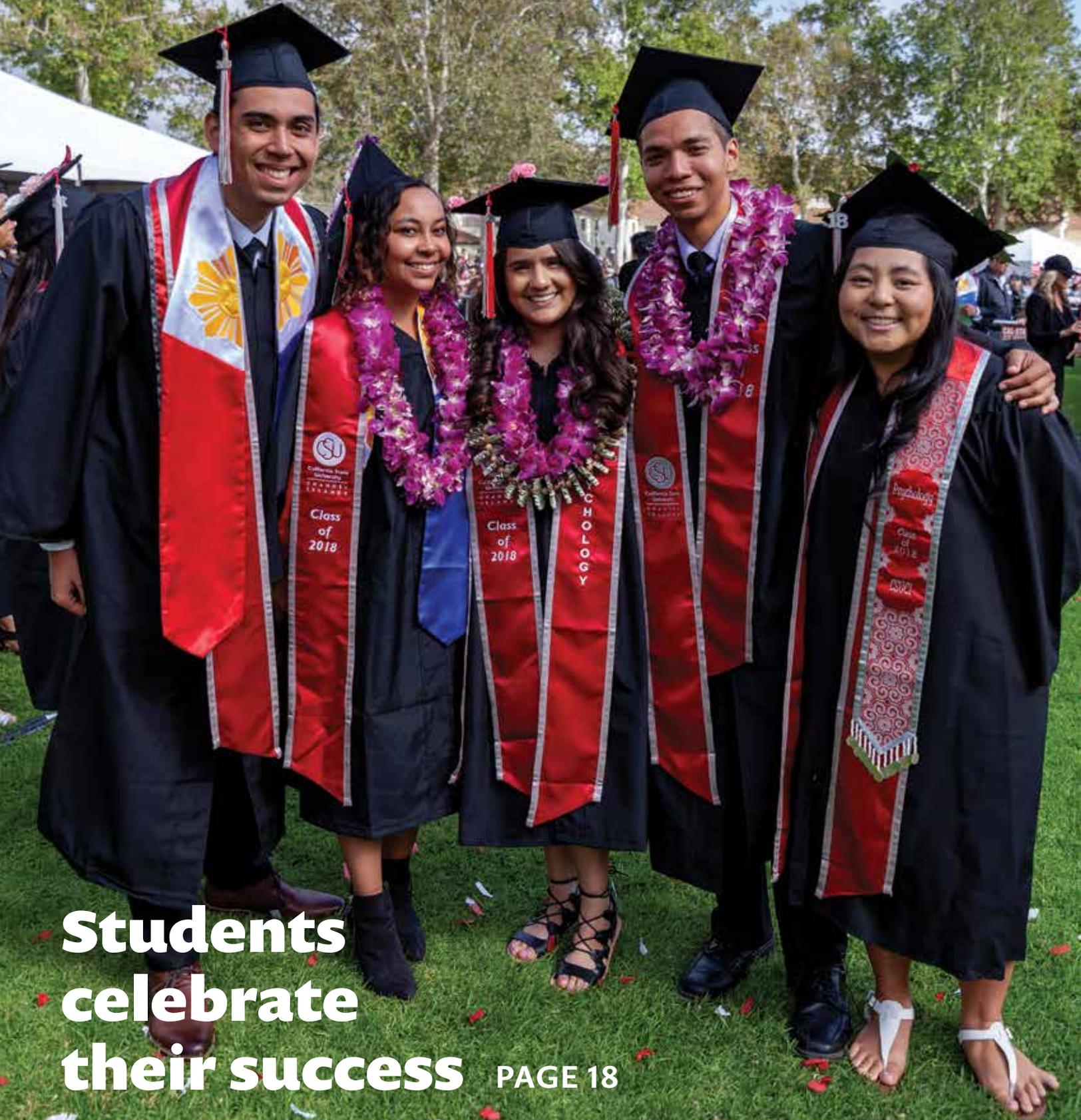


CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY CHANNEL ISLANDS

Channel

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MAGAZINE



**Students
celebrate
their success** PAGE 18

Students channel their potential

THE DEMAND FOR A CSU CHANNEL ISLANDS education shows no signs of slowing. We have received a record number of applications for next fall and congratulated a record number of graduates in May.

At that recent ceremony, we had the pleasure of awarding honorary doctoral degrees to two extraordinary individuals — Ventura County Superior Court Judge Michele Castillo and former second lady Tipper Gore. Judge Castillo overcame significant adversity growing up but persevered in her education and career to make history as the first Latina/Filipina appointed to the bench in Ventura County. Ms. Gore has dedicated her life to championing human rights, serving as an advocate for mental health, homelessness, LGBT rights, physical fitness and more.

I cannot think of any two people more deserving of this recognition and it has been my deep pleasure to get to know both of these remarkable women. I hope you enjoy reading about them (see page 8).

I like to say that CSUCI is reimagining higher education to serve a new student population and a new era. The workforce is transforming right before our eyes and we are preparing our students for jobs that do not yet exist.

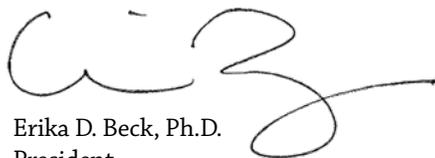
And while that change brings complexity and uncertainty, it also presents CSUCI with an extraordinary opportunity — the opportunity to lead the change that higher education requires to serve a new student population and a new era.

And from my perspective, the single greatest asset that will help us realize that vision is what so many other universities lack — the will. Our faculty and staff are among the most entrepreneurial and innovative individuals that I have encountered in the course of my career. They are not afraid to think about higher education in new and compelling ways, they are an aspirational community — a community that wants greater outcomes for our students.

The first line of our mission statement reads “Placing students at the center of the educational experience ...” and as anyone who has spent any time on our campus can tell you, our faculty and staff live and breathe this mission into everything they do.

Inside this edition of *Channel*, you will read about the many ways our faculty and staff are transforming education and ensuring all of our students have a timely pathway to graduation. It is a tremendous privilege and honor to work with such an outstanding group of individuals.

Enjoy!



Erika D. Beck, Ph.D.
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: Students celebrate their success page 18

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



This news magazine is printed on recycled paper.

Channel

MAGAZINE

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Commencement



Judge Michele Castillo



Amanda Quintero



Gift from the Grossman Community Foundation



Nursing students celebrate during their 2018 pinning ceremony.

CSUCI tops several national and statewide polls

By Kim Lamb Gregory

CSUCI'S ACADEMIC PROGRAMS AND THE opportunities the campus creates for its graduates drew national and statewide attention in 2018.

The campus earned top rankings in several categories, from overall excellence to the quality of a specific program.

U.S. News & World Report ranked CSUCI 18th among the Top 25 Public Regional Universities (West). Criteria included graduation rates, the availability of resources for faculty, location, campus life and range of academic offerings, among other strengths.

The nonprofit *Washington Monthly* once again listed CSUCI as one of the U.S. colleges and universities that offers students the “Best Bang for the Buck—West.”

The bimonthly magazine's annual list ranks institutions of higher learning that help non-wealthy students attain marketable degrees at affordable prices.

“Instead of rewarding colleges for the number of applications they reject, we give them credit for enrolling unusually large numbers of low-income and first-generation students,” wrote contributing editor Kevin Carey on the *Washington Monthly* website. “Instead of assuming that the most expensive schools are also the best, we recognize universities that produce research, train the next generation of scientists and Ph.D.s, and instill their graduates with an ethos of public service.”

CSUCI ranked 26th on the list among 1,404 public, private nonprofit, and for-profit colleges in all 50 states.

CollegeNET ranked CSUCI 18th out of 1,363 universities in the nation in the Social Mobility Index or SMI. The SMI measures how much and how well a college or university graduates economically disadvantaged students at a lower-tuition rate, then graduates them into promising careers.

When it comes to higher education, the term “social mobility” is when a student is able to improve his or her social and economic circumstances by getting a college education.

CSUCI's Nursing Program has distinguished itself both nationally and statewide in 2018.

RegisteredNursing.org this year ranked CSUCI's Nursing program as the 12th-best program in the state out of 131 nursing schools. The ranking was determined by analyzing current and historical pass rates among students who take the National Council Licensure Examination or NCLEX.

For the fourth time, CSUCI Nursing graduates scored a 100 percent pass rate on the NCLEX.

CSUCI Nursing graduates also managed a 100 percent pass rate for the years 2011-12, 2013-14 and 2015-16.

“We have not fallen below the 90 percent ever,” said Nursing and Health Science Program Chair Lynette Landry Ph.D., RN. “The national pass rate was 81.4 percent. I'm very excited. To me, it's reflective of the quality of our faculty and their commitment to student success.” ♦c

CSUCI swears in a new Chief of Police

By Kim Lamb Gregory

CSUCI HAS A NEW CHIEF OF POLICE.

President Erika Beck made it official at a March 16 swearing-in ceremony for Chief Michael Morris, who had been filling the role on a temporary basis since September 2017 when former Chief John Reid transferred to CSU Chico.

About 150 people attended the event, which was held on campus in Malibu Hall. Reid, who was among the guests, was a mentor to Morris during his 11 years as a CSUCI police lieutenant.

“He’s been a great leader and



mentor and he’s the one who taught me how to be a chief,” Morris said.

Morris’ wife of 27 years, Nicki, pinned his new badge on her husband’s uniform and the room erupted in applause.

As is the custom, President Beck conducted the swearing-in ceremony as friends, members of his family and representatives from the campus and local law enforcement agencies looked on.

“Mike Morris possesses the vision, professionalism and

experience to lead the CSUCI Police Department and ensure its reputation as a highly respected, collaborative and integral part of our campus community,” Beck said.

The President also is well-aware of Morris’ sense of humor, surprising him with a giant inflatable doughnut and a pink frosted cake shaped like a doughnut.

“I like doughnuts a lot,” Morris laughed. “My family and I devoured it.”

The doughnuts also were a nod to the regular informal get-togethers the University’s Police Department sponsors in order to get better acquainted with the students, one of his favorite parts of being a CSUCI police officer.

“Coffee with the Cops (doughnuts play an important role)” and “Cocoa with the PoPo” are opportunities for students to chat with the officers and begin to build trusting relationships.

His duties as chief will be more demanding, but Morris plans to make time to attend these events as much as he can. “I’m going to have to be more intentional to be involved in these events and connect with students,” Morris said. “It’s important to me. The greatest thing about this campus community is the people.” ♦c

Commencement 2018

CSUCI CELEBRATED ITS 16TH COMMENCEMENT

with two ceremonies on Saturday, May 19. More than 19,000 parents, families and friends cheered for 1,600+ students who participated — a total of 2,513 students were eligible to graduate — during the morning and afternoon ceremonies, receiving bachelor or master’s degrees, or credentials.

Peter Mosinskis, Director of Information Technology Strategy, was the honored staff member selected to ring the Navy ship bell, signaling the beginning of the morning ceremony. Raudel Bañuelos, Director of Facility Support, was selected to ring the Navy ship bell for the afternoon ceremony.

Bañuelos, the vice tribal chair of The Barbareño/Ventureño Band of Mission Indians, also sounded a conch shell signaling the recognition of building on the knowledge base of the indigenous people who first inhabited this area.

The Light of Learning carried by Jose Alamillo, Professor of Chicana/o Studies, symbolizes the University’s commitment to a life of the mind and the central role played by our outstanding faculty.

CSU Board of Trustee Silas Abrego, CSUCI President Erika D. Beck and graduating students Anthony Mendola, Teresa Castillo and Riley Leal provided remarks during the ceremonies.

During the morning ceremony, an honorary Doctor of Laws was awarded to Michele M. Castillo, a judge with the Ventura County Superior Court, and during the afternoon ceremony an honorary Doctor of Humane Letters was award to Mary Elizabeth “Tipper” Gore, former second lady of the United States (see article on page 8). ♦c

Morning ceremony ▶ go.csuci.edu/grad18am

Afternoon ceremony ▶ go.csuci.edu/grad18pm

Graduates thank their family and friends:

▶ go.csuci.edu/gradthanks







Former U.S. second lady Tipper Gore receives an honorary doctorate.



Judge Michele Castillo received an honorary doctorate.

Former U.S. second lady and first Ventura County Latina judge receive honorary doctorates

By Kim Lamb Gregory

THE FIRST LATINA EVER to be appointed to the Ventura County Superior Court and the former second lady of the United States received honorary doctorates at the CSUCI Commencement ceremonies held Saturday, May 19.

CSUCI President Erika Beck, presented Judge Michele Castillo with an honorary Doctor of Laws during the morning ceremony and Mary Elizabeth “Tipper” Gore was awarded an honorary Doctor of Humane Letters at the afternoon commencement.

Once again, CSUCI graduated a record number of 2,513 students eligible to receive degrees. Over 19,000 parents, families and friends helped the 1,600 graduates in attendance celebrate at the ceremonies.

After welcoming remarks, Castillo took the podium and shared that she, like many of the Class of 2018, was the first in her family to attend college.

Castillo spoke about growing up

in Ventura as part of a multiracial family of five. Her father was a drug addict who often did not work, leaving her mother as the sole breadwinner.

Her books became her refuge, especially books about Martin Luther King Jr. and his quest for social justice and civil rights.

She made good grades and participated in activities such as the Stanford University Junior Statesmen of America program despite low expectations from one high school counselor.

“I did those programs despite ... my high school counselor who encouraged me to take home economics instead of more challenging classes because, in his mind, I would soon be at home,” she recalled.

Castillo acknowledged that the Class of 2018 also overcame obstacles to earn their degrees, and now was the time to put their education to good use.

“I dare each and every one of you to go out there and make a difference with your university education,” she said.

At the afternoon ceremony, Gore expressed gratitude at being able to share one of life’s great moments with graduates.

“Receiving your college degree is a time of celebration, transition and yes, a little trepidation,” she said.

Gore reminded them of a passage from Ecclesiastes about how “to everything, there is a season” and how it helped her through transitions in her own life.

“There have been seasons in my life to be very public and work on the national stage for issues I care about deeply, such as mental health and ending homelessness,” she said. “And there have been other very private seasons when I have tended to my family’s needs, recharged myself and reset my priorities.”

Gore suggested that in this season of academic triumph, that now was the time to speak up for what is right, fair and true.

“Given the challenges in our country and the world today, I believe now is not the time to keep silent,” she said. ♦c

Being dolphin proud

Alexis Mumford reflects on being Student Government Vice President

By Zoe Lance

THE 2017-18 ACADEMIC YEAR HAS BEEN A series of both personal and professional challenges for Alexis Mumford.

In serving a term as Student Government Vice President, the recent Communication graduate spent countless hours on events, projects and legislation to make the organization's inner workings more visible to the campus community. She was responsible for working closely with the senators and fielding feedback from students on what Student Government could do better.

But she was also at the frontline with her peers on issues affecting the CSUCI community, Ventura County and beyond, including the catastrophic Thomas Fire and the precarity of the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals program. She worked hard to put on events, make announcements and share resources with students. To her, being engaged in this work was her utmost priority and she's proud to have played a role in the University.

"I've always been the type of person who cares about other people and had a strong passion to stand up for what's right," she said. "Before joining Student Government, I felt like I always had the qualities to be a leader. Now I have the confidence in myself to be one."

When she arrived at CSUCI in fall 2014, Mumford had little interest in getting involved on campus. The Oxnard native had a connection to CSUCI — her mother, Monica Rivas, is an advisor in the Academic Advising office — but Mumford would come to school and go home. Being a part of campus life seemed impossible.

A chance conversation with a classmate who was part of the Student Government organization changed everything.

"They told me that Student Government needed more students to become involved, so I decided to join," Mumford said. "During the interview, I heard about an opportunity to be director of events. I immediately thought, 'That's what I want to do.' I could either complain about things on campus, or I could actually get involved and do something about it."

After serving in the event planning role for two years, she ran for vice president, knowing she wanted to take on more projects and be a support system for her peers. Learning from past Student Government administrations helped her understand how to be an effective leader.



"Being vice president gave me the experience to navigate tough situations," she said. "I appreciated the way people were able to engage with me in difficult conversation without fear."

Mumford also is proud of the work student leaders did around basic-needs initiatives and an in-progress project for a bike rideshare program.

"The biggest lesson Student Government taught me was to see issues from multiple perspectives," she said. "Because of the coordination we did, I was able to take concerns into consideration and bring in new ideas from our constituents."

After graduating on May 19 with a B.A. in Communication, Mumford participated in a three-day American Committees Foreign Relations Young Leaders Initiative conference in Washington, D.C. — one of only 15 students from across the nation. Mumford is considering career paths in public service and event planning.

As she looks back at the last four years, she appreciates the opportunities she had to be involved and make real change on campus.

"CSUCI is a really great place, and I'm happy to see it grow," Mumford said. "I am really proud to be a Dolphin." ♦c

Nerding out

Katianne Brent's experience in the Psychology program

By Zoe Lance

KATIANNNE BRENT LOVINGLY CALLS herself a science nerd.

She's always been fascinated with behavioral neuroscience, a field that focuses on the biology of behavior. She also enjoys the research side of psychology, going so far as to get a tattoo with an oft-used number in statistical hypothesis testing. And she thrives on the rigor of being an aspiring medical professional, applying what she's learned in the classroom wherever she goes.

"I've always been innately curious about everything," she said. "The more and more I've learned about science and the psychological disorders that afflict people, the more I've realized I can help with an understanding of both biology and psychology."

This curiosity has led Brent to CSUCI's Psychology program at the Goleta campus, where she'll graduate with a psychology degree this summer. Brent plans to pursue graduate work in medicine or neuroscience.

"Being at CSUCI has really been such a positive experience," she said. "The professors know your name and are definitely invested in your success. I really appreciate the community that I've found and the support I've gotten the whole time."

Brent came to CSUCI by way of Northern Idaho. Before moving to Southern California, she had spent summers in Los Angeles with an aunt. As Brent was getting ready to study biology at the University of Hawaii, her aunt encouraged her to consider Santa Barbara City College (SBCC) and transfer to a local university. It seemed cosmic — a book series she had read as a kid growing up near the Canadian border was based on the beach town.

Through SBCC, Brent found CSUCI's Goleta program. She's taken classes in theory and data analysis, getting a holistic view of the psychology field. Being able to interact one-on-one with her professors and learn from their careers has given her an appreciation for the discipline.

"I knew that what I needed was a hands-on experience where I could have my questions answered — and I have a lot of questions," she said. "You find



a respect for the profession, major and science, as a whole. The cohort system has also been really beneficial for me. Having that sense of community has been really positive."

Brent's daily schedule is packed, between working and being a student. By day, she's a psychology tutor at SBCC and a behavior therapist for children with autism. By night, she works as a server at a local restaurant. Having opportunities to work with different kinds of people helps keep her critical thinking and observational skills sharp.

"It's like watching a psychology textbook being played out loud," she said. "People always say, 'Do what you love and it won't feel like work.' It's so silly, but it's really true. It's incredible to be excited about doing this as a future profession." ♦c

Internship at the Smithsonian inspires graduating History major to think big

By Kim Lamb Gregory

CLASS OF 2018 HISTORY MAJOR SAMANTHA Mendoza realized she was a part of history when she received a special assignment during her spring semester internship at the Smithsonian National Portrait Gallery in Washington, D.C.

“When they unveiled the portraits of the Obamas, I transcribed the video,” she said. “I was overwhelmed because I was one of the first ones to see the video of the unveiling. I was blushing, it was so cool.”

With help from her mentor, Chair and Professor of History Frank Barajas and Professor of Chicana/o Studies Jose Alamillo, Mendoza landed a three-month paid internship with the Smithsonian that began in late January.

The internship was part of the Smithsonian Minority Awards Program, an internship designed to increase participation among groups not well represented in the museum field.

“I loved it. I was busy every day researching portraits, visiting museums, leading tour groups and talking about portraits I had researched,” she said.

Mendoza has wanted to work as a librarian/ researcher for the Smithsonian since she was a teenager, so when Alamillo brought a speaker from the Smithsonian to the CSUCI campus in spring 2017, Alamillo recommended Mendoza speak to her about an internship.

The telephone interview for the internship was scheduled for early December and Mendoza was prepared.

Then, the Thomas Fire broke out.

Mendoza and her sister, Monique, had to evacuate from their Ventura home and when they returned, Samantha got sick.

“There was smoke everywhere, my voice was horrible.

I thought I’d never get the job,” Samantha said. “I drank as much NyQuil and took as many cough drops as I could.”

Her compromised voice didn’t keep her from landing the internship and moving to Capitol Hill for the spring.

She often lost track of time as she pored through archives and scoured the internet, exploring the background of dozens of portraits.

One of her assignments was to research the newly unveiled Obama portraits.

“I learned about the flowers behind President Obama and how they represented Hawaii where he was born, Chicago where

he lived and Kenya where his dad was born,” she said.

Mendoza also spoke to Smithsonian librarians about which step to take next toward her goal of working among them, which will be a master’s degree in Library Science.

As her mentor, Barajas has every confidence that she’ll achieve her goal.

“She seeks and acts upon direction to achieve her scholastic and career goals,” Barajas said. “She will succeed.” ♦





‘A public university serves a public purpose’

Reimagining higher education for a new student population and era

By Zoe Lance

BY THE YEAR 2030, CALIFORNIA is projected to experience a shortage of more than 1.1 million employees with bachelor’s degrees. According to the Public Policy Institute of California, there won’t be enough highly educated professionals to meet economic demand and the pipelines for the state’s colleges and universities will need to widen significantly.

The future of our innovation economy — one where we solve social problems, invent life-changing technology and engage each other in informed, rigorous debate — will require more college-educated citizens than ever before.

CSUCI President Erika Beck believes that in order to avoid this shortage, higher education must reimagine itself for a new student population and era. She says that CSUCI’s students, staff, faculty and community partners are perfectly positioned to do just that.

“The regional state university serves as an engine for social mobility and economic vitality,” Beck said. “It serves as the building block of our democracy. And when it works in direct partnership with the broader community, higher education elevates everyone.”

When she arrived on campus in 2016, Beck embarked on a listening tour in the CSUCI community and asked constituents what they thought the University’s future looked like. After meeting with many community members, including political, nonprofit and business stakeholders in Ventura County, she synthesized the feedback into several goals. Beck adds that CSUCI must re-envision how it serves

students to enable their success, support faculty in finding new approaches to instruction and cultivate collaboration between various disparate units on campus.

“I really wanted to give both the campus and the broader community a sense of what I heard and share my perspective on the opportunities to realize our future,” Beck said. “We’re building a new and innovative institution that enables students to succeed, and has the potential to transform our regional community and beyond.”

The entry point for addressing the degree shortfall is helping students graduate in a timely manner. Compared to other universities, CSUCI admits and graduates a higher percentage of low-income and first-generation students. Beck believes that the University can emerge as a national leader at this and can leverage data to support students while still maintaining high academic expectations.

“Ensuring that our students have the ability to graduate in a timely manner is absolutely essential,” Beck said. “A public university serves a public purpose. We all benefit from the individual learning of our students — our community is the direct beneficiary of our students’ citizenship.”

CSUCI students react positively to hands-on, interdisciplinary learning experiences that help them jump into the workforce. Beck says that going forward, the University needs to ensure that all CSUCI students have access to these options — which means investing more in faculty.





California needs CSUCI graduates to keep the economy moving forward.

“It is more important now than ever to facilitate an inclusive, vibrant intellectual community, and to increase the resources dedicated to supporting faculty in service of their instructional and

“The entire University community will work to strengthen collaborative efforts toward constructing clear pathways to graduation,” she said. “It’s important that we continue to build a culture that

emboldens creativity and innovation.”

Above all, Beck believes that a commitment to inclusive excellence — engaging the rich diversity of the campus community and ensuring that everyone has the opportunity to reach their potential — will help CSUCI begin to think about this

❖ “The regional state university serves as an engine for social mobility and economic vitality. It serves as the building block of our democracy. And when it works in direct partnership with the broader community, higher education elevates everyone.”

—President Erika Beck

scholarly pursuits,” Beck said. “We need to provide greater opportunities for faculty to innovate and collaborate, to experiment, to expand new lines of research and to develop greater connections with their colleagues.”

Beck also looks to the first line of the University’s mission statement — “Placing students at the center of the educational experience” — in visualizing the future classroom. CSUCI will need to build deeper and seamless collaborations between faculty and staff members to create the ideal space.

reimagination. Above all, she says, the University is in the business of changing family trees.

“When our students participate at commencement, they bring their brothers and sisters, their cousins — they’re role modeling the value of a college degree as a vehicle for social and economic mobility,” she said. “The majority of our students are the first in their family to graduate from college, so every student who crosses that stage emerges on the other side as a role model for what is possible for everyone else around them. For me, that’s really the great power of higher education.” ❖c



New strategic initiatives to enhance student experience

By Zoe Lance

PLAN FIRST SEMESTER BLOCK SCHEDULING for first-year students to ease the transition into college-level coursework. Check!

Adopt an e-transcript reader program to evaluate transfer credit faster and easier for incoming students. Check!

Create a Curriculum Action Team to streamline students' curricular paths through their majors. Check!

These are all initiatives that CSUCI has implemented to enhance students' educational experiences, based on the work of the Strategic Initiatives Steering Committee. The committee has been charged with

sponsoring campuswide conversations to develop, refine, prioritize and recommend strategic initiatives to President Erika Beck.

"I wanted the campus to engage in a deliberative, broad exercise to talk about our future direction and solicit ideas from the broader campus community," Beck said. "The committee represents students, faculty and staff, and I wanted them to initiate a dialogue about our future direction and identify the concrete steps we need to take in order to realize our collective vision."

Comprised of student, faculty and executive leadership, the committee utilized feedback from



the entire campus community to develop strategic initiatives within four key areas. The initiatives include educational excellence, student success, inclusive excellence, and capacity and sustainability.

❖ “A proposal like increasing advising in pre-professional programs isn’t couched in just student success, but also academic excellence.” –*Provost Geoff Chase*

Above all, the initiatives foster the University’s mission of placing students at the center of the educational experience.

“One of the exciting parts of this process is seeing how the individual proposals overlap in interesting ways,” said Provost Geoff Chase, the

committee chair. “A proposal like increasing advising in pre-professional programs isn’t couched in just student success, but also academic excellence and inclusive excellence. It’s been an opportunity for the University to come together and ask, ‘How can we work together in new ways to better serve our students?’ ”

The committee began its work in spring 2017 when Beck charged Interim Provost Daniel Wakelee with launching a strategic initiatives planning process. In fall 2017, Provost Chase continued the planning process and charged four subcommittees to lead campuswide discussions on both short-term and long-term strategic initiatives. Much of the work is connected to other top campus priorities, including increasing four- and six-year graduation rates and expanding



immersive learning experiences where students are able to apply their learning to help address real-world challenges.

Chase and the other committee members have made it a priority to share their ideas with the campus by presenting to campus stakeholders, sponsoring online surveys and organizing World Cafés. At these events, attendees worked in small groups to parse out ideas, ask questions and provide input on University priorities.

“The degree to which the campus has been supportive of this process has been gratifying,” Chase said. “One of the wonderful things about the CSUCI community is that they are engaged — they care deeply and they’re willing to put in the work. We’ve kept the process going and helped everyone understand that this is an iterative process of looking at something and getting specific, and then stepping back to look at the big picture. They’ve had opportunities to draw connections between the

different components and gain a broader picture of the University as a whole.”

While some of the committee’s recommendations are longer-range initiatives that will take time and additional resources, like improving the community college pipeline and expanding access to online courses, they’ve already made an impact in short-term projects. Beck is looking forward to seeing how the impact of these initiatives resonate for future students.

“I am immensely proud of the quality of the work we have completed to this point and the dedication of the entire campus community to seeing it through to fruition,” she said. “The committee will continue to engage the campus moving forward, making sure people understand what we are doing and the progress we are making. It will have a transformative impact on the University and the quality of education we offer.” ♦C

To learn more about the new strategic initiatives visit: go.csuci.edu/si



Jennifer Rueda (center) helped other students as a mentor and graduated in May.

Empowering students to become navigators of their own success

By Zoe Lance

A FEW YEARS INTO HER ACADEMIC CAREER AT CSUCI, Jennifer Rueda '18 got a job as a student engagement and outreach mentor with Peer Education and Equity Programs (PEEP). The Health Science student knew that she'd be talking to Ventura County high schoolers and their families about going to college. But she didn't know that she was about to unlock an entire support system of

intimidated to speak up, and simply not knowing who to go to for support," she said. "Once I became involved with an organization on campus, this new network guided me. This role helped me gain various skills and learn how to help other students."

CSUCI's array of student success initiatives help students like Rueda have life-changing experiences. They engage in peer-learning communities, assume leadership and mentoring roles, participate in faculty-led research, spearhead community service projects and

❖ "There are so many opportunities for them to become a successful navigator of their own success at CSUCI." –Amanda Quintero

CSUCI staff and peers in PEEP, leading her to feel more connected to the campus.

"During my first two years here at CSUCI, I didn't venture out and ask for the support I needed. This was for many reasons, including feeling out of place, being

more than shape their path to graduation and beyond. Since 2010, CSUCI's Student Academic Success and Equity Initiatives (SASEI) have leveraged \$25.6 million in external funding to strengthen services and facilitate student success in Ventura and Santa Barbara counties.

The impact of these initiatives has led CSUCI to formally launch Channel Your Success, a campuswide campaign that will help the University community understand the magnitude of this work

and advance equity and inclusion. The campaign will officially kick off in fall 2018.

“There are so many ways that our students can channel their success,” said Executive Director of Student Academic Success and Equity Initiatives (SASEI) Amanda Quintero, Ph.D. “There are so many opportunities for them to become a successful navigator of their own success at CSUCI.”

The core elements of Channel Your Success are a wide-scale peer mentor referral program, as well as culturally relevant practices to support social transition and student engagement among first-time freshmen and second-year students, particularly Latinx/Chicanx and first-generation students. Faculty and staff have already found great success in these practices — Quintero says that programs like Noche de Familia and the ¡Sí Se Pudo! graduation celebration foster student connection.

“We want our students to be deeply involved and immersed in a culture of engagement on campus,” she said. “At these events, we really look at how you channel your success in terms of your full identity — not just your academic identity, but how you’re contributing to the community, how you might be uplifting someone else or how you’re uplifting yourself.”

Channel Your Success is grounded in the work CSUCI is doing for the CSU’s Graduation Initiative 2025, a plan to raise graduation rates for 475,000

students across 23 campuses. By 2025, the University must raise the four-year freshmen graduation rate from the current 25 percent to 40 percent and the two-year transfer graduation rate from the current 42 percent to 54 percent. It also must erase the achievement gaps for undergraduate minority and Pell Grant-eligible students.

“There is a moral imperative that we all do a better job, that we all change as institutions and that we begin to look at bottlenecks in a meaningful way that’s going to help students ultimately complete their goal, which is to earn a four-year degree,” Quintero said. “We know that our students’ success is largely not an issue of ability. This commitment to eliminating the equity gaps is a necessity to move into the next frontier of higher education.”

Rueda also believes that the campaign will be aspirational and empowering for her peers, helping them to take advantage of the support at their fingertips.

“Channel Your Success involves mentors going out to find students that need additional support and guidance,” she said. “Once students know that there are initiatives and individuals on this campus ready to help them through their journey at CSUCI, Channel Your Success will resonate with them.” ♦c



Amanda Quintero advises a student.



Associate Professor of Nursing Jaime Hannans and Associate Professor of Communication Jacob Jenkins

Opening new possibilities

openCI's quest to save students' textbook costs

By Zoe Lance

ASK YOUR NEAREST COLLEGE STUDENT IF THEY enjoy shopping for textbooks every semester — more than likely, you're going to get an exasperated, frustrated response.

Price tags on course materials are often prohibitive for many students. In a comprehensive survey of more than 700 CSUCI students this past academic year, 89 percent reported that textbook prices have caused them stress or anxiety, while 65 percent said that they've chosen not to buy a textbook for a class because it was too expensive.

Jaime Hannans, Associate Professor of Nursing, and Jacob Jenkins, Associate Professor of Communication, are working hard to change these statistics through the openCI initiative. Since 2016, the two faculty

members have led a cooperative effort to provide quality educational resources to faculty and students while reducing student costs for course materials.

The genesis of their efforts lies in the CSU's Affordable Learning Solutions program, a systemwide effort to provide more access to open educational resources. These are academic resources that reside in the public domain or have been released under a license. They come in many forms, including software, streaming video or a bespoke e-textbook written by faculty.

"We offer faculty a number of ways to think about their courses differently," Hannans said. "They use a combination of resources from multiple places, which helps them design their courses to make the best package of materials possible for their students. The currency in the materials they're using are really effective."



Hannans and Jenkins first learned about ALS in 2015 through CSUCI's Teaching & Learning Innovations program (www.csuci.edu/tli/). They knew their own students struggled with choosing to pay for rent or food over buying textbooks, and they also knew that their colleagues were already trying to provide alternative course materials.

Since launching openCI in 2016, the duo has worked tirelessly to spread the word about these resources. They've created an online toolkit, written editorials, met with student groups and presented research at conferences.

Their hard work has paid off: in the past two years alone, they've saved students nearly \$900,000 in recurring costs. In fall 2018, the Communication and Early Childhood Studies programs will offer pathways through their majors where students don't have to buy any

textbooks at all — the first two undergraduate “Z-majors” in the CSU system, meaning there is zero cost to students for textbooks.

“The success of openCI really speaks to the spirit of CSUCI, its innovative nature and the thoughtfulness of our faculty,” Jenkins said. “More than anything else, we merely raised the awareness for these resources and raised the possibility of doing something different.”

Hannans and Jenkins are excited about the progress they've made so far and look forward to the future of openCI. They've found that 100 percent of their colleagues who redesigned their courses with free materials thought that they were equal to or better than traditional textbooks.

“We're really excited about the progress we've made these two years, and we owe it all to the faculty that have been engaged from the very beginning,” Hannans said. “It shows the potential it has not just for our campus, but many other campuses and the different approaches you can take.” ♦C

Shaping lifelong learning

More than 60 CSUCI faculty members in 18 programs have embraced openCI's mission. Some have found that stepping away from a textbook has helped their students understand the importance of being lifelong learners.

‘WE ARE ALL LEARNING TOGETHER’

In spring 2018, Lauren Fascenda taught two online courses — one on teaching strategies in preschool and early elementary settings, and another on child and adolescent psychological development — using a variety of resources from across the internet, including documents from the California Department of Education and links to TED Talks. Fascenda, a lecturer in Early Childhood Studies, noticed that her students have responded well to assignments outside of a textbook.

“In my ECS/PSY 150 course, I asked my students to find online readings that were of interest to them,” she said. “On the discussion board, they gave their thoughts on what they found and then read their peers' work. I found this so interesting because in the past, students' interests about the material wouldn't have shone through in that way.”

As she continues to teach these courses, Fascenda hopes to build a library of sources that can help her students refine their information literacy — knowing which sources to trust is a lifelong learning skill.

“The sources we use are convenient and easily accessible — it also means that for faculty we have to be constantly updating our resources and challenging ourselves to find the most up-to-date, relevant and appropriate materials,” Fascenda said. “We're not just ‘teaching’ our students — we are all learning together.”

‘EXPLORE ON THEIR OWN TIME’

Nien-Tsu Nancy Chen, an Assistant Professor of Communication, just finished teaching a course on quantitative research methods. Instead of using a textbook that cost \$85, she put chapters from five different books on e-reserve at the John Spoor Broome Library, used Lynda.com video tutorials and gave her students a link to a copy of the Literature Review Survival Guide. She quickly found that they appreciated the variety in formats.

“My students embraced the open educational resources, and found them equally as helpful as traditional textbooks,” Chen said. “Some students especially enjoyed the video tutorials and found them easier to process than traditional textbooks.”

Chen says that the access to open educational resources expands students' understanding on what they take away from their coursework — what they're learning in class can serve them further than graduation.

“By taking college classes using open educational resources, students are made aware of how many free, quality educational resources are out there in our digital world,” she said. “This would hopefully encourage them to explore these resources on their own time and become lifelong learners.”

Nursing and Veterans Affairs receive grants from Dr. Richard Grossman Community Foundation

By Kim Lamb Gregory

BURN TREATMENT PIONEER DR. RICHARD Grossman always valued the nurses who supported the work he and the other physicians performed at the Grossman Burn Center in Sherman Oaks.

“My husband worshipped his nurses, some of whom had been with him 30 and 40 years,” said his widow, Elizabeth Rice Grossman. “He said, ‘Without my nurses, I never could have achieved the outcomes I did.’”

Another cause that meant a great deal to the Grossmans was the welfare of veterans.

“Our foundation has been looking for ways to support our local veteran community for several years,” Grossman said. “The Veterans Affairs effort at CSUCI is the perfect match. Our late board member, Lane Weitzman, was a veteran, and Dr.

Grossman served in the Naval Reserve. Supporting veterans through education is something that resonates with us.”

In March, The Dr. Richard Grossman Community Foundation presented two gifts to support the University’s award-winning Nursing program and the Veterans Affairs program.

Nursing will receive \$200,000 to help enhance and expand the program that has already been ranked the 12th best in the state.

“We thought this would help attract more students who were interested in healthcare but had a financial need in order to attend this nursing school,” Grossman said. “This school is getting a very good reputation, and it’s right here in our backyard!”

Lynette Landry, Chair of the Nursing and Health Science programs, expressed her gratitude to Grossman at a gathering in March in which members of the Grossman Foundation formally presented the



A campus therapy dog named “Doc” on a recent visit to CSUCI.



From left to right: Jay Derrico, Kris Postil, Rocky Morton, Elizabeth Grossman, President Erika Beck, student Daniel Cook, '18 ESRM, and John Notter

checks to CSUCI President Erika Beck.

“My predecessor started a great program,” Landry said, referring to former program chair Karen Jensen. “I’m excited to expand on what she’s done.”

and \$50,000 will go towards the acquisition and training of five to six service dogs who will be trained at San Luis Obispo-based New Life K9s.

The remaining \$20,000 will go towards procuring

❖ “The Veterans Affairs effort at CSUCI is the perfect match. Our late board member, Lane Weitzman was a veteran, and Dr. Grossman served in the Naval Reserve. Supporting veterans through education is something that resonates with us.” –Elizabeth Rice Grossman

Assistant Director for Veterans Affairs Jay Derrico also was on hand to thank Grossman for the \$220,000 gift for the ongoing programs and services provided to student veterans, and for service dogs for student veterans suffering from post-traumatic stress.

“We have continuing programs at Veterans Affairs,” Derrico said. “Our biggest is internships in which we help pay salaries for student veterans to work in their field of interest. We have other major programs like our Student Veteran Medallion Ceremony at the end of the year.”

A total of \$150,000 will go to the Veteran’s program

two campus therapy dogs.

The campus therapy dogs will be named “Doc” for Dr. Richard Grossman, M.D., and “Lon” for Lon Morton, who served on both the CSUCI Foundation Board and the Grossman Community Foundation Board.

“We are deeply grateful to the Grossman Community Foundation for this generous gift,” Beck said. “The funds will help our student veterans and nursing undergraduates tremendously as they transition and engage with the campus community and work toward attaining their educational goals.”

To view a recent visit to the campus by therapy dog “Doc,” visit: [go.csuci.edu/doc](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=go.csuci.edu/doc) ❖

The Creativity Cultivator

Luke Matjas' deep passion for championing creativity

By Zoe Lance

IF YOU'RE HANGING OUT IN FRONT OF NAPA HALL, you might see one of the CSUCI's Art students' favorite sightings: Professor Luke Matjas whizzing by on a skateboard, in transit to the studio.

"I used to bring my skateboard into class — one I had from the 1980s — and joke with my students that it's older than they are," he said.

It's this rapport with his students, coupled with a deep passion for championing creativity, that makes Matjas a beloved faculty member. As Chair and Professor of Art and Performing Arts, he teaches studio art, digital media and design courses. He gets

in Matjas' plans. Before joining CSUCI, he founded his own professional graphic design studio and received a Master of Fine Arts from the University of California, Santa Barbara. But he loved the idea of his only clients being himself and his students and joined CSUCI in 2003 inspired by the CSU system's educational mission.

The beauty of the Ventura landscape — the intersections of water, fields and mountains — also was very special. His art focuses on the relationships between humans and the environment. The work in his first solo museum exhibition, 2016's "That Great Rock Mass is Called the Earth" at Oxnard's Carnegie

❖ "CSUCI is close to Los Angeles, a hub of artistic creativity, but it's far
❖ enough away to serve as a retreat to focus. I take a lot of inspiration
❖ from this area." —Luke Matjas

immense satisfaction out of seeing unexpected and unique work from his students.

"Sometimes students sign up for design courses and think they are going to learn how to do traditional, commercial stuff," he said. "But they're all very conceptually driven classes, and I enjoy seeing how they each tap into their own background and their own experiences to make art. Making 'weird' art is a good thing in my book."

Being a professor wasn't always

Art Museum, stemmed out of his time as an artist-in-residence at Joshua Tree National Park.

His experiences in working outside of the classroom shows his students that there are many ways to be an artist.

"From the Channel Islands to the Santa Monica Mountains to the high desert, there are so many places to look outside and see unbelievable geological features," he said. "CSUCI is close to Los Angeles, a hub of artistic creativity, but it's far enough away to serve as a retreat to focus. I take a lot of inspiration from this area."

In looking back at their time at CSUCI, Art program alumni remember how he cultivated confidence in his students. Dani Kwan '13 recalled how he encouraged students to find a place in the world of design.

"Luke has mastered the balance between being a strict instructor and nurturing mentor," the Studio Art alumna said. "Luke made time for each of his students in and outside of class to listen, ease our worries and give us guidance. To this day, my peers and I who have graduated continue to look up to Luke and still strive to impress him."

Ben Blanchard '15, remembered talking to Matjas at Discover CI, an event for future CSUCI students. By







❖ “Our students learn how to be part of a team, and to bring their own experience to the table and do something interesting with them. Learning how to be creative on a daily basis is one of the most rewarding things you can do, regardless of the field.” –*Luke Matjas*

the end of their conversation, Blanchard knew that he wanted to be in Matjas’ courses. He took many, including an independent study program.

“I was intrigued by his outright exuberance for the program. It was hard not to be excited leaving his talk,” the Studio Art alumnus said. “I enjoyed learning from Luke because he cared as much about my work as I did and was always willing to go above and beyond to help me succeed.”

To Matjas, CSUCI Art students are exceptional for the energy and diverse ideas they bring to the table. Not only is he teaching them the skills needed to be a professional artist, but how to infuse what they learn in the classroom into everyday life.

“We are using different tools to unlock a whole range of creative practices and ideas,” he said. “Our

students learn how to be part of a team, and to bring their own experiences to the table and do something interesting with them. Learning how to be creative on a daily basis is one of the most rewarding things you can do, regardless of the field.” ❖c

Editor’s Note: Visit the John Spoor Broome Library featuring Professor Matjas’ latest art exhibit, “The Young People’s Guide to our Woodland World,” through Aug. 24. You can also get a quick peak of his unique campus office by visiting [▶ go.csuci.edu/Luke360](https://www.csuci.edu/Luke360)

A catalyst in the classroom

Loren Dacanay, '06 Single Subject Teaching Credential/Chemistry

By Zoe Lance

SINCE RECEIVING HIS CHEMISTRY credential from CSUCI in 2006, Loren Dacanay gives an annual presentation to Associate Professor of Education and Political Science Tiina Itkonen's class on working with special education students. In 12 years of teaching, he has worked with many students who have had disabilities to make accommodations for experiments in his chemistry lab.

During his fall 2017 visit, a student in Itkonen's class raised her hand after his talk. In front of the class, she explained that she was a former high school student of Dacanay's. The confidence he had instilled in her had made her feel empowered and led her down the same pathway to teaching.

"I started to cry," Dacanay said. "I remembered her and how she struggled in the class. At the time I thought she needed a cheerleader, and I stuck a note in her textbook that said, 'You can do it, I believe in you.' The student shared that if it hadn't been for that note she wouldn't have been in Itkonen's classroom.

"It's one of those things where you say, 'Wow, I really did what I set out to do. I changed the world a little bit,'" said Dacanay.

Dacanay came to teaching later in life. After receiving a bachelor's degree in enology from the University of California, Davis, he worked in the food and consumer chemical industries for more than a decade. When he became a stay-at-home father, he volunteered at his children's Thousand Oaks elementary school. Others encouraged him to pursue teaching when they saw how comfortable he was in the classroom.

He remembered enjoying his undergraduate coursework in chemistry and chose CSUCI to pursue his credential. Dacanay's connection to CSUCI is deep — he worked on his Eagle Scout Project at the Camarillo campus when it was still a hospital, and his sister, Joanna Murphy, is a longtime CSUCI staff member.

"CSUCI is really close to Thousand Oaks, so it was also easier to put in the extra time to get another degree while still watching my kids," he said.

He currently teaches chemistry as well as Advanced Placement seminars and research courses at Simi Valley High School. He enjoys speaking to Itkonen's



classes, as he believes that sharing his real-world experience can help future teachers make lessons for students of all abilities.

To Itkonen, Dacanay is a prime example of a teacher that values inclusion.

"He is student-focused, and teaches to multiple learning styles," she said. "He continues to just overflow with enthusiasm. Loren has touched a lot of lives since leaving CSUCI."

To Dacanay, the most important thing about teaching is developing mentoring relationships with his students — as well as helping the future teaching generations.

"It could be one of those things where you just show a little bit of interest, and it sparks change in a person's life — that's what it's really all about," he said. "In staying connected with CSUCI, I can help new teachers and give back." ♦c

Students receive scholarships at the B&TP Leadership Dinner

By Kim Lamb Gregory

ELIZABETH CHAVEZ WIPED TEARS WITH HER dinner napkin as she watched her daughter, Devina Chavez, cross the stage and accept her scholarship at the 14th Annual Business & Technology Partnership (B&TP) Leadership dinner.

“I’m just so proud of her, so proud,” Elizabeth said.

Devina was one of five exceptional students chosen to receive scholarships from the B&TP, an organization of local business and technology leaders that provide scholarships, internships and other opportunities for CSUCI students majoring in one of the Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics fields.

The students were honored during an awards ceremony and dinner held April 26 at the Hyatt Regency Westlake.

“When I applied to CSUCI, I knew I needed scholarships. I needed people to back me up,” said Devina, a Biology major from Merced, California. “I could not afford it on my own, and I’m grateful.”

The other scholars were Biology major Deanne Pamela Antonio, Business Administration major Anna Maria Sandry, Environmental Science & Resource Management major Tanya Saxena and Biology major Melony LaBoy.

“I have a lot of friends who ended up pregnant or incarcerated,” said LaBoy, who grew up in Oxnard. “It’s typical of a lot of students from my community. I want to change that stigma by being a first-generation student to get a bachelor’s degree. I want to continue and be the first in my family to get a Ph.D.”

Antonio, whose family arrived from the Philippines with very little money, hopes to teach computer science to individuals with mental or physical disabilities.

Saxena transferred to CSUCI after studying computer science at University of California, Irvine, because she wanted a university that excelled in Environmental Science, which fascinates her.

Sandry hopes to use her degree in Business Administration to work for the U.S. government, because she is grateful to be here and wants to give back.

“I was born in Indonesia and unfortunately, I didn’t feel welcome or safe there ... the politics,” she said. “The United States is a country where I am



Scholarship awardee Devina Chavez and her mother, Elizabeth, attend the B&TP Leadership Dinner.

welcome and it gives me more opportunity.”

Assistant Professor of Mathematics Cynthia Flores was honored as Faculty Leader of the Year, and the Business Leader of the Year award went to SAGE Publishing President & Chief Executive Officer Blaise Simqu.

Goleta-based Inogen, an oxygen therapy technology company founded by three students at University of California, Santa Barbara received Technology Leader of the Year.

CSUCI President Erika Beck congratulated the scholars and honorees and once again underscored the University’s commitment to preparing students for jobs of the 21st century.

“We are preparing them by teaching them new ways of learning and providing them with a solid foundation of critical thinking skills, analytical skills, problem-solving skills and communication skills,” Beck said. “And a deep sense of curiosity and a passion for life-long learning.” ♦c

Learn more about these scholarship students by visiting: [go.csuci.edu/btp18](https://www.csuci.edu/btp18)



From left: Assistant Professor Cynthia Flores, Deanne Antonio, Devina Chavez, President Erika Beck, Anna Maria Sandry, Melony LaBoy, Tanya Saxena and Alison Perry Bauerlein of Inogen



George Leis and scholarship awardee Deanne Antonio



Guests attend the B&TP Leadership Award dinner

A fresh start

Adam G. Johnson, '17 B.A. Psychology

By Zoe Lance

WHENEVER THERE'S A TOUGH property appraisal to make, Adam Johnson is the person his colleagues turn to. They know that he just received a Psychology degree from CSUCI and his training is a powerful asset to their work in valuing real estate and understanding their clients.

"They'll ask me, 'How can we look at this from a psychology perspective? What would be your take?' And it's funny, because you wouldn't think that there's an application for psychology in something like real estate appraisal," Johnson, who works as the office manager, said. "But I've found that I'm able to bring in a new perspective that they may otherwise not see."

This ability to employ what he's learned in the classroom is a dream come true for Johnson. Through CSUCI's Psychology program at the Goleta campus, he was able to go from community college courses to a bachelor's degree in just 20 months. He is seriously considering graduate work in psychology and is staying involved with the Santa Barbara City College program as a tutor.

Johnson's pathway to a degree took many twists and turns. Enrolling in college for the first time 20 years ago, he picked psychology as his major — a subject he calls his first love. He's always enjoyed observing and analyzing people's relationship dynamics and group behavior.

However, a rough patch in his life, which resulted in incarceration, threatened to derail his future.

"I knew that I had the skills and ability to be successful, but it was very challenging to go into a job interview and not be able to get past the application process," Johnson said. "When you have that background, you never know when you're going to hit a roadblock."

Johnson worked full time to provide for his family but knew that he wanted to go back to school and finish a degree. He says that CSUCI helped him reconsider pursuing psychology and reshape his own self-image.

"I was able to obtain a new identity," he said. "I look in the mirror and see myself as Adam Johnson, a successful college graduate."

He dove into CSUCI's program, immersing



himself in class projects, conducting research and volunteering for new student orientation.

"Adam was one of the brightest students in his group," said Kimmy Kee-Rose, an Associate Professor in the Psychology program who taught Johnson. "When he had academic challenges, he overcame them and adapted well — he's self-motivated and hardworking. I have a high opinion of Adam."

Johnson credits the program for his strides in personal growth. He says that there's a need to talk about the stigma that previously incarcerated people face as they reintegrate into society. His hard work at CSUCI challenges those perceptions.

"Everything I did at CSUCI not only changed my academic understanding of psychology, but who I was as a person," he said. "I will always have a very soft spot in my heart for the CSUCI program. I am very grateful for the opportunity to share my experience." ♦c



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