

Channel

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We welcome your comments and suggestions. Please send correspondence to csuci.news@csuci.edu, mail to: CSU Channel Islands, Communication & Marketing, Channel Executive Editor, One University Drive, Camarillo CA 93012-8599, or call 805-437-8415.

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CSU Channel Islands Mission Statement

Placing students at the center of the educational experience, California State University Channel Islands provides undergraduate and graduate education that facilitates learning within and across disciplines through integrative approaches, emphasizes experiential and service learning, and graduates students with multicultural and international perspectives.

Channel is printed on FSC certified recycled paper.





Artful Conservation

A 17-foot California condor sculpture created for Art Professor Matt Furmanski's capstone class by Isela Munoz, '19, Jenica Zeta, '19, and Maria Zuart, '19, otherwise known as "The Crazy Condor Ladies," will soon soar over the Bitter Creek National Wildlife Refuge (BCNWR).

The students partnered with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to create the sculpture and an array of murals depicting native flora and fauna. Their work will be enjoyed by researchers, volunteers, rangers and staff who stay in the refuge bunkhouse.

The 23,572 acre BCNWR is located approximately two hours north of CSUCI in the Los Padres National Forest at Dough Flat. In 1985, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service began aquiring land in the area to conserve threatened and endangered plants and wildlife. Although the refuge provides habitat for several listed species, the primary goal was to preserve essential foraging and roosting habitat for the endangered California condor. *Continued on page 2*.







PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE Reaching Higher

THE FALL SEMESTER BROUGHT WITH IT A renewed sense of vitality among our campus community. We began by learning that we were named the 9th Most Transformative College in the nation by Money Magazine and being awarded the Seal of *Excelencia* by Washington, DC-based *Excelencia* in Education. It is heartwarming to see the great work performed by our dedicated faculty and staff and the post-graduate success of our students recognized at this level.

Along these lines, we remain diligent and focused on our work in meeting the benchmarks delineated in the CSU's Graduation Initiative 2025. According to the Public Policy Institute of California, our state will be at least 1 million baccalaureate degrees short of what the future workforce will require. Here at Cal State Channel Islands, we continue to focus on alleviating that shortfall and ensuring that all of our students have a timely pathway to degree completion.

Using our Strategic Initiatives (Educational Excellence, Student Success, Capacity & Sustainability, and Inclusive Excellence) as a guidepost forward, our entire campus community is working hard to realize our goals. In the pages that follow you'll learn more about the great work being done by our students, faculty, staff, alums and community supporters.

I hope you enjoy reading about these stories and the tales of hard-work and generosity that transpire in our community every day. On behalf of the faculty, staff and students of CSU Channel Islands, I wish you all a joyous holiday season!

Sincerely,

President

Erika D. Beck, Ph.D.

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NOTE FROM THE EXECUTIVE EDITOR

We hope you enjoy our redesigned Channel magazine which includes a new layout, longer stories continued online, and expanded imagery to reflect our students, faculty and alumni accomplishments, and beauty of the campus! The magazine can also be found online at: go.csuci.edu/Channel. — Nancy Covarrubias Gill '05





The President's Innovation Awards recognize the significant innovation and contributions of faculty, students and staff in advancing the University's mission and impact.

J. Jacob Jenkins

President's Award for Innovations in Teaching and Learning

Associate Professor of Communication J. Jacob Jenkins, Ph.D., understands how high-impact practices help students meet their full potential. For his commitment to putting students at the center of the educational experience, Jenkins received the 2019 President's Award for Innovations in Teaching and Learning.

The students in his service-learning courses have partnered with the Moorpark Chamber of Commerce on community initiatives, while the collaborative classwork model in his courses has given them a taste of what it's like to be part of a consulting firm. Jenkins has also personally mentored more than 40 students in

writing and submitting original research for publication and presentation.

His leadership role in openCI, the University's affordable learning solutions program, has enabled the first three zero-cost course material majors, or "Z-majors," in the CSU and saved students millions of dollars in textbook costs.





Kiki Patsch

President's Award for Innovations in Teaching and Learning

Assistant Professor of Environmental Science & Resource Management, Kiki Patsch, Ph.D., instills in her students the importance of community engagement and the relationships between geography and the world around us. For her work in enhancing the geospatial program beyond the program and into the wider CSUCI community, she received the 2019 President's Award for Innovations in Teaching and Learning.

Patsch's classes have worked with both on-campus partners implementing new plans for campus trash collection and on off-campus projects with the Surfrider Foundation, the National Audubon Society and the Ventura Land Trust.

Patsch's deep belief in the value of lifelong learning has led her to beome the first professor in the CSU to begin teaching the latest in geographic information systems software.





Melissa Soriano

President's Award for Student Innovation

Melissa Soriano has worked hard to help her peers succeed in and out of the classroom. Soriano was instrumental in organizing the 2019 STEM Social, an evening where hundreds of students connected with faculty and alumni to learn about potential career paths, co-curricular activities and graduate school opportunities. The chemistry student's commitment to building community amongst CSUCI's STEM students has earned her the inaugural President's Award for Student Innovation, which recognizes students for developing unique programs that contribute to the University community. Soriano will pursue a Ph.D. in materials chemistry.

Ricky Medrano Staff Excellence Award

For his unparalleled work ethic and dedication to CSUCI, Ricky Medrano is the 2019 recipient of the Staff Excellence Award. As the science lab technician for mechatronics and computer science, Medrano keeps the program's labs in top shape: the equipment is clean, organized and available to students and faculty when they need it. He has also been instrumental in implementing and maintaining safety procedures in the computer science labs. His approachability, attention to detail and quick learning abilities have made him an invaluable member of the program and campus community.



Raising the Bar

CSUCI Named a Top University for Latinx Student Success

CSUCI's Early Childhood Studies major Adrian Uribe and 2019 Nursing graduate Diana Xicotencatl remember the anxiety they felt as the first in their families to enroll in college.

"My first month here at school was definitely fun, but as soon I got homesick, it hit me like a train," said Uribe, of Santa Fe Springs.

Xicotencatl, of Santa Paula, struggled to pay for college and do well in school.

"It was hard for me to balance work and school because I was trying to help provide for my family," she said.

Both students are now thriving, thanks to numerous programs CSUCI has in place to assist Latinx students, with particular focus on first-generation college students.

CSUCI's commitment to supporting Latinx students during their journey through higher education this year earned the University the Seal of Excelencia from the Washington, D.C.-based organization Excelencia in Education.

CSUCI is one of only nine institutions of higher learning in the nation and the only university in California to receive the designation.

"At CSUCI we are reimagining higher education to serve a largely first-generation, historically underserved student population. We have benefitted greatly from the diverse perspectives of our Latinx students and their communities in ways that enrich the academic culture for all students," said President Beck.

"If institutions aren't effectively serving our Latinx students, we lose a vital source of talent for our workforce and civic leadership," said Deborah Santiago, CEO of *Excelencia*.

The Educational Opportunity Program (EOP) for first-generation students was among the programs that helped Xicotencatl, who is now doing a nurse residency at Children's Hospital Los Angeles.

"It's always been a dream for me to work at Children's Hospital, so to get in right after I graduated is so exciting," Xicotencatl said.

Uribe gained his academic and social footing with the help of a peer mentor from CSUCI's Peer Education and Equity Programs (PEEP). He became a mentor himself and will graduate in spring of 2021 with plans to teach high school history and coach basketball.

"This program allowed me achieve things I never thought were possible," Uribe said.

Community, Collaboration and Civic Engagement

President Sara Ruiz and Vice President Isaiah Ball

Student Government President Sara Ruiz and Vice President Isaiah Ball are looking forward to the slate of events and initiatives they have planned to strengthen student involvement.

This fall, they ramped up another annual Civic Engagement Week, which featured a voter registration drive and events encouraging their peers to get involved in their community. They will also recruiting for CSUCl's Lobby Corps committee, a group of students that lobby at local, state and federal levels on behalf of their peers and the CSU.

"We want to strengthen students' commitment to civic engagement," said Ruiz. "There's a misconception that students aren't committed. We

want to keep the momentum from last year's events going."

Ruiz and Ball planned a Mental Health Awareness Week, collaborating with departments across campus to showcase the resources and services available to students. They also talked about how to help more students take advantage of openCl, the University's program that lowers the cost of course materials. They want their term to be defined by initiatives that promote Student Government's visibility and role in enhancing student life.

"We want to interact with other students and boost the University's collaborative spirit," Ball said. "You get the most out of your college experience when you have extracurriculars, get involved and meet new people. We want to make the best possible experience for CSUCI students."

Ruiz and Ball have both been involved in Student Government for several years, holding respective positions as senator of social justice and chief justice. Ruiz, a political science and theatre student, and Ball, a communication student, have both found passions in activism and helping others. Both believe their student leadership has enhanced their college experience, and want others to experience the same transformation.

"We are building the culture of CSU Channel Islands," Ruiz said. "We are molding it to what we want the ideal CSUCI to be."



Michele Serros Collection

by KIM LAMB GREGORY

University Hall Exhibit

Nationally-renowned Oxnard Author/Poet Michele Serros is Honored with an Exhibit

A skateboard, photos, hot pink high heels and the iconic desk where Oxnard native Michele Serros wrote her way to national renown are among the items now on display in University Hall.

After an opening exhibit in February in the John Spoor Broome Library Gallery, Associate Professor of Chicana/o Studies Jennie Luna, Ph.D., a personal friend of Serros, oversaw the creation of the new display in the east lobby of University Hall.

"It's thematic of different parts of Michele's life. It took a lot of processing and imagination in the hopes of honoring how Michele would have liked it," Luna said.

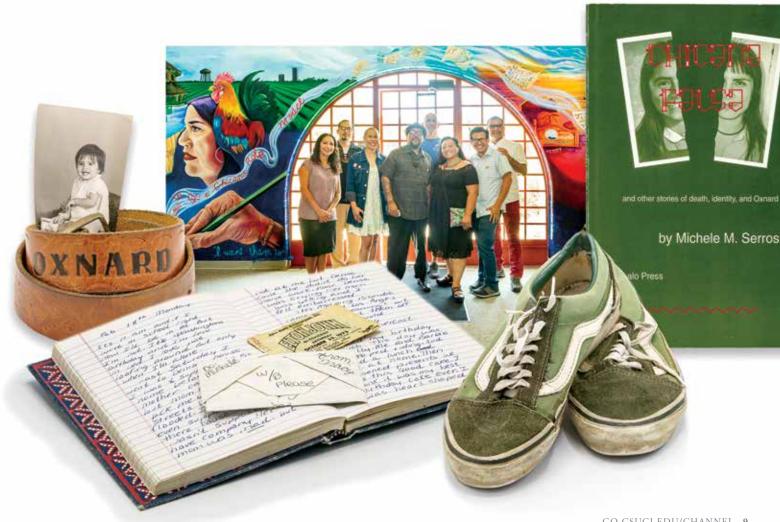
The Chicana/o writer, poet and social commentator died of cancer in 2015 at the age of 48. Because she

never forgot where she came from, Serros arranged for CSUCI to receive all of her original manuscripts and personal effects after her death.

Los Angeles artist Joe Galarza captured the images of Serros' life as he painted the wall-sized display of many of the everyday trappings she enshrined in her writing.

"I wanted to incorporate her humor with images like the chicharones (pork rinds) as she posed in her Quinceañera dress, as well as her riding the streets of El Rio on her skateboard," he said.

To see a time lapse video of the Serros mural in University Hall (shown below) visit: go.csuci.edu/SerrosExhibit



President's Dinner

by KIM LAMB GREGORY

Farm-To-Table Feast and Innovative Projects

Student and faculty research displays of bees, robots, moon jellies, dancers, and an electric pickle wowed guests who attended the 19th Annual President's Dinner held October 5 and hosted by the CSU Channel Islands Foundation and Mechanics Bank. This year's dinner, held under the stars at the South Quad of the campus, celebrated the area's agricultural bounty with a custom three-course farm-to-table dinner prepared by CSUCI's award-winning chefs.

Lagomarsino Award Winner

A highlight of the 19th Annual President's Dinner held on October 5 was the presentation of the 2019 Robert J. Lagomarsino award to former Wall Street executive turned Santa Barbara radio host Neil Kreisel.

The award, named in honor of the Honorable Robert J. Lagomarsino, a former United States congressman and state senator who is also a longtime supporter of the University, is presented to an individual who or organization which has contributed to and supported CSUCI.

Kreisel and his wife of almost 50 years, Beryl, moved to Santa Barbara from New York 21 years ago, after Neil retired from a successful career on Wall Street and in real estate. Kreisel then taught finance at Santa Barbara City College and now hosts two radio shows on KZSB AM 1290 in Santa Barbara.

When presenting the award, President Erika D. Beck praised Kreisel's advocacy, which has ranged from financial support to traveling to the state capital with Beck to stress the importance of CSUCI to state legislators.

When accepting the award, Kreisel gave numerous reasons why he supports CSUCI including its outstanding faculty, affordability, interdepartmental collaboration, emphasis on environmental stewardship, small class size, and the peer mentorship program.

"Most of these students who are first generation may have no idea what the word 'matriculation' means. They can't easily read a course catalog, and don't know how or are afraid to ask for help," he said. "Each mentor is assigned 10 to 12 mentees. Last semester 40 mentors changed the lives of over 436 mentees. I call that great leverage."

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FACING PAGE CLOCKWISE Neil Kreisel accepting the Lagomarsio Award from President Beck; Nursing students show guests what it would be like for a person living with glaucoma by using a virtual reality simulation program; Haas Automation guests; SAGE Publishing guests; Mechanics Bank guests.













12 CHANNEL MAGAZINE

A \$1.1 MILLION GRANT AWARDED TO two CSUCI faculty members is changing the early childhood education landscape in California.

A project called "Dual Language Learning Professional Development (DLLPD) for the California Early Childhood Workforce," funded by the California Department of Education, focuses on equipping educators throughout the state with the skills needed to teach dual language learners in preschools, community organizations and other settings. Over 60% of children between the ages of birth and five in California live in a household where members speak a language other than English.

Associate Professor of Early Childhood Studies Carola Oliva Olson, Ph.D., the grant's principal investigator, and Mari Estrada, Ph.D., lecturer in Early Childhood Studies and project co-director, designed the professional development model. An undergraduate course offered through CSUCI's Extended University introduces students to current theory, research and policy to support dual language learners and effective strategies to use in the classroom. The course is offered online and in-person, in both English and Spanish.

"We know that what happens in early childhood makes a difference for students in being successful in both school and life," Oliva-Olson said. "We must respond to a tremendous need in the county, state and nation to prepare our teachers. It's not about teachers becoming proficient in multiple languages, but the learning strategies they can use with their dual language learners throughout the day."

Over 60% of children ages zero to five in California live in a household where members speak a language other than English.

This past spring, Oliva-Olson and Estrada launched a pilot online course with 20 early child-hood educators across California.

"The pilot gave these teachers an opportunity to refine their classroom practices, and we were thrilled with the results," Oliva-Olson said. "We have great momentum to roll out the program across the state."

In the fall, they launched six simultaneous cohorts supported by 10 new instructors. This phase will support more educators in completing the course, and build both trainer and instructor capacity to advance this professional development. The excitement around Oliva-Olson's and Estrada's work has extended beyond the classroom: Continuing Development Inc./Child Development Centers (CDC), which operates local and statewide early learning experiences, is planning to roll out their strategies across their agency.

"There's a lot of interest in the work we're doing," Estrada said. "It has also provided us with the opportunity to work closely with CSUCI faculty and staff to talk about the language and cultural needs of California's young children. Extended University has been critical in making this happen and has been a great partnership for Early Childhood Studies and the School of Education."



ABOVE
Mari Estrada, Ph.D.,
Grant Writer and
Lecturer of Early
Childhood Studies
at CSUCI and CoDirector for DLLPD

FACING PAGE LEFT TO RIGHT Veronica Cerda, Teacher at CDC

Lourdes Zambrano, Teacher at CDC

Carola Oliva Olson, Associate Professor of Education at CSUCI and Principal Investigator for DLLPD

Lizelle Wulff, *Program Quality Manager for DLLPD*

Jennifer Escamilla, Site Supervisor at CDC





A day of service kicks off an ongoing partnership to reestablish a sacred Chumash site on campus.





by MARYA BARLOW

ISING ABOVE THE WEST SIDE OF CAMPUS, ROUND Mountain stands as a striking feature in the CSU Channel Islands landscape. From the top, it offers panoramic views of the campus, Oxnard plains, Camarillo, Point Mugu, and surrounding mountains and agricultural fields.

The mountain also boasts a historic identity as "Sat'wiwa" (the bluffs), a sacred site where the native Chumash inhabitants gathered for the winter solstice and set up shrines to celebrate harmony, healing, forgiveness, and compassion. The centuries-old tradition died out nearly 200 years ago.

On a sunny Saturday in September, 126 volunteers gathered to take the first step in reviving it. CSUCI students, staff, faculty, and alumni joined with Chumash descendants and members of the Santa Monica Mountains Trails Council for the inaugural Round Mountain Day of Service. Armed with picks, rakes, and hand tools, the volunteers began clearing a path to the top of the mountain. They hope to restore Sat'wiwa as a sacred Chumash shrine and, later, open the trail and mountaintop to the public as a cultural and recreational site.

For CSUCI Director of Facilities Support Raudel Bañuelos, who is also a Chumash elder and vice tribal chair for the Barbareño/Ventureño Band of Mission Indians, leading the service day was a meaningful milestone. He helped kick off the event by offering a Chumash blessing, burning sage, and sharing Sat'wiwa's history.

ABOVE View of Round Mountain, circa 1937, CSUCI John Spoor Broome Library Archives.
RIGHT Raudel Bańuelos performing a Chumash blessing.



"To set foot on a mountain my ancestors found sacred was a great honor"—Salvador Ambriz

"It's an honor to be able to contribute to the campus in this way and involve young minds who will carry on this tradition," Bañuelos said. "We want to bring back the shrine as a sacred site and celebrate winter solstice with all of the community as a yearly event. These celebrations are so needed in this time of disconnect and separation in our world."

After spending the morning clearing overgrown brush from the four-foot-wide trail, volunteers returned by bus to campus to enjoy lunch and share reflections and observations.

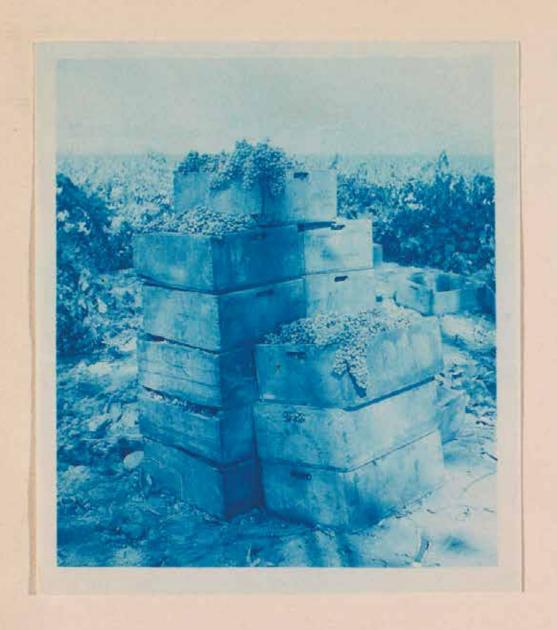
Salvador Ambriz, a history major of Chumash descent from Tulare, California, found the experience deeply moving. "The trail restoration event for me was a spiritual experience as well as hard work," he said. "I felt as if it was my duty to help restore a sacred site of my heritage. To set foot on a mountain that my ancestors found sacred was a great honor. To have such a site on my own university campus is an even greater privilege for all students to enjoy."

Zakiyyah Willis, a fourth-year health science major from Sacramento, added, "I wanted to kick my semester off with community service. This experience further validated for me that promoting unity and serving others should always be top priorities. I feel honored being able to say I was on Round Mountain and assisted in restoring it."

> Read more at go.csuci.edu/RoundMountain







HELPING STUDENTS

Find Themselves in History

JULIA ORNELAS-HIGDON

Assistant Professor of History

{ FEATURE Article }

by MARYA BARLOW

If you're not a history lover, Assistant Professor Julia Ornelas-Higdon is happy to convert you.



"I REALLY ENJOY TEACHING STUDENTS who are not history majors," she said. "Sometimes they confess they hate history. I love the opportunity to change their minds."

Ornelas-Higdon teaches courses in U.S. History, California History and Culture, Immigration, Race and Citizenship, and Narratives of Southern

California—reaching a broad range of students from first-year Liberal Studies majors and future teachers to fourth-year history majors. An expert on agricultural labor and the California wine industry, she's also completing a book that traces California winemaking from its origins in 1769 in the Spanish mission through the end of World War I. Her work is supported by a grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities.

"California wine has this stereotype of being a product made by and for exclusive populations," she said. "But when we look at the origins of the wine industry, it involved a diverse set of immigrants. It's racially diverse, it's working class, and it's not as exclusive in its history as it is today. I find that fascinating."

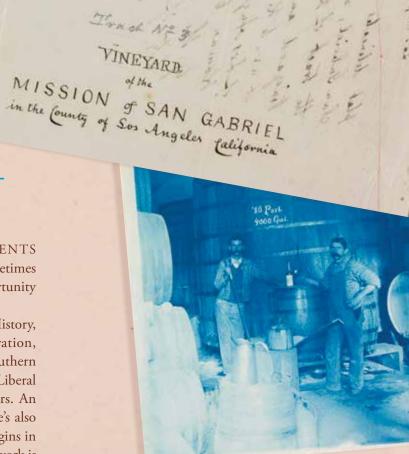
Ornelas-Higdon attributes her love of history to her family. Growing up, she was captivated by stories of her grandparents and great-grandparents, who migrated from Mexico to work in California as agricultural laborers, following crops seasonally throughout the state.

"I had never studied anything related to my family's Mexican-American culture and our trajectory and personal stories," she said. "When I got to college, I learned about the Bracero Program, a 1942 agreement between the U.S. and Mexico to send agricultural laborers into the field while American soldiers were fighting World War II. When I made this

FACING PAGE Grape Harvest, Fair Oaks Rancho Photographs, Altadena, California. Circa 1885. photCL 6. Image courtesy of The Huntington Library, San Marino, California.

TOP RIGHT Bottling Port, Fair Oaks Rancho Photographs, Altadena, CA. Circa 1885. photCL 6; Vineyard of the Mission San Gabriel Map, San Gabriel, California, April 6, 1865. SR_Box_26(11).05. Images courtesy of The Huntington Library, San Marino, California.

BOTTOM RIGHT Ornales-Higdon's grandmother (back row, center) and her family taken in Mexico in 1958 shortly before their migration to southern California. Her two older brothers had already been working as braceros and agricultural workers in California for several years. Photo courtesy of Julia Ornales-Higdon.









"When we look at the origins of the wine industry, it involved a diverse set of immigrants."

connection to my own family, it blew my mind. It motivated me to go into the archives and find more stories about people with my own history."

While attending Pomona College as an undergraduate student, Ornelas-Higdon's dedication caught the attention of a revered history professor who encouraged her to go to graduate school and become a professor.

"I had never considered it before," she said. "I didn't have role models in my life who were professors. For someone I respected and admired so much to tell me 'you would make a great professor' was a boost to my confidence. It opened up my world view. I try to keep that in mind when my students come in for office hours. I listen to their passions and make gentle suggestions."

> Read more at: go.csuci.edu/WineHistory

The Grapes of Conquest: Race, Labor, and the Industrialization of California Wine, 1769-1920

Ornelas-Higdon's upcoming book examines the evolution of winegrowing across three distinct political regimes (Spanish, Mexican, and American) through the industry's demise after Prohibition. The monograph is an interethnic study of race and labor in rural California, examining how diverse groups, including California Indians, Mexican Californios, Chinese immigrants, and EuroAmericans, came together to build the wine industry.



FACING PAGE CLOCKWISE

Mission San Gabriel, San Gabriel, CA. Circa 1886. photPF 588.

Grapes on the Scales, Fair Oaks Rancho Photographs, Altadena, CA. Circa 1885. photCL 6;

Winemaker's Cottage, L.J. Rose Property, Sunny Slope Ranch Photographs, San Gabriel, CA. Circa 1880. photCL 522;

Conditions of the Sale of Land by the San Gabriel Wine Co., San Gabriel, CA. March 26, 1888. Box 149 (24);

Harvesting Grapes, Fair Oaks Rancho Photographs, Altadena, CA. Circa 1885. photCL 6.

LEFT Native American Children and Dwellings, San Gabriel, CA. Circa 1880, photCL 74 (582).

Images Courtesy of The Huntington Library, San Marino, CA.

Naturally Inspired

Dulce Lopez'17 B.S. Environmental Science & Resource Management

"My goal is to be the teacher I wish I had."

by MARYA BARLOW

ACH MORNING DULCE LOPEZ greets her eighth-grade students at the classroom door with a friendly handshake. The gesture clearly conveys Lopez's enthusiasm for teaching science and serving as a role model for future generations.

In Anacapa Middle School's dual-language science program, Lopez teaches three classes a day in Spanish and three in English. In her first year of teaching, she's also helping develop and pilot the school's Spanish-language science curriculum.

"That's what really drew me to my position—to be able to teach science in my native language," she said. "I want to be the science teacher I didn't have. Going through my education, I never saw many people like myself represented in science. I want students in my classroom to know they can grow up to be anything."

A first-generation college student from Oxnard, Lopez enrolled at CSUCI in 2013 as an Environmental Science & Resource Management (ESRM) major and quickly "fell in love" with environmental science education.

"What I loved about ESRM is how hands-on it was," she said. "I had opportunities to do undergraduate research and service-learning projects on the Channel Islands, in New Orleans, and in Costa Rica. Those experiences really helped me set myself apart from others and stand out when interviewing."

While attending CSUCI full-time, Lopez seized opportunities to work, teach, and conduct research. Among them, she held jobs as a park ranger in the Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area and was a student assistant and STEM educator in the "Crossing the Channel" program, a federal grant-funded initiative providing classroom education, mentoring, and outdoor experiences on the Channel Islands for Oxnard middle and high school students.

"My students inspire me each day to be a better teacher," she said. "I want to provide a lot of hands-on opportunities for them to learn science by experiencing it."









MATTHEW LAWLER thinks big... and small.

AS FOUNDER AND CEO OF SOL FORMS, INC., he's building an online platform in which brands pay people for their personal data and product insights. The technology effectively flips current ad models used by Google and Facebook.

"I love advocating for the people and empowering them at a time when giant tech corporations have been just going deeper and deeper into exploitative business models that certainly do not have their best interests at heart," Lawler said.

While growing the start-up company, Lawler and his family of four decided to downsize in their personal lives. In September, they moved into a 350-square foot tiny home in Westlake Village. Lawler says his wife and business partner, Brooke, and their two sons are excited by the change.

"We wanted a more simple, minimalistic life and to be mission-oriented and focus on our business and family life," he said.

After graduating from CSUCI in 2010 with a degree in Art, Lawler worked as a graphic designer, illustrator, and user experience designer for a variety of companies

and nonprofits, including Volvo, Life Skills for American Families, and his own design firm, Matthew Lawler Creative. In 2017, he co-founded Thor as chief marketing officer, launching a startup aimed at using blockchain technology to support the gig economy workforce with payments, healthcare, and retirement planning. The company shut down in April, amidst disputes over its direction.

Eager to deliver on his mission to do good through technology, Lawler quickly shifted efforts to Sol Forms, which he says will use interactive comics to generate marketplace insights. He's currently meeting with investors and outlining an ambitious technology aimed at toppling Facebook.

"We're moving into a world where we'll be able to treat data more like a hard asset," he said. "Now is our chance to adapt new technologies to benefit people, and not just the largest corporations. Our platform rewards people for their attention, instead of exploiting them."

> Learn more at: www.solforms.com

FACING PAGE The Lawler family: Brooke. Kai (2 yrs.), Fin (4 yrs.) and Matthew.



A Legacy of Love for

by MARYA BARLOW & KIM LAMB GREGORY

JERRY CLIFFORD AND BIJIAN FAN don't have any biological children, but when planning their estate, they created opportunities for dozens—and potentially hundreds—of CSUCI "kids."

A legacy gift established by the couple this year will fund scholarships for CSUCI students long after both have passed away.

The gift reflects their deep connections to CSUCI as well as their own personal experiences with the transformative power of higher education.

"We've both been a part of CSUCI and feel that it deeply benefits the community," said Clifford. "I believe in helping some of the young people who don't have the opportunities I had. CSUCI's focus on the local students—particularly bringing firstgeneration college students into the university and trying to change lives and families—is commendable. These families need that kind of support."

"We want to give something that's local, and that supports education," added Fan. "I feel that as an immigrant, I really benefited from my education."

Both semi-retired, Clifford and Fan actively serve as instructors and participants in the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute (OLLI), part of CSUCI's Extended University, which offers university-quality classes for students ages 50+.

Clifford, a research scientist and educator, joined CSUCI in 2004 as a lecturer in physics and astronomy, after Fan's job as a biotech engineer at Amgen brought the couple to Ventura County. Born in Chicago, Clifford earned his undergraduate degree in physics from Lawrence University and a Ph.D. in nuclear physics from Iowa State University. He became an Air Force officer, taught at the Air Force Academy in Colorado Springs, and later worked in the office of the Secretary of Defense at the Pentagon.

In 1980, after moving to New Mexico to work at the Air Force Weapons Lab at Kirtland Air Force Base, Clifford met Fan in a hiking club. They have been together ever since, and were among the first same-sex couples to legally marry in Ventura in 2008.

Fan grew up in Xi'an, China, where he earned his bachelor's degree and became a mathematics faculty member at Jiao Tong University. He came to the U.S. in 1989 with two bags and \$75, and completed his Ph.D. in mechanical engineering at Texas A&M with the help of a graduate teaching assistantship and a \$300 loan from a professor. After retiring from a career as a biotechnology engineer with Merck and Amgen, Fan launched a second career as an internationally recognized sculptor, visual artist, and educator. He shares his passion with students at OLLI, integrating his background in art and science in courses including "Origami Memory Gymnastics," "The Science of Acupuncture," and "Train your Brain: Mental Fitness for Life."

"We feel strongly about CSUCI's commitment not just to undergraduate students, but also the region's senior citizens who are intellectually curious and want to be involved with a university," Clifford said. "Many seniors, once they get out of work, have relatively little social interaction, so they build social networks. When we start fall classes, it's like kindergarten, the OLLI students are so excited to see their friends again."

- > Read more at: go.csuci.edu/LegacyGiving
- > Learn more about legacy giving at: csucilegacy.org

FACING PAGE LEFT TO RIGHT BiJian Fan and

Jerry Clifford. **ABOVE EGRET**

This kinetic sculpture was made by Fan from a sheet of Polyvinyl Chloride, synthetic paper, and thread. The motion of the head and tail in the wind brings the bird to life.

ABOVE ARTICHOKE

This is a student project from Fan's Origami Math Genius (OMG) class at the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute (OLLI) where he uses the art of origami and math as a brain fitness tool.

A Hometown Connection

by MARYA BARLOW

WO PROMINENT EXECUTIVES BORN AND RAISED in Ventura County are the new co-chairs of the CSUCI Planned Giving Advisory Council (PGAC). The PGAC promotes and encourages legacy gifts to the University as a way to support CSUCI students and deepen the University's impact on the region.

Louie Valdez is Managing Director of Investments at Wells Fargo Advisors in Westlake Village. He grew up in Thousand Oaks, where his family opened one of the city's first restaurants, Casita Valdez, in 1958. Valdez, a Certified Financial Planner, holds a bachelor's degree in economics from CSU Northridge and a master's degree from the College for Financial Planning.

"I was fortunate to be the first in my family to attend public university and it was an important first step in my professional development," said Valdez. "Since my family has been in the Conejo Valley for many years, I feel the importance of supporting our local university. When you walk onto the CSUCI campus, there is a sense of belonging to something special."

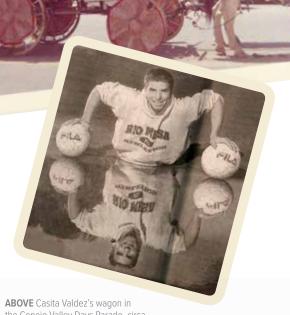
Jonathan Johnen, a partner and co-owner of Farr Johnen & Associates in Ventura and Santa Barbara, is a Certified Financial Planner specializing in life, disability, and long-term care insurance. Born and raised in Camarillo, he earned a bachelor's degree in business economics in 2006 from University of California, Santa Barbara.

"Through the PGAC, we are able to help the University with advancing educational programs, create opportunity, and most importantly help take care of the students," said Johnen. "I was very fortunate to have great mentors throughout my life, and I feel that joining the PGAC has offered me a small way to honor them."

As PGAC co-chairs, Valdez and Johnen lead other successful advisors and provide guidance on how to work together to support CSUCI and its students. They offer advice on financial strategies for the University as well as to donors and supporters.

"We are so fortunate to welcome Louie and Jonathan as co-chairs of our PGAC," said Director of Planned & Major Gifts Grace Robinson. "Because both were supported at critical times in their own educational journeys, they know the importance of securing a legacy for our students."

> Learn more about legacy giving at: csucilegacy.org



ABOVE Casita Valdez's wagon in the Conejo Valley Days Parade, circa 1965. Trying not to fall in the puddle, Jonathan Johnen carefully balances on two soccer balls for this senior year photo at Rio Mesa High School.

BELOW LEFT TO RIGHT

Jonathan Johnen and Louie Valdez.



2018-19 California State University Channel Islands

Foundation Annual Report

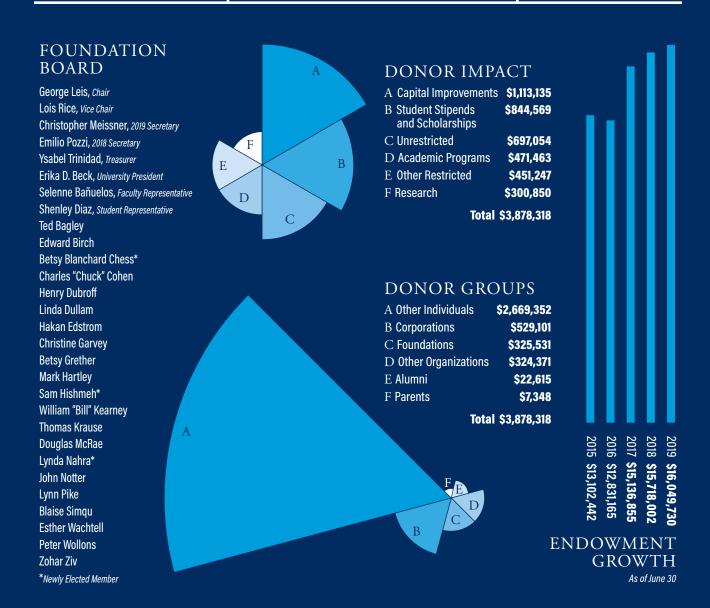
1,577
INDIVIDUAL

DONORS

\$3,878,318

TOTAL DOLLARS RAISED 889

ALUMNI DONORS



The Year in Review

The 2018-2019 academic year was extremely productive for the CSU Channel Islands' Foundation. In addition to raising \$3.8 million in philanthropic funds, the Foundation welcomed several new members to its board of directors, including Betsy Blanchard Chess, Sam Hishmeh and Lynda Nahra, and celebrated the return of former board member Linda Dullam.

The Foundation manages CSUCI's endowment funds with the intent of generating additional income from the philanthropic gifts given to the University. As of June 30, 2019, the Foundation's Endowment had a value of \$16 million. The Endowment paid out more than \$585,703 in 2018-2019, directly supporting academic programs, student scholarships and student support programs such as student research. The Foundation's total assets at that date were \$26.6 million.

Some of the foundation's major initiatives this year included the launch of CSUCI's Peer Mentor Ambassador program aimed at retaining the University's most vulnerable students and helping them persist to graduation. This effort was launched with the establishment of the Tipper Gore Award for Excellence in Peer Mentorship which will fund \$3,500 stipends each semester for selected peer mentor "ambassadors" who will guide and support struggling students.

The Peer Mentor Ambassador Program is already seeing a 96% retention rate among participating "mentees."

Other highlights from the year included:

- The creation of the inaugural class gift by the 2019 graduating class. A committee formed from a student class project, Student Clubs & Organizations and ASI Student Government raised \$6,890 for the campus Hot Meals Program benefitting students facing food insecurity. With support from alumni and our campus community, more than \$13,000 was raised for Hot Meals.
- The acquisition of the Michele Serros collection containing artifacts, manuscripts, books and personal effects of the late Chicana writer, poet and social commentator. The exhibit is on display in University Hall (see story on page 9).
- The first installment of a multi-million dollar legacy gift that will help the University build a performing arts center as part of its future multi-use facility.
- Top priorities for the Foundation next year include continued support for the Peer Mentor Ambassador Program, CSUCI's proposed multi-use building, including the new performing arts center and health center, as well as building support for undergraduate research and creative activities.

"We hope to grow CSUCI's philanthropic support in order to expand the University's ability to provide exceptional and affordable higher education to the students of Ventura, Santa Barbara and Los Angeles Counties," said CSUCI's Vice President for Advancement Nichole Ipach. "The community support that the University has received to date has already served to transform the lives of our students."

On behalf of the students. faculty and staff, we gratefully acknowledge the following donors.

These gifts in support of CSU Channel Islands were made from July 1, 2018 to June 30, 2019. Every gift makes a difference and every donor is appreciated. Thank you!

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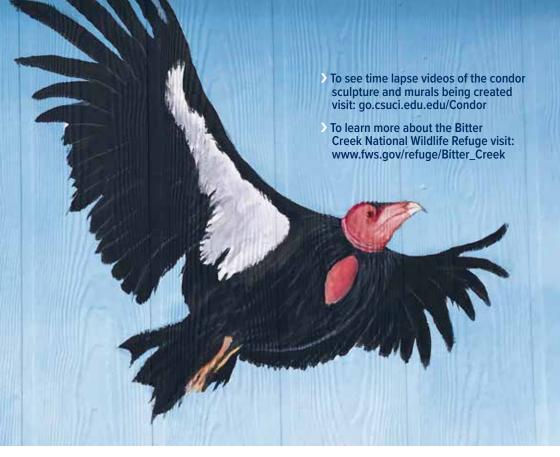
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