorees **1 William Watkins '74** (Urban Studies); **2 Pamela Villaseñor '06** (Psychology); and

3 Rudy Pereira '85 (Computer Science).

At Commencement 2024, the university welcomed more than 10,000 Matadors into the CSUN Alumni family. The ceremonies included **honorary doctorates** for alumni **4 Andrew**

Anagnost '87 (Engineering) and **Robert Taylor '82** (Engineering), as well as **David Nazarian '82** (Business Administration) and **Debra Farar '75** (English), M.A. '87 (Early Childhood Education), not pictured. At Honors Convocation, **5 Alumni Association**

President **Felicia Conlan '09** (M.S., Communicative Disorders/Teaching Credential), Ed.D. '17 (Educational Leadership and Policy Studies) offered congratulations.

Longtime volunteer **6 Marty Zisner '75**

brings the fun at the 2024 Environmental and Occupational Health Technical Symposium.

LEARN MORE
For video tributes to the DAA honorees, scan the QR code:





Extra! Extra!

Want to find more ways to plug in to your Matador community? Read on!



Alumni Authors

Join us in celebrating the incredible achievements of our alumni authors! The Alumni Association, in collaboration with the University Library, has launched an effort to highlight the diverse and inspiring voices that have emerged from our CSUN community. We want to feature alumni who've made significant contributions to the world of literature, nonfiction and beyond. You can be part of our stellar group of alumni authors by submitting your work. Submissions may include fiction or nonfiction published manuscripts. Visit library.csun.edu/services/alumni-community/alumni-authors-submission or scan the QR code.



Paying it Forward

Alumna Honors Mother's Sacrifices With New Psychology Scholarship

Inspired by the sacrifices of her single mother, who immigrated to the United States to provide a brighter future for her daughter, Jean Pauline Serrano always has strived for excellence. Graduating from CSUN with a bachelor's degree in 2020 and a master's in 2022 — both in psychology — Pauline's academic journey is a testament to her resilience and dedication. The Alumni Association recognized her hard work and determination with a first-generation student scholarship in 2021.

As she pursues a Ph.D. in school psychology and teaches part-time at CSUN, she has decided to give back to her alma mater with a \$5,000 gift in honor of her mother, Jhoanna Serrano. "I am eager to start my career, create my own scholarship and give back to the same CSUN community that

provided so much for me," said Pauline Serrano, who goes by her middle name. Her generosity reflects her gratitude and commitment to supporting others on their educational journeys.

Initially, Pauline planned to establish the scholarship after completing her doctorate and achieving financial stability. However, driven by her passion to help others, she decided to launch a crowdfunding campaign in late 2023 and raise the funds earlier than planned. The overwhelming generosity of friends, family and even strangers proved that philanthropy transcends wealth, age and social status, she said. She hopes that the Jhoanna Serrano Psychology Scholarship will inspire its recipients, knowing it comes from a fellow Matador who was "also hustling to make ends meet" — one who understands their challenges and believes in their potential, she noted.

Pauline plans to establish a mentorship relationship with the scholarship recipients, hoping to foster a supportive community of psychology majors who are first-generation students raised in single-parent households. She sets a powerful example for future graduates, embracing a culture of philanthropy that will inspire future alumni.

For Pauline, scholarships were crucial to achieving her academic goals. As she reflects on her journey, she's grateful to have received one of the few CSUN scholarships available specifically for first-generation students. Her decision to give back is rooted in her deep admiration for the CSUN community and her commitment to support underrepresented students like herself.

Every year, the Alumni Association awards 15 student scholarships to help fund academic needs for first-generation, graduate and legacy students. These scholarships are a cornerstone of support and vital in bridging financial gaps and fostering a culture of giving among alumni. Susan Ettinger '80 (Home Economics), M.S. '84, a dedicated Alumni Association board member and steadfast CSUN supporter, considers her contributions to the Student Scholarship Fund "an investment, not only in [the students'] future, but in ours," she said. Lack of funding should never be an obstacle for a student as they pursue their dreams, Ettinger added. —Naz Keynejad



To donate to the Alumni Association Student Scholarship fund, visit tinyurl.com/Alumni-Association-Donate

Meet Sam

The Alumni Association is delighted to welcome Sam Fleischer '15 (Mathematics) to the alumni board. Sam is a senior quantitative analyst in baseball operations for the Los Angeles Dodgers, where he builds statistical and machine-learning models to support coaches and executives during in-game decision-making. Prior to joining the Dodgers, Sam was a systems engineer at the NASA Jet Propulsion Laboratory, where he worked on mathematical and statistical models for planetary protection of Europa, the Mars rover. Sam's enthusiasm and dedication to fostering community engagement will enhance our efforts to connect with and support our alumni. We're thrilled that he brings expertise and passion for mentoring young professionals to the Alumni Association.



To learn more about the Alumni Association and our board of directors, visit csun.edu/alumni/AlumniAssociationBOD



Support Our Students

CSUN Funder is the university's signature crowdfunding platform, providing students, departments and alumni dedicated space and guidance to conduct grassroots fundraising for their campus programs and projects. Gifts to a CSUN Funder project provide critical financial support, and can help cover the costs of specific needs such as project materials, travel to academic conferences or scholarship funds. From film projects to engineering competitions, donations to a CSUN Funder project can make a big impact on programs and experiential learning opportunities at CSUN.



To help our students reach their full potential, visit csunfunder.csun.edu



Extra! Extra!

Continued



Join a Chapter!

The Alumni Association is home to more than 15 unique alumni chapters. These chapters foster connection and nurture professional and personal relationships among Matadors. Many chapters offer career development opportunities such as workshops, continuing education units (CEU) seminars and day-long conferences. They also organize social events and reunions, strengthening the bond between members and creating a sense of community. This past year, two new alumni chapters were formed: the Filipino American Alumni Network and the Entertainment Alumni Chapter. Both are geared toward providing opportunities for their networks to engage with CSUN and give back through mentoring current students and promoting community engagement. Chapter membership is free, and all alumni are welcome! To get involved, visit tinyurl.com/Alumni-Chapters or scan the QR code.





ALEX VALERIO

ADAM SIAN
2023-24 president of the CSUN Archery Club, in the campus Orange Grove.

the Giving Day site for a cut of a \$5,000 challenge gift.

Armed with tools and resources and inspired by the potential for bonus funds at the end of Giving Day, the student clubs got to work promoting their causes on social media. Adam Sian, the 2023-24 Archery Club president, aimed to engage as many people as possible — so he used Discord, in addition to other traditional social media platforms.

Reaching out to archers around the globe, Sian energized the community and donations started pouring in.

Omar Palacios, Formula SAE volunteer coordinator, pushed that club's campaign on social media as well, leveraging the group's different teams — aerodynamics, controls, engine and manufacturing — to reach a wider circle of contacts. As the Archery Club's total started climbing the Giving Day donation board, other student sports clubs took notice and began helping.

Throughout the 36-hour campaign window in March 2024, the Archery Club and Formula SAE were running neck-and-neck. In the end, Formula SAE edged out the Archery Club for first place in donor count, but Sian and Palacios learned that the spirit of collaboration and friendly competition were key to running a successful fundraising campaign, they said. Combined, their two clubs raised close to \$12,000 from more than 440 donors. In all, 25 student clubs and organizations raised more than \$40,000 from more than 800 donors during Giving Day.

Giving Day matches and challenges give donors the opportunity to increase their philanthropic impact with additional funding for a specific need or program. For the student clubs, it's a chance to raise additional dollars for their specific needs *and* increase visibility for their organization. The Archery and Formula SAE clubs' success stories highlight the power of collective giving and building a culture of philanthropy within the CSUN student community. It's a testament to the drive and determination of our students and the impactful support of a global community. —*Naz Keynejad*

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Support our student projects today!

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SAVE THE DATE!

Giving Day 2025 is March 5-6! For more information or to explore options for creating a match challenge, contact the Annual Giving office at (818) 677-2786 or annualgiving@csun.edu.

Bullseye!

Student Clubs Harness Power of Giving Day

The CSUN Archery Club needed new, high-caliber bows to help train potential future Olympian archers. The Formula Society of Automotive Engineers (Formula SAE), who've been building Formula One-style race cars since 1988 and competing internationally against about 120 schools each year, needed new tires for their cars.

Both clubs had participated in the 2023 Giving Day campaign — a 36-hour fundraising event connecting all members of the Matador community through crowdfunding — and were looking forward to 2024's opportunities. To help boost the clubs' fundraising efforts, the CSUN Giving Day organizing team sprang into action and held coaching sessions, providing customized marketing strategies and toolkits for participating clubs. Bonus: CSUN President Erika D. Beck offered a match challenge through the university's Brighter Future Fund, to give student clubs and organizations the opportunity to compete by raising the highest number of donors through

Opening Dreams by Opening Books

Grant Launches Literacy Program to Boost Teachers' Skills

To begin the new school year this past August, **Chris Garibay** assessed the reading skills of his new class of fourth, fifth and sixth graders.

Garibay, 33, champions reading and literacy, and the doors those lifetime skills can open. He teaches students identified as having special needs and, last year, three of his students at Malabar Street Elementary School in East Los Angeles improved enough to move into general classes.

Now Garibay '16 (Early Childhood Development), M.A. '23 (Educational Curriculum and Instruction) has a new set of tools to take his students even further, thanks to an accelerated CSUN reading and literacy summer program for teachers. He's completing the final course this fall.

"I really love where I got my kids last year," Garibay said. "But after taking the summer courses, I thought, 'Oh, my goodness, I can get them so much further.'"

As it became clear that COVID disruptions had dramatically impacted literacy skills for kids in kindergarten through second grade (K-2), CSUN's Michael D. Eisner College of Education Department of Elementary Education partnered with Ballmer Group and Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD) officials to create an accelerated Reading and Literacy Credential program to expand the number of teachers trained to address those gaps. The alliance was forged by former LAUSD Superintendent Austin Beutner, who after his tenure continued to work with innovative partners to advance one of his key priorities.

A \$3.5 million gift from Ballmer Group helped CSUN launch the accelerated program in 2022. Connie and Steve Ballmer co-founded Ballmer Group in 2015 to improve economic mobility and opportunity for U.S. children and families who are disproportionately likely to remain in poverty. As CSUN wraps up the third year of the three-year grant, its impact is resonating in schools across Los Angeles.

Igniting Interest

Reading skills are critical for everyone, including individuals who won't go on

to college, said Mira Pak, the secondary education professor who directs CSUN's program. She recalled the story of a friend who, while studying to be an esthetician, watched talented classmates drop out because they couldn't read the textbook.

"Not being able to read narrows down your choices for your life," Pak said. "It kills some possible dreams."

The Ballmer Group grant ignited interest across the state in CSUN's program, which gives preference to primary grade teachers. It also covered tuition and provided a stipend for 150 LAUSD teachers over the past three years.

The grant revived CSUN's L.A. Times Literacy Center, which reopened for the first time after COVID, providing low-cost tutoring to elementary-aged children.

"None of this would have happened without the Ballmer Group grant," Pak said. "This grant was a gateway to a lot of things."

'You're Going to Be Ready'

CSUN's program — three courses in the summer with an optional course in fall — was designed to give teachers skills that normally take a full year to learn. Teachers who complete the three summer classes receive a CSUN certificate, which LAUSD honors as a micro credential.

A fourth class — the one Garibay's taking this fall — enables teachers to earn an "authorization" in reading and literacy from the state, recognized by districts throughout California. The authorization qualifies teachers for other positions such as literacy coaching, working one-on-one with students who need extra support or with classroom teachers who need to improve their skills. Over the past three years, 138 teachers completed the fourth course or are enrolled now.

Teachers who completed CSUN's literacy program have reported high levels of increased confidence in teaching reading, Pak said. She and assistant professor Dominic Grasso, who directs the L.A. Times Literacy Center, are researching the impact



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Reading and
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Credentials:
csun.edu/eisner-education/elementary-education/credential-programs

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“Not being able to read narrows down your choices for your life. It kills some possible dreams.”

Mira Pak, CSUN secondary education professor

Elementary school teacher Chris Garibay tutors kindergartener Kris Butala in Sept. 2024 at CSUN's L.A. Times Literacy Center.

on students who've studied under the teachers who took the CSUN program.

The Department of Elementary Education is in talks to train teachers from four different school districts over the coming months. An online version of the course also makes the program scalable throughout California. The state Literacy Coaches and Reading Specialists Educator Training grant program also could help districts send teachers through CSUN's program. A CSUN Foundation match for a portion of the Ballmer Group grant also supports literacy education at CSUN.

A few months into the 2024-25 school year, Garibay is using his new skills to help students learn to read — and *learn to love it*. He encourages students to attempt books above their reading level, with the belief they'll get there someday.

“Remember,” he tells them, “you can't read it *now*, not ‘you can't read it.’ I never want you to say, ‘I can't.’ It's, ‘I'm not ready *yet*.’ You're going to be ready. Let's keep working.”

—Jacob Bennett



Thank You!

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Fable Tech Labs, Inc.	Largo Concrete	Northrop Grumman Corporation	Sheila Dave and Sherry Gold Foundation	The Mortimer & Mimi Levitt Foundation	Weingart Foundation
Film L.A. Inc.	Layton Construction Company	Notre Dame High School	Sidney Stern Memorial Trust	The Pad Project	Weiss Accountancy LLP
First Citizens Bank	LC Engineering Group, Inc.	Nova Services, Inc.	Sigma Theta Tau International	The PENTA Building Group	Wells Fargo Foundation
Fountain Hospice Inc	Learfield Communications, LLC	NutriShop Northridge	SingerLewak Foundation	The Ralph M. Parsons Foundation	Western States Fire Protection Company
Freedom Scientific	Levitt Pavilions Los Angeles	O2EPCM, Inc.	Skirball Cultural Center	The Raymond Group	Whitecap Foundation
Fresh Potato Factory	Lion's Partners Insurance Agency	OMG23	Social and Environmental Entrepreneurs, Inc.	The Robin-Hwajin Yoon Kim Foundation	Will Geer Theatrical Botanicum
Gardiner & Theobald, Inc.	Live Nation	Optima Energy, Inc.	Soup Can Music	The Sascha Brastoff Foundation	Winningham Becker & Company
Goffin & King Foundation	Lloyd Rigler Lawrence E. Deutsch Foundation	OrgName	South Coast Botanic Garden	The Thompson Family Foundation	Withum
Gold Coast Tours	Los Angeles County Department of Public Health	Pacific Premier Bank	Southern California Edison	The TriMas Foundation	WithumSmith+Brown, PC
Golden Globe Foundation	Los Angeles Department of Water & Power	Pacific Steel Group	Southern California Section Institute of Food Technologists	The Wal-Mart Foundation	Woodland Hills Rotary Club Charitable Foundation
Goldenvoice, LLC	Los Angeles Dodgers Foundation	Paladin Technologies	State of California	The Whiting-Turner Contracting Company	
Gold's Gym	Los Angeles Philharmonic Association	Pan-Pacific Mechanical	Stonefire Grill		
Southern California	Los Angeles Unified School District	Paramount Pictures	Suffolk Construction Company, Inc		
Gonzaga University		Parker Hannifin Foundation	SYK Accounting Corporation		
Google, Inc		PCL Construction Services, Inc.			
Grammy Museum Foundation, Inc.		Pension Assurance LLP			
Grand Performance		Pentecostal Missionary Church of Christ (4th Watch)			
Gruen Associates					
Hackman Capital Partners					
Hamangia Foundation					
Hamer Honda in Reseda					

Northridge Notes

1970s



LYNN DUPRATT '79 (English) has been inducted into the Antelope Valley High School Hall of Fame, Class of 2024. She began her 28-year career in the Antelope Valley Press newsroom as a part-time writer and photographer, and she retired as an associate managing editor in 2007.

1980s

JUDY FRIEDMAN-RUDZKI '83 (Business Administration) has been appointed chair of the Los Angeles Jewish Health (LAJH) Board of Directors. In her new leadership role, Friedman-Rudzki—just the second woman to occupy the position—will collaborate with senior leaders of the organization as well as colleagues and the broader community to advance the mission of LAJH, one of the nation's leaders in care and living options for seniors.



DAVID BLUMENKRANTZ '85 (Journalism), M.A. '03 (Art Education), M.F.A. '09 (Visual Communication), journalism

professor at CSUN, spent three weeks in Kenya leading a team of Kenyan instructors and students through an Advocacy Media & Photojournalism Workshop at the Mukuru Youth Institute in Nairobi. The trip was part of Blumenkrantz's project "One of Us: Art for People." His professional experience includes eight years of work with non-governmental organizations; documentary and photojournalism work in East and Central Africa; and covering social, relief and development, and political issues. He also has freelanced for the Los Angeles Times and other publications as a writer and photographer. His work has been exhibited and published in countries including Kenya, Zimbabwe, China, Germany and France.



ZEKE ZEIDLER '87 (English), judge of the Los Angeles Superior Court, has been named the Wilmont Sweeney Juvenile Court Judge of the Year for 2024 by the Juvenile Court Judges of California, a section of the California Judges Association. Zeidler has been a juvenile court judge for more than 26 years, serving as a Superior Court Referee for more than six years before being elected as Superior Court Judge in 2004. After ascending to the bench of the Los Angeles County Superior Court—the first openly gay man ever elected to the position—he served three terms as president of the Interna-

tional Association of LGBTQ+ Judges. He previously was selected to serve on the California Judges Association's Task Force on the Elimination of Bias and Inequality, and on the Judicial Council's Advisory Committee on Providing Access and Fairness. He continues to mentor LGBTQ+ law students throughout the greater Los Angeles area.

SUREN SEROPIAN '88

(English) has been promoted to senior director of development for CSUN's College of Engineering and Computer Science. He was hired in 2013 as director of development for the College of Humanities. During his decade in the role, the college saw a significant increase in fundraising, creating opportunities for more student support through scholarships. Seropian has held development positions in the social service, health care, and elementary and higher education sectors. He serves on the U.S. board of Teach for Armenia, and as an advisor to the CSUN Armenian Alumni Network and the CSUN Armenian Students Association.

1990s

DOUGLAS SAMUELSON '92 (M.S., Computer Science) has been appointed chief financial officer for Newton Golf, a technology-forward golf company. He is also the CEO of PreCheck Health Services Inc. Previously, Samuelson served as CFO of fusion restaurant Hip Cuisine, Inc., as a California certified public accountant, as chairman and interim CFO for Smack Sportswear, and as accounting director for the RAND Corporation.

2000s

JENNIFER JOHNSON

'03 (M.A., Rhetoric and Composition Studies), a senior continuing lecturer at UC Santa Barbara, gave a talk in CSUN professor Irene Clark's Composition Studies Class on Oct. 9, titled "Building a Career in Composition Studies: A Story of Passion, Perseverance, Pluck, and a Little Luck Too."



BRYAN HENDERSON '06

(Health Administration) serves as director of Imaging Services at Valley Presbyterian Hospital in Van Nuys. In this role, he oversees the radiology, cardiology, neurology and radiation oncology departments. Henderson also published his first book, "Satisfaction Guaranteed," which compares patient satisfaction levels between medical patients in the Canadian and American health care systems. Henderson launched a nonprofit, the Henderson Heart Foundation, which provides medical equipment and supplies to impoverished medical centers around the world.

ANDY POSNER '06 (Spanish Language and Culture) founded a nonprofit, Capital Good Fund, while studying for his M.A. in environmental studies at Brown University. The organization aims to use financial services to tackle poverty and climate change, and respond to the needs of Latino communities in the 11



Please submit notes for future publication to magazine@csun.edu.

states the nonprofit serves. Capital Good Fund recently was selected for a \$156 million grant from the Environmental Protection Agency's Solar for All Program. Posner's organization was recognized by the White House in a press release, announcing the funding. He credited CSUN for laying the foundation for his success.

MICHELLE MIZNER '07 (Cinema and Television Arts) was named a 2024-25 McGhee Fellow by Boston public media producer WGBH. The McGhee Fellowship is annually awarded to a mid-career filmmaker who has demonstrated exceptional promise in non-fiction TV production, embodying standards including excellence, intelligence, fairness, passion and scholarship. Early this year, Mizner won the 2024 Oscar for Best Documentary for producing and editing "20 Days in Mariupol."

2010s

KEVIN STRAUSS '10 (Journalism - Public Relations), communications manager for the Santa Clarita Valley Water Agency, was recognized as the 2024 Communicator of the Year by the California Association of Public Information Officials. Strauss created the agency's first-ever digital media strategy, encompassing paid digital ads and social media across multiple platforms. In 2023, the Santa Clarita Valley Signal named him one of the "Top 51 Most Influential People in the Santa Clarita Valley."

ASHLEIGH LARSON '11 (Sociology), M.P.H. '20 joined

CSUN's Department of Government and Community Relations as assistant director. Previously, she oversaw the academic and internship needs of the online Master of Public Health cohorts in the university's Health Sciences department. Larson also worked as program manager of public health practice at UCLA's Fielding School of Public Health, where she helped establish community partnerships to expand internship opportunities for students.



JONATHAN ADRIAS '13 (Education - Instrumental Music), M.A. '15 (Educational Leadership and Policy Studies) is senior director of development for the College of Business Administration at Loyola Marymount University. Adrias began his career in Alumni Relations in CSUN's Division of University Relations and Advancement, while still a student. In 2016, he moved to UCLA's School of Nursing, as assistant director of development, working with alumni on annual gifts. In 2021, Adrias returned to his alma mater and joined the Nazarian College of Business as director of development.

ELIZABETH DORSSOM '14 (Public Administration), an assistant professor of political science, won the Junior Faculty Teaching Excellence Award from Lincoln University of Missouri. This award is presented annually to two



KEVIN FITZER '24 (Business Law - Real Estate) was selected by the Colorado Rockies in the 16th round (468th overall) of the 2024 MLB First-Year Player Draft in July. As an outfielder for the Matadors, he was named a Big West Scholar-Athlete of the Year during his last season. Fitzer also received All-Big West honors for a second straight season, earning an Honorable Mention.

tenure-track, untenured (junior) faculty members.

GUADALUPE RIVERA '16 (Communication Studies) is an annual giving associate in CSUN's Department of Alumni Relations and Annual Giving. She has a background in the nonprofit and higher education sectors. Most recently, Rivera worked at the Hammer Museum as a development associate, advancing membership and development goals, creating membership materials and helping manage donor data. She also served as the CASE Graduate Trainee Resident at Oregon State University, where she supported annual giving campaigns and stewardship efforts.

KATIE WOLF '16 (English), M.A. '19 (English) successfully defended her dissertation, "The Contemporary Female Gothic: Hauntings from the Home to the Colonial Landscape," at the University of Nevada, Reno in May 2024.



CHASE BETHEA '18 (Media Composition), professional video game composer, was honored with the prestigious "Excellence in Artistry" Award by the Black in Gaming Foundation. The foundation is a community dedicated to cultivating, supporting and promoting Black professionals in the game industry. The award celebrated Bethea's outstanding contributions to the realm of video game music and marked his fifth award in the industry. Bethea also has been recognized in the book "The Theory and Practice of Writing Music for Games," where he discussed his writing process for the award-winning video game soundtrack of "On the Peril of Parrots."

SALVADOR VILLALOBOS MENDEZ '19 (Spanish) is a Spanish teacher at Ventura High School, where he teaches AP Spanish.

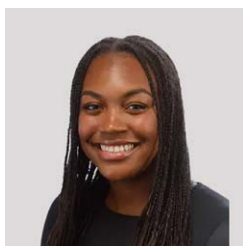
Jefa Narco en Si Me Querés, Quereme Transa, Cristián Alarcón,” at the Latin American Studies Association in Bogotá, Colombia. She presented



MITUL KALRA '24 (Communication Studies) is a legislative aide with the Capital Fellows Program, a prestigious, one-year fellowship in the California State Senate. She works full time while pursuing a graduate certificate in applied policy and government. As a Capital Fellow, Kalra supports the writing of legislation, researches bills and takes positions, meets with constituents and advocates for various bills in the legislature. At CSUN, Kalra was named the 2024 Leo Wolfson Scholar for her academic excellence and contributions to the community. The honor is the university's top award presented to a graduating senior.

CESAR HERNANDEZ '19 (Music Performance - Jazz), trumpeter; **CHRISPANAMENO '23** (Jazz Studies), saxophonist; and **ETHAN LAVENSTEIN '24** (Jazz Studies), trumpeter, performed as part of the six-piece jazz ensemble Tree Time, at Scribble community space on Aug. 4 in Highland Park. The group highlighted a composition by the late composer and CSUN jazz teacher Howie Shear.

as part of a panel titled, “Narconarrativas, Pasados y Presentes: Reflexiones Sobre El Sujeto, El Espacio y La Nación.”



MORGAN SALONE '20 (Kinesiology), former middle hitter for the Matador Women's Volleyball team, is a physical education and health

teacher and volleyball coach at Milken Community School. In 2019, during her senior year, she received an All-Big West Honorable Mention. She finished the season with 157 kills, averaging 1.55 kills per set — which ranked fourth on the team.

RYAN KETCHAM '21 (Journalism), a reporter for KTNV Channel 13 News in Las Vegas, received an Emmy for his team's coverage of the deadly shooting at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas, on Dec. 6, 2023. Ketcham was the first person from his station on scene, where he stayed for the next 10 hours. He called in to the station and conducted a phone interview with the anchors live (on air), describing the scene.

KAILA MOORE-JONES '22 (Africana Studies) is a donor and member services specialist in CSUN's Division of University Relations and Advancement. She's responsible for processing donation, event and membership transactions for Advancement Services, among other duties. Previously, she worked as a development coordinator at the Hollywood Food Coalition, where she assumed various responsibilities in donor relations, stewardship and special events. As a student, she made significant contributions as a lead coordinator at The Black House, fostering a welcoming and inclusive environment for Black students on campus.

In Memoriam

FACULTY & STAFF

JIM DOLE (Biology), professor emeritus of biology, died on Feb. 13, 2024. He was 88.

Dole served on the Department of Biology faculty from 1963-2007, and he was an active member of CSUN's Friends of the Library from 2004-16. He served as president of the Friends of the Library from 2010-12, and he was editor and principal writer of the Friends Newsletter for many years (ably assisted by Jim Parker). The University Library honored Dole with the Library Volunteer of the Year award in 2009.

MARY ELLEN ETHERINGTON (Health Sciences), professor emerita of health sciences and one of the founders of CSUN's acclaimed physical therapy program, died on July 2, 2024.

In the late 1960s, Etherington taught physical therapy (PT) courses for the Department of Health Sciences at what was then San Fernando Valley State College (now CSUN). At the time, certification — not a degree — was required. She collaborated with the University of California to launch a more robust PT program at Valley State. Today, CSUN's program offers a doctoral degree (Doctor of Physical Therapy), and it welcomed its 69th cohort this fall — thanks to Etherington's vision.

“Mary Ellen's dream to bring more opportunities for physical therapy education to Southern California is responsible for the PT program's early existence, which has been magnified by PT educators who followed in her footsteps,” alumni of the very first PT cohort wrote in tribute, after her death. “She was always proud of the program's development and

2020s

MARIA ELIZABETH MASSENA '20 (M.A., Spanish) presented her paper, “Radiografía de Una

success, with its thousands of physical therapists.”

Physical therapy alumnus Rick Katz '79 added: “Mary Ellen was the face of our program and a strong advocate for us at CSUN. I always thought of her as a ‘tough cookie’ with a soft center. She interviewed me for the program and was a guiding light. It is important to remember our pioneers and to elevate their accomplishments so that we never forget them.” Peggy Roller '88, CSUN professor of physical therapy, remembered Etherington as program chair when Roller was a student in the fledgling program. “She was tough and particular about the learning experience and student success,” Roller said.

HELEN GIEDT

(Psychology), professor emerita of psychology, who taught for three decades at San Fernando Valley State College—from its founding until after it was renamed CSUN—died on Nov. 19, 2023. She was 102.

She earned her B.A. and M.A. from University of Kansas prior to receiving her Ph.D. from the University of Southern California in 1952. Giedt taught at CSUN from 1958 until her retirement in 1988. Giedt was a member of the university's 50 Year Club and active in the Association of Retired Faculty, the University Library and the library's Old China Hands collection in the Special Collections and Archives.

She is survived by her daughter, Kathy Wade; her son, Gordon; grandchildren Eric, Megan and Melinda; four great-grandchildren; and numerous

nieces, nephews and treasured friends.



HERBERT W. LARSON

(NCOD: Deaf and Hard of Hearing Services), former NCOD director and pioneer of Deaf education, died on March 19, 2024, from injuries sustained in a fall. He was 92.

Larson spent the bulk of his working years in Deaf education. He served as director of NCOD from 1979 until his retirement in 1998. He was proud of the community programs he developed for youth who are deaf, including the Jr. National Association of the Deaf College Bowl and the SELACO Deaf and Hard of Hearing program—now named in his honor, as the Larson East Auditory Oral Program in Downey.

He was also an Emmy Award winner for his work as host of the Silent Network's TV show “Off Hand.” He received myriad national and local awards, including keys to several cities. Larson served on numerous boards and committees, serving the Deaf community by making it a more accessible place for education, entertainment and communication. Scholarships established in his name at CSUN and in the community include one at NCOD, The Larson Regional Program and DEAFinitely 4 Kids Inc.

He is survived by his wife, Caroline; daughters Pamela and Johanna; three grandsons; his brother, David; and many nieces and their children.



ROBERT G. MARSHALL

(Archival Administration), who retired from the University Library in 2009, passed away on Dec. 29, 2023. He was 74.

Marshall had more than 30 years of experience as an archivist, and he taught archival administration. He was the head archivist of the CSUN Urban Archives Center from 1985-2009 and the University Archivist from 1993-2009.

Through his numerous professional memberships, presentations, exhibitions and publications, Marshall was considered an expert in local history collections, particularly those focusing on Los Angeles and the San Fernando Valley. He made an indelible mark on campus, especially at the Library and in the Department of History, his colleagues said.

MARIA “MAJA” REID

(Foreign Languages), mentor, professor and former chair of the Foreign Languages department in the College of Humanities, died on Nov. 19, 2022. She was 92.

Prior to Reid's teaching career, she attended UCLA, where she earned bachelor's, master's and doctoral degrees. Throughout her long tenure at CSUN, she was a professor of modern and classical languages and mentored many students.

Reid always had a coterie of students surrounding her because of her warmth, kindness and dedication to her mission of sharing her German language and culture,

colleagues recalled. She is survived by her stepson, Mark Reid, and his wife, Kate; her grandchildren Alison, Matthew and Cameron; great-grandchildren Sophia and Roland; and many nephews and nieces.



BORIS RICKS (Political Science), associate professor and co-director of CSUN's Center for Southern California Studies, died suddenly on Sept. 5, 2024. He was 63.

Ricks was a noted educator, community advocate and sought-after TV political commentator—especially during Presidential campaigns.

Ricks played football at Mississippi Valley State, an HBCU (Historically Black College & University), and he was a loyal and active member of Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity, Inc., a historically African American fraternity.

“Dr. Ricks grew up in South Central Los Angeles, he cared deeply about issues in the community and became one of the greatest advocates for South Central L.A.,” said Renford Reese, a Cal Poly Pomona professor and lifelong friend of Ricks. Days after his friend's death, Reese made a \$25,000 gift to CSUN to establish a scholarship in Ricks' name in the College of Social and Behavioral Sciences.

Ricks, who had served on CSUN's faculty since 2008, was a brilliant scholar, with expertise in urban, racial and ethnic politics. He served on many commissions

dedicated to empowering his community, including the recent L.A. Governance Reform Project, a team of researchers and leaders who proposed significant reforms to the Los Angeles City Council. “Nobody that I know was more connected to the haves and have-nots of Black Los Angeles,” Reese said.

He was known on campus for his signature bow ties—Ricks' vast wardrobe featured many colorful ties, shirts and jackets. His attention to detail also carried over to his teaching and relationships, Reese said—Ricks could remember names and personal details that helped him connect and have substantial conversations with the people he met.

Yan Searcy, dean of the College of Social and Behavioral Sciences, reflected on how the new scholarship will honor Ricks' legacy.

“The loss of Dr. Ricks has me thinking regularly about two things—the importance of people and the importance of education,” Searcy said. “Dr. Ricks impacted community, family, friends and students. The fact that [Reese] immediately reached out to us to share this gift to honor Dr. Ricks reflects those important elements. It is a testament to how Dr. Ricks lived his life of impacting people through the duality of education and relation.”

To contribute to the Dr. Boris Ricks Leadership Scholarship, please visit CSUN Funder or contact the CSUN Office of Development at (818) 677-7586 or development@csun.edu.



PAULETTE SHAFRANSKI (Kinesiology), professor emerita of dance, died on Aug. 11, 2024. She was 87.

Shafranski joined the San Fernando Valley State College (now CSUN) faculty in 1963, and she had a hand in designing the original dance studio in Redwood Hall. She also established the practice and standards for CSUN's annual spring dance concerts. Her research focused on the physiological effects of training for jazz dance performance. The university honored her with a Distinguished Teaching award in 1982 and an Outstanding Faculty award in 1993.

She also gave back philanthropically to CSUN, establishing the Paulette Shafranski Dance Scholarship in the Department of Kinesiology. She was a member of the university's President's Associates.

RICHARD STREID

(Kinesiology), professor emeritus in CSUN's College of Health and Human Development and one of the assistant coaches of the storied 1967 Valley State football team that played in the "Junior Rose Bowl," died on Aug. 14, 2023. He was 85.

Streid was a founding faculty member in the Department of Kinesiology at San Fernando Valley State College in 1966. He coached and taught in the department until his retirement in 2001. During his career, he was named to the Matador Hall of Fame for his accomplishments.

He is survived by his wife, Connie; three children, Mark, Susan and Alison, and their spouses; 10 grandchildren and 10 great-grandchildren.



SAM WINNINGHAM (Athletics/Physical Education), former CSUN football coach and administrator, who led the Matadors to the "Junior Rose Bowl" in 1967 — along with coach Richard Streid (*see above*) — passed away from cancer on April 19, 2024. He was 98.

Winningham was San Fernando Valley State College's first head football coach, from 1962-68. His Matador team took on West Texas State in the '67 Junior Rose Bowl, which was then a top-tier bowl game for Division II football. Inducted into the Matador Hall of Fame in 1987, Winningham also served as assistant athletic director and chaired CSUN's departments of Athletics and Physical Education from 1978-88.

In 2017, the university renamed the Matador Spirit Plaza near Premier America Credit Union Arena & Redwood Hall in honor of Winningham, celebrating the former coach and his contributions to CSUN.

He is survived by his daughter, Beth Winningham, grandchildren, great-grandchildren and extended family.

REMEMBERING TWO CIVIL RIGHTS ICONS

REV. JAMES M. LAWSON JR.

(Civil Discourse and Social Change), the renowned civil rights leader, pastor and CSUN instructor, died on June 9, 2024, of cardiac arrest. He was 95. Less than three months after his passing, his wife, **DOROTHY WOOD LAWSON**, recipient of the CSUN Department of Gender and Women's Studies 2014 Phenomenal Woman Award, passed away in late August. She was 89.



Rev. Lawson was a mainstay of the CSUN campus since 2010. He taught theories and practices of nonviolent activism as part of the university's Civil Discourse and Social Change initiative, an effort dedicated to promoting ideas of community involvement, as well as social justice-related activism.

Dorothy Lawson was instrumental in pioneering the first racially integrated office in Nashville, and it was during her time in that office that she met James M. Lawson Jr. The couple made civil rights history despite the safety risks to their family. Dorothy Lawson took part in many of that era's more famous boycotts and sit-ins, as Rev. Lawson became a close adviser and friend to the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr., who called him "the leading theorist and strategist of nonviolence in the world."

Rev. Lawson was born in 1928 in Pennsylvania, one of 10 children. His great-grandfather had escaped enslavement in Maryland; his father was an African Methodist Episcopal minister and one of the first Black graduates of McGill University in Canada. He moved the family to Ohio, where Lawson earned a bachelor's degree from Baldwin-Wallace University.

Later, while studying theology at Vanderbilt University's divinity program, Rev. Lawson was called on to organize what became the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee, which sought to organize the spontaneous efforts of tens of thousands of students who began challenging Jim Crow laws across the South. He arranged lunch counter sit-ins during his time in graduate school, which resulted in his expulsion from Vanderbilt.

Rev. Lawson's teachings and work with students were instrumental to several of the most high-profile U.S. protests of the 1960s, including the Freedom Rides of 1961.

The Lawsons' influence touched nearly every social justice movement of the past several decades. During her life, Dorothy Lawson reflected, "Today, people don't realize how dangerous the work for civil rights activists was during the turbulent 1960s in the South — and the fine line activists had to walk between standing up for their human rights, and facing violence and even death."

In 1974, the Lawson family moved to Los Angeles, where Rev. Lawson became pastor at Holman United Methodist Church, which he led for 25 years until his retirement in 1999. Dorothy Lawson completed her graduate work at Cal State L.A., taught school and became the chairperson of the Inner-City Task Force. Then, she created curriculum for the United Methodist Church and developed a model for recruiting and training teachers. She received numerous awards for her volunteer work with adult literacy and her social justice work. In August, she also became a Matador grandparent, as one of her grandsons started his freshman year at CSUN.

The Lawsons are survived by their sons, J. Morris Lawson III and John Lawson (a third son, Seth, died in 2019); Rev. Lawson's brother, Phillip, and three grandchildren.

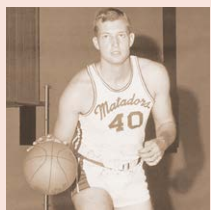
ALUMNI

LURIE CARTWRIGHT

'70 (Sociology), '92 (Teaching Credential), M.S. '92 (Communication Disorders and Sciences), died on Dec. 15, 2023, from blood cancer. She was 77.

Cartwright served as a CSUN instructor, clinical supervisor and speech-language pathologist, and she volunteered as an alumni chapter representative. In 2012, the CSUN Alumni Association honored her at the university's Volunteer Service Awards Luncheon.

Cartwright began working in the College of Health and Human Development as a supervisor/preceptor in the Language, Speech and Hearing Center in 2003. Earlier, as a graduate student in the program, she also had served as a clinic assistant in 1991-92 for the Early Intervention Program.

**MARK COOLEY '68**

(Spanish Language and Literature), M.A. '71 (Education), former men's basketball player and Matador Hall of Famer, passed away on May 4, 2024. He was 78.

Cooley is just one of 12 CSUN players to record at least 1,000 points and 500 rebounds, and he was the first in school history to reach the milestone. In 1985, Cooley was inducted into the Matador Hall of Fame.

After graduating from CSUN with a master's in education in 1971, he earned a second master's in administration from the University of La Verne. He began his career in

education as a high school Spanish teacher and moved on to the education of limited-English speakers. He retired in 2005 as director of bilingual services/instructional support for the Azusa Unified School District.

Cooley is survived by his wife and fellow alum, Diana (a former Valley State cheerleader who finished her degree at Cal Poly Pomona); their daughter, Andrea, and son, Mark; and grandchildren.

BOB MILLER '75 (Theatre),

a legendary costume designer for television who received the university's Distinguished Alumni Award in 2001, died on Dec. 9, 2023, after battling cancer. He was 70.

As a freelance costume designer, Miller was a five-time Daytime Emmy Award winner and six-time nominee for his work on "General Hospital" and the spinoff "Port Charles." He won these awards along with the 2001 DAA honor alongside his life partner, Steven Howard '77 (Theatre), aka Steven Trevor.

During Miller's time at CSUN, he was heavily involved in the theatre department—stage managing and costume designing. He and Howard became a sought-after duo in the industry, where they designed and coordinated costumes for "The American Music Awards" and "Dick Clark's New Year's Rockin' Eve," a role they held for 16 years. They frequently were requested as guest costume designers at CSUN and taught in the Department of Theatre, filling in for faculty on sabbatical.

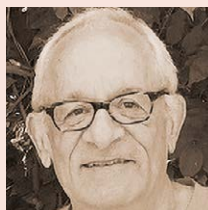
Miller is survived by his partner, Steve, and friends.

**BOB POOL '68**

(Journalism), former editor-in-chief of the Daily Sundial and legend of the Los Angeles Times newsroom, died on April 21, 2024. He was 79.

Pool was just 15 when he made arrangements to cover the 1960 Democratic National Convention at the Los Angeles Memorial Sports Arena and Los Angeles Memorial Coliseum, for his mother's Alabama hometown newspaper. He witnessed history as John F. Kennedy was nominated by his party before going on to win the White House.

Pool served as editor of the Canoga Park High School student newspaper before leading the Daily Sundial and graduating from San Fernando Valley State College (now CSUN). After being drafted into the Army and spending two years in Honolulu, Pool worked as a reporter for the Thousand Oaks News-Chronicle (now the Ventura County Star) before being hired at the Los Angeles Times in 1983 as a general assignment reporter. He retired from the L.A. Times in 2014.

**GARY SNYDER '69**

(Sociology), who worked with mentor Addie Klotz to help establish the university's first student health center, died in August 2022 in West Bloomfield,

Mich. He was 76.

Snyder arrived at San Fernando Valley State College in fall 1964 and found himself ill-prepared and uninterested in school, he later recalled. Struggling to find his way as a student, he left school for a couple of years, re-enrolling in 1966.

He took note of a healthcare system on campus that did not serve its students, and he was determined to effect change. Snyder soon met Klotz, a mentor who changed his life. Klotz, who served as the campus' health services director from 1961-72, worked with Snyder and many other student leaders and staff to establish the Student Health Center and change the student experience at Valley State. Under her leadership, in 1966, the center became the first such service in the nation accredited by the American College Health Association.

After Northridge, Snyder earned a Master of Public Health degree from the University of Michigan, the state where he settled and lived for most of the next five decades (in the Metro Detroit area). He married and raised a family and worked in the healthcare field, including in administration.

In his memory, Snyder's family established the Gary Snyder Memorial Scholarship at Animo Pat Brown Charter High School in South Los Angeles, where his son Joel is a teacher. The annual scholarship is awarded to an Animo graduate who is attending CSUN. The first recipient, Melanie Rosales, entered CSUN in 2023 as a first-generation college student. Snyder is survived by his wife, Francie; sons Mark and Joel and their

spouses; grandchildren Leila, Sophia, Ora and Solomon; and many friends and family.

RONALD WINTERS '63

(Biology), dean emeritus of the College of Health Professions at University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences, died on April 13, 2023, on his 81st birthday. Winters was born in Hollywood, where he was raised by his maternal grandparents, Aaron and Rose Kertman, and his aunt, Clarisse. He graduated from North Hollywood High School.

At his graduation from what was then San Fernando Valley State College (now CSUN), Winters was honored as the top graduate from the Department of Biology. Winters continued his education, receiving his Ph.D. in pharmacology from Oregon State University.

He served on the faculty and in the administration at Oregon State College of Pharmacy and Wichita State University, before becoming dean of the College of Health Professions at University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences in 1982. There, he helped grow the small college from a loose affiliation of programs to become, at his retirement in 2011, the campus' largest college, with 21 programs, degrees and certificates. According to his family, his greatest joy was teaching, from a special school for child actors in Los Angeles, to college students and graduates continuing education.

He is survived by his wife of 47 years, Marsha; daughter Alexandra and son-in-law Ivan Iordanov; and son Andrew, as well as other loved ones.



CSUN

Della Escobar
Johnnie Escobar Torres Award
Recipient

CONTRIBUTION
FUND



Roses In!

University Relations and Advancement colleagues (L-R) Kaila Moore-Jones, Brenda Zendejas, Delia Escobar, Nazara Ali, Araceli Ayala and Pei-Ying "Peggy" Lin celebrate their team award, after the annual Staff Service and Recognition of Excellence Awards event on Sept. 19. Each year, CSUN celebrates the dedication and hard work of its staff, managers and auxiliary employees, honoring their commitment at milestones such as five, 10, 15 — and even *50 years* of service! Following campus tradition, these colleagues piled red roses at the "feet" of the Matador statue. Students, staff, faculty and alumni place roses at the statue to celebrate milestones such as an engagement, graduation and other achievements. Once a Matador, always a Matador!

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On the cover: Illustrator Kathleen Fu shares a colorful, vibrant vision symbolic of the ecosystem of accessibility-focused opportunities, training, programs, facilities, technology and more available at CSUN. Read more about how CSUN advances inclusion and accessibility for people with disabilities, on page 14.

