

CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY CHANNEL ISLANDS

# Channel

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MAGAZINE



## Beck in the community

PAGE 21

# Looking to the future

**A**S I WRAP UP MY FIRST YEAR ON CAMPUS, I have reflected upon all I have learned about the people, culture and values of the entire CSU Channel Islands community. During my first 100 days, I embarked on a listening tour meeting with more than 10,000 members of the CSUCI community. I hosted Bagels with Beck, Burritos with Beck, even Bento Boxes with Beck. I met with students, alumni, faculty, campus leadership, local business and community leaders, donors, legislators and our Foundation Board.

Everywhere I have been, no matter who has been engaged in the dialogue, there has been overwhelming agreement about our fundamental mission – to offer a high quality, affordable education to the diverse students of our region which serves as a pathway for social and economic mobility.

CSUCI is uniquely positioned to enhance the civic and economic prosperity of our community by preparing our students to not just join the future of our innovation economy, but to lead it.

We are not trying to replicate the university of yesterday — we are blazing a new trail in higher education and emerging as a national role model for the future of higher learning. Advances in technology are transforming the workplace at an ever increasing pace and we can scarcely envision the new professions our students will hold in the coming decades. To prepare them to thrive in this new landscape, we are providing innovative ways of learning that extend beyond the four walls of a classroom. We are laying a solid foundation of analytical, communication, critical thinking and problem-solving skills — and a deep sense of curiosity and a passion for life-long learning that transcends any degree program and will serve our students no matter where life may take them.

Moving forward, we will continue to secure new and diverse revenue streams needed to maintain our commitment to student access and success. And we will continue to build an entirely new model of higher education that supports a thriving multicultural campus community. In partnership with our business and industry leaders, we will continue to align our academic programs with state and local employment trends and continue ensuring that the education CSUCI provides is, and will always be, exceptional.

As you read the interesting articles that follow about our CSUCI community, I encourage you to remain involved with CSUCI as we look to the future.

Sincerely,



Erika D. Beck  
President







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

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**Cover:** Role Model: President Beck's philosophy on the power of community engagement

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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.

If you would like to be added to our email or mailing list for University events or special announcements, please submit your contact information to: csuci.news@csuci.edu



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# Nursing program ranks among California's best

By Zoe Lance

**C** SUCI IS HOME TO ONE OF THE BEST NURSING programs in California according to a recent survey from RegisteredNursing.org.

Out of 50 ranked colleges and universities, CSUCI sits at No. 11 — higher than eight other CSUs and all of the UCs. The ranking cited CSUCI's program caliber and its graduates' strong ties to the community, as well as its exceptionally high license-exam pass rates.

For the faculty, staff and students in the Nursing programs at the Camarillo campus as well as the Cottage Health System Goleta location, the accomplishment reflects their excellent academics and community commitment. CSUCI Nursing offers several options, which includes one for current nurses seeking a bachelor's degree.

Admission is rigorous. Out of 500 applicants for fall 2017, only 44 students will join the Camarillo campus while only 22 of 150 applicants will attend the Goleta location.

"The ideal student has to come in with their eyes wide open to what nursing is," said Karen Jensen, who started the program in 2006. "They have to be intelligent in science and math, but also be a good communicator and compassionate."

Before they become professionals, nursing students take the National Council Licensure Examination (NCLEX) exam. CSUCI's Nursing pass rates have been nearly perfect in most years and 100 percent in 2016, where all 40 students who took the NCLEX passed. Jensen says that this is no small feat.

"It's hard to do that well and keep it up at that level," she said. "Our students understand the seriousness of what they're doing."

CSUCI students have access to many training



CSUCI nurses with Karen Jensen (right)

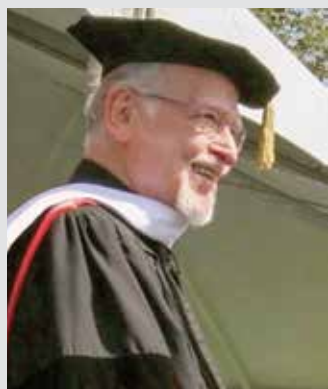
opportunities, like the simulation lab. They can practice the skills they need to perfect on workstations and high-fidelity simulators, which are computerized mannequins that mimic a patient's respiration, heart function and neurological signs.

Students will transition to careers in Ventura County hospitals, physician's offices and public health initiatives.

Nursing students also spend many hours volunteering at the Frances Huggins Community Health Clinic, a project that CSUCI students established in Oxnard in 2015. With community partners they provide immunizations and screenings, as well as health education and fitness classes. They also host two annual health fairs.

Jensen, who is retiring this academic year, believes that this dedication sets her students apart.

"I wouldn't be afraid to have any of them care for me," she said. "I know they'd take good care of me and anybody else." ♦c



Aug. 9, 1931 – May 1, 2017

## CSUCI recognizes the passing of Henry L. "Hank" Lacayo

Lacayo was a Ventura County icon and an integral member of the CSUCI community. He was an early and important friend of CSUCI, serving as a founding member of the President's Circle and as a member of the Foundation Board.

He was instrumental in the

founding of CSUCI's Henry L. "Hank" Lacayo Institute for Workforce & Community Studies and was awarded an honorary doctorate degree in 2012 in recognition of the profound impact he had on both CSUCI and the entire region.



# Alison Potter receives staff award for excellence

By Zoe Lance

**I**F YOU ASK ALISON POTTER what she does as an Academic Program Analyst at CSUCI, her short answer is pretty sweet: she helps faculty help students.

"I ask the faculty, 'How can I help you help them? Can I take some things off your plate so it frees up more office-hour time? Do you need help with this event to draw students there?'" she said. "I enjoy working at CSUCI because it opened up so many opportunities for me, and I see it as my way of giving back to the University."

It's this can-do attitude and passion that made Potter the inaugural recipient of the CSUCI Staff Award for Excellence. The CSUCI Staff Council award highlights exceptional staff members for their contributions to the University community. Award criteria includes years of service, job performance, and demonstration of University values.

Potter provides support for four undergraduate programs: History, Political Science, Global Studies, Chicana/o Studies and also supports University Programs. In her behind-the-scenes work of scheduling classes, processing travel forms and planning events, she ensures that her faculty have more time to devote to student interaction.

Frank Barajas, one of the faculty members who nominated Potter, says the award was well-deserved.

"I was proud of her and for her," said Barajas, who is a Professor of History and program chair. "She's diligent and follows through with all of her duties. We can always depend on her, and she always completes things with a smile."

Potter's roots at CSUCI run



deep. She graduated from the University with her bachelor's degree in Business in 2009, and received a master's in educational leadership in 2016. She's played a variety of staff roles, including graduate program recruitment and administrative support, and served on University-wide committees such as the recent Provost search — something she counts as one of her proudest CSUCI moments.

"While I was pursuing my undergrad degree, I realized that CSUCI's positive campus culture extended to its faculty and staff,

and I knew that I wanted to work here one day and be a part of that," she said. "Being on the Provost search committee was really rewarding, knowing my input is valued across this campus."

Being the first CSUCI staff member to receive this award strikes a deep chord for her.

"It melted my heart," Potter said. "I came to work the next day with a skip in my step because I know people appreciate what I do. To know that people think that much of you is really rewarding." ❖c

## Josh Rubin finds a business program to balance his wine

**F**OR JOSH RUBIN, THE VINEYARDS HE works with are more than just rows of grapes waiting to be made into wine — they're a working laboratory.

"It's one thing to read a textbook, but to really convert theory into understanding and practical application is an incredible opportunity," he said. "I'm making better decisions now. That's the ideal case for an MBA. It's a great complement to my previous specialization."

“Making sound scientific decisions and sound business decisions shouldn’t be mutually exclusive,” he said. “The way the science fits in is that you get to make operational decisions that make sense from a scientific perspective.”

Rubin turned to CSUCI's program, hosted at the University's Goleta campus. He enjoys the in-person experience.

"I wanted an in-class MBA," he said. "There are a million online programs out there with big names, but you're not going to get the same experience out of it. It's the people: there's a really cool blend of other disciplines in our cohort."



"Now I have the language to back up the arguments I'm trying to make on how science can save us money," he said. "It's the greatest immediate improvement for me."

“Previously, I was expecting people to perform by the standards I hold for myself, and that’s not really correct,” he said. “When someone has different strengths than you, it could mean that they are the exact complement that your team needs.”

"I think about my team differently now. What can I do to help them excel in the best way possible? Asking and answering that question is a lot of what management is." ♦**C**



# Student advocate

## *Michelle Noyes' experience in student government*

By Zoe Lance

**W**HEN MICHELLE NOYES, '17 B.S. BUSINESS, first came to CSUCI as a freshman, the idea of running for the highest student leadership role on campus wasn't even on her radar.

But a coincidental circumstance gave Noyes insight into Student Government's purpose as the representative voice of CSUCI students, and led her to become the organization's president.

In her sophomore year Noyes joined the CI View student newspaper, which is next door to the Student Government office. The proximity allowed her to see what was going on, and when she saw that elections were happening, she decided to get involved. Noyes joined the 2015 ticket as vice president to presidential candidate Monique Reyna.

"Taking the risk of running for vice president was scary, but exciting," she said.

Her risk paid off. Not only did the pair win, but Noyes found passion in leading the Student Senate. It pushed her to continue advocating for CSUCI students, and in 2016 she ran for president with Marlene Pelayo and won.

In addition to being a CI View staff writer and layout editor, Noyes was student president of the Martin V. Smith Business Club and treasurer for the College Republicans. She's also a member of the Gamma Beta Phi Honor Society and the Mortar Board National College Senior Honor Society. Her time as president made her further appreciate the work of student organizations.

"There's a lot that goes on behind the scenes: you don't realize how much time students and clubs are putting in," she said. "It was great to get along with people on campus, because it's a lot easier when you go to them with a problem students have. We're able to solve a lot of things with having those relationships."

She counts her greatest Student Government

❖ "I've been passionate about having student voices be heard and making sure they are a part of the conversation." —Michelle Noyes

accomplishments as increasing student presence on University committees, establishing the CSUCI Food Pantry, working on providing more emergency funds for students and hosting a CSU-wide meeting of the California State Student Association. Her peers



are at the center of all of her efforts and said she appreciates other CSUCI community members for having the same mindset.

"I've been passionate about having student voices be heard and making sure they are a part of the conversation," she said. "There are a lot of people here on campus who are here to help students, and

that's really special."

Noyes plans to pursue a career that includes working with both people and numbers. ❖c



CSUCI student Winter Smith working with robots

## Computer Girls provide peer support

By Zoe Lance

**T**HE COMPUTER GIRLS IS MORE THAN JUST a student group — it's an empowering community.

Established in 2014, the club provides a support network for women interested in pursuing careers in computer science. The members primarily participate in community service projects that help middle school and high school students, including CSUCI's Science Carnival. They also organize biweekly coding sessions and annual boot camps for the entire University community, volunteer for outreach activities and co-organize with other clubs to host guest speakers.

Computer Girls is comprised of nearly 60 members, some of which are men. Kristen Godinez, a graduating Computer Science student and the club's former president and vice president, says that the club's presence and diverse membership helps women on campus succeed.

"A lot of women leave the major because they think they're not good enough," said Godinez, who has been a part of the club since its inception. "We have a support network here that says, 'We're here for you, we've been through the same classes and we can help you get through them.' They know they can talk to us."

The club also sponsors professional development opportunities, so Godinez and her peers can attend conferences around the country and network with companies.

"It was only because of the club that I was able to attend and put myself out there," she said. "Companies reached out to me that I never thought I'd apply to, like Amazon, Google and Twitter."

Anna Bieszczad, a full-time lecturer in the Computer Science program and the club's advisor, has seen club members gain the self-confidence to apply for highly competitive graduate programs, internships and jobs.

"It is so heartwarming to see female students that are seriously considering changing their major, stay and blossom," Bieszczad said. "It's because of the powerful peer support that they have received through the club."

As a professional software engineer, Bieszczad experienced how tough it was to be one of the only women in a male-dominated field. When she first came to CSUCI, she also noticed that there were few women in the program. For Bieszczad, establishing Computer Girls is a point of pride.

"When we created the club, we strongly believed that it was very needed at CSUCI, but I never dreamed of the remarkable impact that it would have," she said. "The empowerment they feel, the self-confidence and the power of teamwork seems unstoppable." ❖C



# On the Hill

## *Jenna Kushigemachi's Panetta Internship experience*



CSUCI student Jenna Kushigemachi is flanked by Leon and Sylvia Panetta, founders of the Panetta Institute, where Kushigemachi was an intern last year.

By Zoe Lance

**W**HEN JENNA KUSHIGEMACHI turns on the television to watch cable news, she knows exactly which politician is being interviewed and where — in fact, she could probably give you a short bio while also telling you about the last time she was in the building.

"I've walked through where they do interviews," she said. "I sat in those offices every day for three months. I've passed Speaker of the House Paul Ryan in the hallway."

Kushigemachi, a graduating CSUCI Art and digital media student, spent Aug. to Nov. 2016 at the Panetta Institute for Public Policy's Congressional Internship program in Washington, D.C. The Institute, founded by Leon and Sylvia Panetta, prepares students to work in a congressional representative's office. Most of the cohort comprise of students from the 23 CSU campuses.

The program starts with a two-

week American government and policy course at the Institute, which is housed at CSU Monterey Bay. Kushigemachi attended lectures given by former Vice President Dan Quayle, lawyers, political consultants and retired members of congress.

"We got to learn from the experts," she said. "I came back with much more knowledge than most people have. You don't get that experience anywhere else."

Kushigemachi landed in Congresswoman Nancy Pelosi's office, working under Pelosi's senior policy adviser for budget and health. Her projects focused on social security and the Affordable Care Act.

"It was really spectacular — I got to work on actual policy," she said. "I drafted and went to congressional briefings. I got up every day and worked in the Capitol Building."

Kushigemachi pursued the internship opportunity as a way

to challenge herself and stretch her capabilities. She went through a rigorous application process to be the only CSUCI student in the program, which included a personal nomination from President Emeritus Richard Rush.

"I really wanted to show that art is what I study in school, but not all that I can do," she said. "It's a once-in-a-lifetime experience, and if you have the opportunity you can't miss it."

And if you ask her about pending legislation, she can tell you all about what's happening in Congress — a new source of pride for her.

"People forget that we have duties as citizens, and that we're obligated to participate and understand how things work," she said. "It changed me as a citizen and I understand the impact of participating. It really increases your level of patriotism, passing your country's leaders in the hallway on the Hill." ♦c



CSUCI students Jeyla Fendi, Hayden McPherson, Professor Sean Anderson, Rachael Bowman and Angie Garelick

# Professor leads students on service-learning trip to post-Katrina New Orleans

By Kim Lamb Gregory

**T**HE THICK MORNING AIR hummed with insects as Jeyla Fendi's boots crunched through the wetlands south of New Orleans. She hacked away underbrush with her machete, wiped sweat from her forehead and returned to counting trees with her classmates.

Fendi was among 12 students who traveled to New Orleans with Environmental Science & Resource Management (ESRM) Professor Sean Anderson, who started this annual tradition in the wake of Hurricane Katrina striking New Orleans in 2005.

The Category Five juggernaut killed more than 1,500 people in Southern Louisiana, doing \$81 billion in damage and leaving an environmental crisis that persists nearly 12 years later.

The wetlands were inundated



CSUCI student Angie Garelick





Attendees of the New Orleans Service-Learning Trip pose near the London Avenue Canal Temporary Flood Gates/ Pump Station

with invasive species of plants and trees and the coast was drastically eroded, washing away the natural buffer New Orleans had against the Gulf of Mexico.

"If you face south from the wetland forest where the students work, it used to be about 62 miles of wetland to get to the open waters of the Gulf," Anderson said. "Now it's only about 14 miles."

One of the students' projects has been to collect data on native versus invasive species of trees and plants in the damaged area. Anderson says the data is unparalleled.

"We have the only long-term data set," confirmed Anthropology major Lauren Wilson. "We are the only ones who have returned every single year since the event. We are documenting which tree species are surviving and which kinds are taking over."

Anderson said the data the students have collected is unmatched by any other research team. Each trip is different each year, depending on what is needed by the communities they serve. Besides conducting research, students have



CSUCI student Jamie Masukawa



CSUCI student Angie Garelick





Students observe “Boots” a seven-foot long alligator



CSUCI students Katie Messerly, Alexis Marquez, Aryana Moore, Julianna Perez and Rachael Bowman



CSUCI students Juliana Perez, Jeyla Fendi and Katie Messerly

helped rebuild homes, cleared overgrown pathways and planted sustainable hydroponic gardens in the devastated Ninth Ward.

❖ “We go and hear people’s stories of Katrina, and you know what you’re doing means a lot to these people”  
—Jeyla Fendi

Every day, the students are up at dawn, working in the wetlands, touring museums, talking with conservation experts or perhaps watching one of the local characters feed Ahi steaks to a seven-foot long alligator named Boots.

At night, the students can rest, journal and input their research data, or immerse themselves in New Orleans

night life with visits to restaurants or jazz clubs.

“We went to cooking school, we went to the farmers market,” Fendi said. “They let us loose to go cook. I taught myself how to make jambalaya.”

Now that she’s back, Fendi knows why other students who have gone on the annual New Orleans service-learning trip say it transformed them.

“It’s really fast, really emotional,” said Fendi, who graduated in May with an ESRM degree. “You work really hard and it’s really hot. We go and hear people’s stories of

Katrina, and you know what you’re doing means a lot to these people.”

Wilson said the trip changed her, compelling her to seek for other ways to help others.

“It was intense, it was emotional,” she said. “It was the best time of my life.” ♦c

▶ [go.csuci.edu/nola](http://go.csuci.edu/nola)



# University Glen development moves towards construction in 2018



ArtandDesignStudios.com

By Zoe Lance

**T**HIS SPRING, THE CSUCI SITE Authority Board took critical steps towards a second phase of real estate development for University Glen.

The 32-acre expansion of CSUCI's residential community will provide more housing opportunities for prospective faculty and staff, as well as more community resources for the current residents. The 600-unit project consists of 310 market-rate apartments, as well as 170 senior age-restricted apartments and 120 for-sale town houses and single-family homes. New amenities will include a clubhouse, pool and other multi-use spaces.

Since fall 2016, the Site Authority Board has been assessing the project's environmental impact and holding public hearings in anticipation of breaking ground in summer 2018. Over the remainder of 2017 and into 2018, the Site

Authority Board will present their plans to the CSU Board of Trustees, finalize the development agreement and begin final design efforts.

"We are very excited about what this last phase of the development will offer to the University Glen community," said John Gormley, Assistant Vice President for Facilities Services. "We are trying to further support our faculty and staff, as well as people who are at the end of their professional careers, and find ways for them to give back to the University and the University to them."

This phase has been made possible through the University's partnership with Kennedy Wilson. The global real estate investment company acquired the leaseholds to the University Glen community and the adjacent Town Center in Aug. 2016 for \$81 million. The agreement allows CSUCI to pursue this campus expansion and

put development revenue towards supporting University operations.

Kennedy Wilson's proposals for additional University Glen development met both the company's and the University's goals to build a mix of housing options, provide community amenities and consider childcare needs.

The University Glen expansion is part of the CI 2025 initiative, a long-term plan to continue to increase the University's student enrollment. The plan consists of several real-estate and construction projects that will keep pace with both student and greater community needs. Related campus developments include the recent extension of Islands Cafe and the grand opening of the Santa Rosa Village student housing community.

For more information, visit the CI 2025 website, [www.csuci.edu/ci-2025/](http://www.csuci.edu/ci-2025/). ♦c



President Erika D. Beck and Chancellor Timothy P. White

# President Erika D. Beck formally honored at investiture ceremony

By Kim Lamb Gregory

**ERIKA D. BECK WAS FORMALLY RECOGNIZED** and celebrated as the new President of CSU Channel Islands at an investiture ceremony held May 5 in front of the John Spoor Broome Library.

Rich with tradition, an investiture is defined as a “formal ceremony conferring the authority and symbols of high office.” It is held during or at the conclusion of the new president’s first year in office.

Among the numerous academic dignitaries, including CSUCI President Emeriti J. Handel Evans and Richard R. Rush, presidents from other CSU campuses, as well as delegates representing academic institutions as professors, staff and alumni, participated in a formal procession dressed in cap and gown regalia.

The tradition has symbolized the pursuit of knowledge since the Middle Ages, and it survives in

modern times as an opportunity to welcome a new era and wish the new president well.

The ceremony began with Academic Senate Chair and Professor of Mathematics Cynthia Wyels carrying the CSUCI mace, a ceremonial staff carved from native walnut and crowned with a pair of dolphins, reflecting the Chumash legend of the dolphins who led the Chumash from the Channel Islands to the mainland.

Joining in the procession were CSU Chancellor Timothy P. White as well as members of the CSU Board of Trustees and other special guests.

Chancellor White praised CSUCI as a “jewel on the coast.”

“A university grown from the footprint of buildings established as part of FDR’s New Deal has since emerged from its former role into a world class center of discovery, achievement and of excellence through inclusivity.”





Members of the CSUCI Investiture Platform Party

CSU Chico President and former CSUCI Provost Gayle Hutchinson congratulated President Beck at the podium along with Alumni & Friends Association Chair Gary Cushing, '10 B.S. Political Science; inaugural Staff Council Chair Rosario Cuevas; Student Government President Michelle Noyes; CSU Student Trustee Maggie White;

overachiever," Nicole grinned and looked back at her sister, who was laughing.

On a more serious note, Nicole Beck referenced their late mother, who had a tremendous impact on the academic future of her three daughters, two of whom earned doctorate degrees and one who became an attorney.

The high point of the ceremony was when Chancellor White draped a custom-designed President's Medallion on the shoulders of CSUCI's new President to a wave of applause. The medallion had a white and silver art deco design with a pearl in the center, to signify the pearls President Beck's

mother gave her before she passed.

"From the time that I was very young, my mother taught me that the world was a place to foster my inherent curiosity, and that I should set about discovering it," Beck said when she took the podium. "And from the moment I stepped foot on a college campus with my mother by my side, I knew she was right. My boys like to tease me that I went to college and I never left. And that has served the underpinnings of the great joy of my career." ♦C

♦♦♦ "My boys like to tease me that I went to college and I never left. And that has served the underpinnings of the great joy of my career." —President Beck

CSUCI Foundation Board Chair George Leis; and several others, including President Beck's sister, Nicole Beck, President and CEO of 2nd Nature, LLC.

As siblings are prone to do, the eldest Beck daughter treated her younger sister to some good-natured ribbing.

"As a middle child, I'm sure she's spent some time studying the middle child syndrome," Nicole said, referring to her sister's background in behavioral psychology. "The oldest is the center of attention and the focal point...capable, confident, responsible, strong,



Elizabeth Hartung



Donald Rodriguez

## A New Chapter

### *Faculty retirements*

By Zoe Lance

**A**S THE MEMBERS OF THE CLASS OF 2017 JOIN the workforce or go on to graduate school, there's another part of the CSUCI community that is also preparing themselves for a new chapter of life — retiring faculty members. It's impossible to sum up long and fruitful careers in academia, but all of CSUCI's retiring faculty loved the opportunity of joining a growing university, the value of academic service and the joy of teaching students.

#### **'THE BEST EXPERIENCE IN MY ENTIRE WORKING LIFE'**

For Assistant Provost Elizabeth Hartung joining CSUCI to build the Sociology and Anthropology programs was a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity. She remembers the camaraderie and excitement of building something from the ground up with kind and open colleagues.

"It was wonderful," she said. "It was truly the best experience in my entire working life."

Before joining CSUCI in 2005, Hartung taught at Fresno State, Southern Illinois University and University of Nebraska Omaha. Her sociology research interests have included teaching issues, social inequality and popular culture.

"To be able to read and write and think and expound and get paid for it is truly the best job opportunity going," she said. "I have felt enormously privileged in the course of my career. I've been very fortunate to do what I have absolutely loved."

In addition to previously serving as Chair of the Sociology and Anthropology programs, Hartung took

❖ "When I think about the Cal State system and this campus, the word that comes to mind is gratitude." —Elizabeth Hartung

on other leadership roles. She served as Chair of the Academic Senate and as Executive Director of the University's Henry L. "Hank" Lacayo Institute for Workforce & Community Studies. She also chaired the system-wide Academic Council for International Programs. As Assistant Provost, much of her work focused on faculty affairs, including recruitment and academic personnel issues.

She is proud of the meaningful connections she's made with her colleagues and students.





Harley Baker



Marilyn Buchanan



Geoff Dougherty



Nian-Sheng Huang



Karen Jensen

“When I think about the Cal State system and this campus, the word that comes to mind is gratitude,” she said. “I’m appreciative of the people I’ve had a chance to learn from and who believed in me. That is the greatest gift.”

Hartung is planning to relocate to Spain, where she’s looking to spend more time on writing projects.

#### **‘THE STUDENTS ARE MY BIGGEST ACCOMPLISHMENT’**

Donald Rodriguez’s favorite CSUCI experiences have been outside of the classroom. Since joining the University in 2003, he’s taken students on environmental studies trips to places like Costa Rica, Mexico, and Yosemite. He believes in the power of hands-on learning.

“For a lot of these students, this is the first experience in that type of environment, and it’s very transformative,” he said. “You are completely immersed in nature and students respond in authentic ways: they experience it at a level that many of them haven’t before. It’s fun to be a part of that.”

Rodriguez, Chair and Professor of Environmental Science & Resource Management, was drawn to CSUCI for its interdisciplinary approach and the service-learning opportunities. Before CSUCI, Rodriguez taught at Colorado State University. His research interests center on protected wildlife areas, coastal management and underrepresented audiences in national parks.

He’s most proud of his program’s progress along with the number of students who have gone on to scientific,

public service and teaching careers, where they solve real-world environmental problems. Rodriguez was a first-generation high school and college student in his family, and remembers what it’s like to navigate academia for the first time.

“The students are my biggest accomplishment,” he said. “I tell students that there are pivotal people that come along in your life that help direct you, help you see your way forward. On the occasion that I’ve been that for students, it has been the most rewarding thing. My experience is not that far removed from theirs, so I can relate to them on a lot of different levels.”

Rodriguez will enter the faculty early retirement program and continue to teach his Costa Rica field course, environmental history and the National Parks class in spring 2018. He also is looking forward to expanding his role on the International Union for the Conservation of Nature’s World Commission for Protected Areas, working on a book project about protected areas and a lot of fishing.

Other tenure-track faculty retiring this year include: Harley Baker, Professor of Psychology, who joined CSUCI in 2002; Marilyn Buchanan, Professor of Education and Interim Dean of the School of Education, who joined CSUCI in 2002; Geoff Dougherty, Professor of Applied Physics, who joined CSUCI in 2002; Karen Jensen, Professor and Program Chair for Nursing and Health Science, who joined CSUCI in 2006; and Nian-Sheng Huang, Professor of History, who joined CSUCI in 2002. ♦C



## Commencement 2017

**C** SUCI CELEBRATED ITS 15TH COMMENCEMENT with two ceremonies on Saturday, May 20. More than 15,000 parents, families and friends cheered for the 2,260 eligible students who received bachelor or master degrees, or credentials during the morning and afternoon ceremonies.

Rosario Cuevas, Operations Support Analyst for Extended University within the Division of Academic Affairs, was the honored staff member selected to ring the Navy ship bell during the morning ceremony, signaling the beginning of Commencement. Dianne Wei, Budget & Operations Analyst from the Division of Student Affairs, was the honored staff member selected to ring the Navy ship bell to start the afternoon ceremony.

The Light of Learning was carried by Donald

Rodriguez, Program Chair and Professor of Environmental Science & Resource Management, for the morning procession and by Karen Jensen, Program Chair and Professor of Nursing, for the afternoon procession.

CSU Board of Trustee Steven Stepanek, CSUCI President Erika D. Beck and graduating Student Government President Michelle Noyes provided remarks. During the morning ceremony, an honorary Doctorate of Humane Letters was awarded to Joe Mendoza (see story on page 20). During the afternoon ceremony, Allison McDonald '07 B.A. Psychology received the Distinguished Alumnus Award. ♦**C**

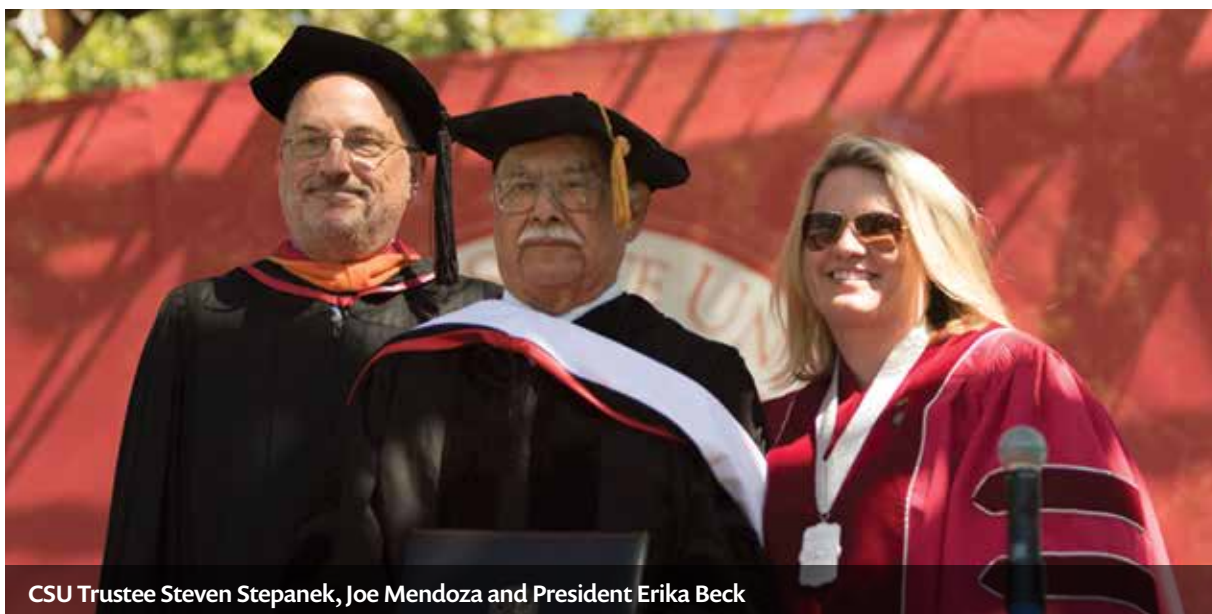
**Morning ceremony** ▶ [go.csuci.edu/grad17am](http://go.csuci.edu/grad17am)

**Afternoon ceremony** ▶ [go.csuci.edu/grad17pm](http://go.csuci.edu/grad17pm)









CSU Trustee Steven Stepanek, Joe Mendoza and President Erika Beck

## Champion of migrant education receives honorary doctorate

By Kim Lamb Gregory

**J**OE MENDOZA FIRST LEARNED THE VALUE OF education when a dedicated truant officer would drive onto the Oxnard fields where 10-year-old Mendoza and his friends were picking fruit.

"She would drive an old Model A and pick you up if you should have been in school," Mendoza said. "She'd put you in the car and take you to school."

More than 70 years later, Mendoza stood on the stage at the CSU Channel Islands 2017 Commencement ceremony on May 20 while President Erika D. Beck presented him with an Honorary Doctor of Humane Letters.

The doctorate was to honor his 60 years of helping immigrants and other underserved populations into the halls of higher education, often at CSUCI.

Mendoza has been a teacher, an administrator, speaker and advocate for thousands of migrant students. He is now the Director of the Special Populations Educational Department for the Ventura County Office of Education.

"It's no exaggeration to say that Joe is a local legend when it comes to advocating for migrant students as well as other special populations, such as homeless and foster youth," said Ventura County Superintendent of Schools Stan Mantooth. "With a big heart and unflinching determination, he has helped countless young people overcome the odds to achieve success in both school and their careers, making them part of the fabric of our community."

Stanford University graduate Erika Hernandez

who holds a master's degree in education, is one of the migrant students who benefited from Mendoza's programs.

Hernandez grew up in a small village in Mexico, one of six children.

"There was no flushing toilet, there was no electricity," she said. "You didn't know if there was going to be food on the table when dad migrated north to work in the fields."

The family moved to Oxnard when Hernandez was 10, and she attended school and enrolled in Mendoza's migrant programs. She joined his first speech and debate team for migrant students and "Saturday School," in which she and other migrant children could catch up with their education.

She earned a Gates Millennium Scholarship to Stanford and later worked in Washington D.C. at the Office for Civil Rights during the Obama administration.

She said she owes so much to Mendoza.

"When he goes and speaks, he tells you he believes in you," he said. "You can become whoever and whatever you want."

CSUCI graduates cheered when Mendoza spoke to them during Commencement, praising both graduates and faculty members.

"You are teachers, but you do more than impart knowledge," he said. "You create citizens of the future. You create the people who are going to sustain and carry on this great idea called the United States of America." ♦c

▶ [go.csuci.edu/mendoza](http://go.csuci.edu/mendoza)





President Erika Beck at the Camarillo Chamber of Commerce

# Role model

## *President Beck's philosophy on the power of community engagement*

By Zoe Lance

**A** GOOD PUBLIC UNIVERSITY PROVIDES WAYS FOR its students to earn degrees and enjoy a greater quality of life.

But an exceptional public university gives its students and faculty the opportunity to engage in mind-opening interdisciplinary studies, in and outside of the classroom.

An exceptional public university develops future leaders and engaged citizens that care about the world.

And an exceptional public university is built by its community, for its community.

University President Erika Beck believes that because of its symbiotic relationship with the community, CSUCI has been a trailblazer in placing regional needs at the center of higher education. Community, in all forms, is at the heart of her educational philosophy.

"The relationship that we've formed with the region is pretty extraordinary," she said. "Our curriculum has developed in response to community need and faculty engage with students in the community to help solve common issues we all face. We've built our University hand-in-glove

with our community and it is one of our greatest strengths."

Since taking the helm of CSUCI in Aug. 2016, Beck has made it a priority to engage with community members from across the region and foster community partnerships. Public service has always been an integral part of both her personal and educational identity.

"A commitment to community runs deep in my family. If the community thrives, it elevates us all," she said. "I want our students to join the workforce, but also to lead the change that will propel our innovation economy and remain engaged with the community."

CSUCI's efforts have emerged in three distinct ways: the integration of co-curricular opportunities for students, relationships with the region's colleges and the promotion of educational initiatives. Beck believes that the combination of this work has vaulted the University to its highest potential.

### THE VALUE OF SERVICE-LEARNING

#### TRYING TO COUNT ALL THE SERVICE PROJECTS

CSUCI students have started is impossible — every academic program, club and organization has a







Cesar Morales, Professor Phil Hampton, President Beck and Carmen Ramirez

## THE FOSTERING OF EDUCATIONAL INITIATIVES

**VENTURA COUNTY'S INDUSTRY LEADERS, ELECTED** officials and community board members are deeply invested in CSUCI. Initiatives in business, technology and education have allowed CSUCI faculty to pursue partnerships that are mutually beneficial.

"The faculty has done a really remarkable job of engaging with business and industry, and embracing the ideals of community-based learning," Beck said.

The Ventura County STEM Network is one of many examples of a faculty member cultivating an initiative that transforms CSUCI's ability to provide a high-quality education. Under the direction of Professor of Chemistry Philip Hampton, the network connects Ventura County students, families, teachers and STEM professionals with STEM resources.

"We serve as a hub for many different sectors of our educational and business pipelines," Beck said. "Continued engagement in the dialogue will help us ensure that these pipelines are strong, and also to develop a regional vision for education in our community."

For a biopharmaceutical company like Amgen, whose foundation support was instrumental in establishing VC STEM, addressing the need for stronger STEM helps both CSUCI and the workforce.

"At Amgen, we use cutting-edge science and technology to improve the lives of those who suffer from grievous illness, and we, along with industry peers, depend on an educated workforce to ensure that scientific innovation continues," said Eduardo Cetlin, president of the Amgen Foundation. "We

recognize that addressing the STEM skills gap requires partnerships between industry, academic institutions and nonprofit organizations.

"At the Amgen Foundation, we prioritize investments that support collaborative approaches with the potential for long-lasting impact and that is precisely what VC STEM is positioned to do for our community. Dr. Hampton and CSUCI provide the leadership and vision that pull these important pieces together to work toward our common cause — strengthening STEM education for the next generation."

## THE FUTURE

**IN LOOKING AT HOW FAR CSUCI HAS COME, BECK** says that community partner support cannot be understated.

"If it weren't for our donors, legislators and community leaders, we would never have accomplished everything we have in 15-plus years," she said. "They are an inspiration to our students: they provide scholarships, network with our students and employ our alumni."

The investment of time and energy, from both the internal and external CSUCI communities, makes Beck thrilled for the University's future.

"We will soar to even greater heights because we have an entire community, tens of thousands of people, who have invested so much of themselves and their identity into the success of this University," she said. "Community is our strongest attribute. It makes us a leader among institutions of higher learning. We stand as a role model for what is possible with strong community engagement." ♦C



Scholarship awardees Jeremy Snoberger, Alejandra Hernandez, Elya Spooner, Jennifer Mallen, Antonella Cammarota with President Beck.

## B&TP Leadership Dinner is humorous, inspiring and poignant

By Kim Lamb Gregory

**F**IVE CSUCI UNDERGRADUATES FROM different backgrounds were presented with \$6,500 scholarships at the 13th Annual Business & Technology Partnership (B&TP) Leadership Dinner on April 20 at the Westlake Village Inn.

"Not only does the scholarship help me go to college and provide for my family, it shows me the University values me and my goals," said Business major Elya Spooner, who is raising two children with her husband.

The scholars were chosen according to financial need, a grade-point average of at least 3.5, and a major in either business or the sciences.

Speaking to an audience of donors and community members at her first B&TP dinner, President Erika Beck spoke about how community support changes lives, and offers the region an educated workforce.

"We are focused on dramatically increasing graduation rates, and alleviating the shortage of bachelor's degrees, as well as closing the educational attainment gap between our better-prepared students and our less-prepared students," Beck said.

Scholarship recipient Jennifer Mallen can now pursue her Nursing degree without worrying about how she will afford it.

Pastry chef Alejandra Hernandez will be able to continue her path to a degree in Business so she can

start her own bakery.

Single mother Antonella Cammarota conquered addiction and domestic abuse, then attended CSUCI as a Computer Science major. Without the scholarship, dwindling finances would have forced Cammarota to quit. "This gives me the opportunity to continue this journey," she said. "And it lets me know this dream is real."

Jeremy Snoberger grew up in a rough neighborhood in Oxnard where drugs and gangs detoured his life before he turned it around by earning three associate degrees from Ventura College, then transferring to CSUCI as a Biology major.

Snoberger will join a research team led by Professor of Biology Nitika Parmar, who was named the B&TP Partnership Faculty Leader of the Year.

Technology Leader of the Year was Jeff Green, CEO of Trade Desk, Inc.

Perhaps the most poignant moments came with naming Lon Morton as Business Leader of the Year. Morton, CEO & Co-Chief Investment Officer of Morton Capital Management, died a few days before the Leadership Dinner after a battle with cancer.

Friends and co-workers spoke about Morton's values, his family and his work. President Beck thanked the Morton family for sharing Morton's legacy with CSUCI. ♦c

▶ Hear the story for each scholarship awardee at: [go.csuci.edu/btpld17](http://go.csuci.edu/btpld17)





President Beck and Helene Schneider



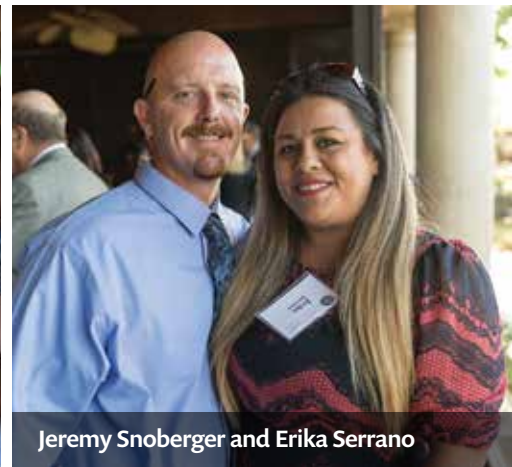
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Interim Provost Daniel Wakelee greets faculty

## ‘A once-in-a-lifetime opportunity’

### *Daniel Wakelee’s service to CSUCI*

By Zoe Lance

**E**VERY ONCE IN A WHILE, DANIEL WAKELEE, sits back and thinks about the first time he visited the campus that would one day become CSU Channel Islands.

“I came out here and looked around, trying to imagine what this place would be like,” he said. “It’s really stunning to see what’s happened since that first visit. It’s been a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to be a part of this.”

After more than 29 years of CSU service, the last 15 years as a CSUCI employee, Wakelee will retire as Interim Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs, a post he’s held since May 2016. In his concurrent teaching and administrative roles, he’s had a strong hand in cultivating CSUCI’s academic programs and facilities.

Assistant Provost Elizabeth Hartung says that Wakelee’s presence on campus will be missed.

“He has been such an integral part of building this campus,” she said. “He has the respect of his colleagues, and served the campus tremendously well.”

Wakelee’s story spans more than three decades.

After receiving his bachelor’s degree in political science from Occidental College, Wakelee worked for political campaigns and local non-profits, including service as director of the county’s FOOD Share. A higher education career excited Wakelee and led him to earn a master’s in public administration from CSUN and a doctorate in educational policy from UC Santa Barbara. He joined the CSUN satellite campus in Ventura in 1989.

As the center grew, it led to continued plans for a public university in Ventura County. “There was a discussion of a university coming to Ventura County, and it was exciting just to think about what this could become,” he said.

The CSUN at Ventura center moved to the CSUCI campus in fall 1999. In 2002, Wakelee formally joined CSUCI as Associate Dean of the Faculty to help continue building the new University.

While teaching classes on American politics, national parks and educational policy, Wakelee also has balanced curriculum development and academic space planning. Before becoming Interim Provost, he served as Assistant and Associate Provost.

Scott Frisch, Interim Associate Vice President for Academic Programs & Planning, and Wakelee’s





Dan Wakelee leads CSUCI students on Santa Rosa Island.

colleague in the Political Science program, says that a deep commitment to the University's success informs Wakelee's perspective.

"Dan gets things done. He will take on responsibility and see it to the end," Frisch said. "He's like the Energizer Bunny. He just keeps going."

Wakelee says his proudest CSUCI achievement has been the 2012 establishment of the Santa Rosa Island Research Station within the Channel Islands National Park. The interdisciplinary research station grew out of a National Parks course and it allows CSUCI to provide service-learning opportunities.

"The research station has had a huge impact on the park and CSUCI students and faculty," Wakelee



Dan Wakelee speaks to students visiting the Santa Rosa Island Research Station

❖ "We've always been doing new things — we're not staying in one place. We have never aspired to just be another state university." —Dan Wakelee

said. "It is exciting to see students who have no experience with parks, who come away with a deep appreciation for these wonderful places. Some of them even end up working for the National Park Service."

Russell Galipeau, the Park's superintendent and the course's co-instructor, says Wakelee has been

instrumental in the CSUCI effort to create Santa Rosa and the park benefits from this research and outreach partnership.

"The University couldn't have tapped a better person for this project," Galipeau said. "Dan thought this could help students in the long-term and he fleshed out the vision on how to do it. Dan structured the program to make it welcoming to all students."

In his retirement, Wakelee plans to stay involved with the Research Station and teaching the National Park class. He's excited to watch CSUCI continue to grow.

"We've always been doing new things — we're not staying in one place," he said. "We have never aspired to just be another state university." ❖c

## Lori Volk '05 B.A. Psychology

# Chief Believer

By Zoe Lance

**L**ORI VOLK'S MARKET TRIPS ARE A LITTLE MORE special than the average grocery run. When she heads down the beverage aisle, she sees a drink she personally brought to fruition — Lori's Original Lemonade.

"I've been shopping in these stores forever, and to see it there is pretty incredible," she said.

Volk's lemonade is in more than 850 stores in seven different states, including Vons, Albertsons and Pavilions locations in Southern California. The brand has three flavors — lavender, ginger and lemongrass — with two more on the way.

The road to Lori's Original Lemonade began with Volk's three children. The Ojai native always encouraged her kids to "wish it, dream it, do it" in whatever they did — especially working towards college. After a 30-year marketing career and years of taking classes, Volk decided that she would follow her own advice and get a degree. CSUCI had just been established, and she enrolled in the Psychology program. Volk graduated in 2005.

"Psychology has to do with people: every single day, every single moment of your life you need to be able to understand people and have empathy," she said. "It's very helpful in business. I love people and I'm always trying to understand them and the way they think. There were wonderful professors at CSUCI that gave me the confidence to take things to another level. It led to the lemonade."

When her three kids entered college themselves, she needed a way to pay their expenses. In brainstorming ideas, Volk remembered their childhood lemonade

❖ "I love people and I'm always trying to understand them and the way they think. There were wonderful professors at CSUCI that gave me the confidence to take things to another level. It led to the lemonade" —Lori Volk

stand and her popular lavender-based recipe. Her inexperience didn't deter her, and she started the company in 2011. She calls herself the company's Chief Believer.

"I wanted to create something that I love and that I wanted to be a part of. I really believed this was going to be a success," she said. "I knew it in my heart. That's all I had."



In 2014, she was named the Woman Business Owner of the Year by the National Association of Women Business Owners in Ventura County.

Volk says that finding great mentors and advisors is the key to success, a belief that led her to participate in a women's economic empowerment conference at CSUCI in 2015. She wants to devote more time to community involvement.

"It's important to be a part of forums where young women can learn and have role models," she said. "I have my own mentors and I'm learning every day." ♦c



Robert Gillett, '06 B.S. Business

# Working in Paradise

By Zoe Lance

**W**HETHER HE'S ON A CONSTRUCTION SITE OR talking to potential clients, Robert Gillett always remembers a piece of business advice he learned in a CSUCI marketing class — one that has served him very well.

"Even though you're selling for a company, you're selling yourself," Gillett said. "CSUCI prepared me for the real world by really teaching me about business communication and personal presentation. CSUCI really fine-tuned me."

Gillett has pursued a sales career in the University's own neighborhood. As an outside sales representative for Graybar, Gillett provides supplies and equipment to electrical contractors all over Ventura County. He credits his time at the University for helping him sharpen his business and interpersonal skills.

"Coming to the campus allowed me to hunker down on my studies," he said. "I knew how to act in a professional situation, but it was really hammered home in my courses."

Gillett started his college experience with classes at Grossmont College in San Diego County. He originally wanted to pursue entrepreneurship and had heard about CSUCI's Business program. The campus' proximity to great surf piqued his interest.

"I knew that I needed to go somewhere I could be more focused," he said. "I thought it was so beautiful and unique. I'm a pretty chill guy, so I loved how chill it was at CSUCI."

As a student, he enjoyed CSUCI's small-class dynamic and talking to professors during office hours. He also



The group projects — including a competitive business simulation capstone course — definitely helped. The camaraderie and experience led Gillett towards sales.

❖ "We are so blessed to have a university that's on the rise in such a dramatic fashion and right in our own backyard. It's truly a gem. We're in paradise." —Robert Gillett

remembers the campus at its idyllic beginnings, back when the Library was located in the Student Union and the best hangout spots were in tucked-away courtyards.

"It was easy to get books, guidance and any kind of help we needed," he said. "What we were doing was up-to-par with what other leading universities were doing."

"I got to know everyone in my program so well," he said. "The dynamic took me from earning B's and C's to A's and B's."

Wherever Gillett goes in the region, he meets more and more people in his field that also graduated from CSUCI. To him, this comes as no surprise.

"My fellow sales staff and project managers I work with are also Dolphins," he said. "We are so blessed to have a university that's on the rise in such a dramatic fashion and right in our own backyard. It's truly a gem. We're in paradise." ❖

# Where are they now?

By Zoe Lance

## *Edward Padilla, '10 B.A. Performing Arts*

**A** GRADUATE OF CSUCI'S PERFORMING ARTS program, Edward Padilla is the prospect research manager and database specialist at CSU Los Angeles. In this role Padilla maintains the university's donor database and finds prospective donors to support the university's educational mission. "What I like most about my job is the team of individuals I work with on a daily basis," he said. "I often have to be creative and think outside of the box."

After graduating, Padilla worked as a CSUCI staff member in the Division of Academic Affairs for nearly five years. He also spent time working with the Los Angeles-based California International Theatre Festival.

Padilla credits his student work experience in CSUCI's Division of University Advancement for leading him to donor relations.

"My experiences in academics, as a student assistant and a staff member at CSUCI, have helped shape my professional career and shown me the importance of enjoying what you do for a living," he said. "I learned how to be professional, accountable and the importance of keeping relationships and finding new ones."

"In my Performing Arts classes, I learned the value of patience, teamwork, putting in 120 percent, and that it is OK to fail."

Padilla is currently working on a master's degree in public administration at CSU Los Angeles.

## *Melissa Mirkovich-Scholes, '05 B.A. Liberal Studies*

**M**ELISSA MIRKOVICH-SCHOLES IS A SENIOR sales representative at SAGE Publications, an independent academic publisher based in Thousand Oaks. In her role as the textbook division's research methods and statistics specialist, Mirkovich-Scholes works with faculty all over the United States and Canada to provide social science textbooks for their course. Since joining SAGE in 2008, she has received company awards, taken leadership roles and mentored fellow sales representatives.

"I love working with college professors and challenging myself to learn more," she said. "SAGE is an amazing company with great values that remind me of CSUCI: a dedication to education, making the world a better place and the familial feel. I am grateful to be a part of the SAGE and CSUCI families."



Edward Padilla



Melissa Mirkovich-Scholes

Mirkovich-Scholes says that her CSUCI experience in student leadership gave her confidence and skills that make her successful today.

"I learned to be innovative and use my critical thinking skills to create something out of nothing," she said. "I learned to take chances and try something new. I am part of a larger family and I make a difference."

She stays in touch with the CSUCI community by volunteering with the Alumni & Friends Association. ♦C



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Laura and Douglas Newton  
Diane and Doug Off ♦  
Deborah and Robert Owens ♦  
Pilar Pacheco +  
June and Clayton Paschen +++  
Phyllis Pattison Σ

Anna and Fletcher Pavin Σ ♦  
Juanita and Ramon Porras  
May Porter Σ +  
Ann and Michael Ragen ♦  
Roxie Ray ♦  
Georgianna Regnier +++  
Lynetta Ivey-Reid and John Reid +++  
Patricia Richards Dodds  
and Thomas Dodds Σ ♦  
Eileen and James Rinde ++  
Grace Robinson Σ +  
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