

csusb

MAGAZINE



OUR
Defining
MOMENT

**\$200 MILLION
CAMPAIGN**
Finds CSUSB
'Poised for an
Unprecedented
New Era of
Growth'



CAL STATE SAN BERNARDINO

WE DEFINE THE *Future*

| fall 2022

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Read all of these fascinating stories and more online at magazine.csusb.edu.

PRESIDENT'S AGENDA

Welcome to the fall 2022 CSUSB Magazine. The largest piece of news is that we have publicly kicked off "Our Defining Moment: The Campaign for CSUSB." We are seeking to secure the foundations of Cal State San Bernardino to ensure the university continues to be a vehicle for change for the people of our region and to provide an exceptional experience for future students, one that anticipates immediate needs and leaves room for innovation.

Our \$200 million goal is based on four pillars: (1) Increase student success, diversity and experience through scholarships; (2) Attract and retain world-class faculty; (3) Improve and transform the Inland Empire through programs and research; and (4) Capital construction to build innovative facilities, smart classrooms and creative spaces. Please read the cover story for more details of what this campaign will provide for our university.

One of the campaign's extraordinary seed gifts came from Stan and Ellen Weisser and enabled us to break ground in September on the long-dreamed-of Performing Arts Center (PAC). This new capital project, which will become the beating heart of the College of Arts and Letters once it opens in 2024-25, will contain a new 500-seat theater as well as the renovation of existing classroom and office spaces. When completed, the PAC will be the premier performing arts facility for CSUSB and the Inland Empire.

And, thanks to the state of California, our Palm Desert Campus has received the \$79 million necessary for us to begin building the new Student Services Building at PDC. This new facility will be designed for maximal flexibility as the campus continues to grow.

Finally, I am incredibly proud that the Campaign for College Opportunity recognized our campus in 2021 and 2022 as an Equity Champion of Higher Education for Excellence for leading California and working with intentionality to support Black and Latinx students through the associate degree for transfer program.

Please keep reading to see more about these stories along with recent faculty accomplishments and recognitions as well as the achievements of our students. And, because giving back is in the DNA of each and every Coyote (currently enrolled or since graduated), please flag your calendars for Feb. 17-18, 2023, for our annual Coyote Cares Day. If you are in the area, please think about joining us. And, if you are far away, please consider taking that day to volunteer or donate to a community project in your area. As #Coyotes4Life, we know that each of us can make a difference.



Tomás D. Morales
President

President Tomás D. Morales regularly engages with the local community, university partners, legislative representatives and educational leaders worldwide to champion CSUSB and its mission.



CSUSB and California Indian Nations College sign agreement to increase number of Native American transfer students to CSUSB

CSUSB and California Indian Nations College (CINC) in Palm Desert have signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) to increase the number of Native American transfer students to the CSUSB campus.

Under the MOU, both institutions will create a college preparation program and develop an enrollment support partnership to increase the number of First Peoples individuals earning bachelor's degrees.

"As an anchor institution in the Inland Empire, CSUSB is here to serve all our region's residents in order to build a better future for San Bernardino and Riverside counties," said President Morales. "We are committed to increasing our outreach and access efforts to the IE's First Peoples, and this MOU is a tremendous step forward."

CINC President Celeste R. Townsend said, "This MOU not only solidifies the partnership with CSUSB, but it also strengthens a joint quest to increase the accessibility of educational opportunities through advanced learning that focuses on diversity, inclusion and empowerment for the underserved and misrepresented population." ●

CSUSB president shares insights on lifelong learning during Palm Desert Campus podcast



In June, President Morales took to the airwaves to record an episode of the podcast "In Conversation: The Voices of OLLI," with Emmy-award-winning producer and Osher Lifelong Learning Institute (OLLI) member, Lou Gorfain. During the 20-minute episode, Morales answered numerous questions, ranging from why the OLLI program at the CSUSB Palm Desert Campus is so vital; the benefits of developing intergenerational relationships between OLLI members (who are age 50 and older) and younger students at the campus; and the importance of creating lifelong learning opportunities for older adults.

"We are a learning organization and OLLI provides an opportunity for individuals and members of the community that have earned their degrees a long time ago, or perhaps never earned a degree but are interested in learning new things, OLLI just provides that vehicle for that to happen. And I'm just so excited. I think OLLI is just a very special program." ●

CSUSB president donates artwork created by student to Undocumented Student Success Center

President Morales donated a vibrant artwork created by a CSUSB art student to CSUSB's Undocumented Student Success Center (USSC) in May. Morales has a tradition of purchasing student artworks and donating them to locations on campus.

Morales purchased a beaded calavera (skull) created by Valeria Vargas during the Día de los Muertos (Day of the Dead) celebration and auction in November 2021, hosted by the university's Association of Latino Faculty, Staff and Students (ALFSS).

Prior to the event, CSUSB's Robert and Frances Fullerton Museum of Art invited the campus and community to decorate a calavera, an iconic symbol for the holiday that is celebrated throughout Mexico.



Vargas' calavera, "Ode to the Inkcap," is an "ode to growing old, appreciating our elders and ancestors and the beauty of our bodies and minds as we enter a new stage of life."

Money raised during the calavera auction went to ALFSS student scholarships. ●



CSUSB hosts roundtable to address water issues brought on by prolonged drought

In September, as the Inland Empire and the state continue to find ways to use and conserve water, CSUSB hosted the Save Our Water Roundtable where regional partnerships and collaboration were highlighted. President Tomás D. Morales welcomed representatives of local and regional water districts, as well Dorene D'Adamo, vice chair of the State Water Resources Control Board, and state Sen. Rosilicie Ochoa Bogh of Yucaipa, to campus.

"Please know that CSUSB is fully committed to doing our part. Not only to conserving water usage on our San Bernardino and Palm Desert campuses, but also to partner with the region and the state to come up with solutions to ensure our state's resilience for years to come."

Morales cited campus conservation efforts, including replacing turf with drought-tolerant landscaping, the use of low-flow water fixtures, as well as university resources such as the Water Resources Institute and its affiliation with CSU-WATER, which provides education, research and policy development. ●

President Morales recognizes work of Sen. Connie Leyva

President Morales spoke at a Campaign for College Opportunity board meeting in October where state Senator Connie Leyva was honored with the Education Champion Award for her contributions to education policy reform.

"She sees education as the solution not only to issues affecting our state currently, but to building a healthy and sustainable future for all California's residents," Morales said of Leyva during the event. "The Education Champion Award specifically recognizes Senator Leyva for her contributions to education policy reform. In her service as chair of the California Senate Education Committee, she championed higher education opportunity through her legislative support

for various policies to invest in financial aid, empower student voices and streamline access to higher ed." ●



LEAD SUMMIT XI builds on the foundation of the past to build for the future

The 11th edition of the Latino Education and Advocacy Days Summit, better known as LEAD Summit XI, looked to the past to help chart a course for the future, and celebrated current accomplishments when it convened at CSUSB's Santos Manuel Student Union North.

The summit programs revisited and commemorated social movements from the last 50 years, including the birth of Chicano-ethnic studies, the school walkouts/blowouts, bilingual education and the Chicano Moratorium. Approximately 950 people attended throughout the daylong conference on Sept. 30, and hundreds of thousands more tuned in to livestreams shown at more than 1,600 Town Hall Remote Viewing Sites, LEAD's social media channels, and broadcast by LEAD's media partners.



The highlight of the conference, "Movimiento y Compromiso: 50 Years of Challenges, Possibilities, and the Quest for Educational Equity," was the morning keynote given by Richard Marin, better known as Cheech Marin, who was this year's honorary chair/padrino de honor. Marin talked about how his interest in collecting Chicano art came about, what it means to him personally, why he decided to share his collection and what led to the opening of The Cheech Marin Center for Chicano Art & Culture, a partnership with the Riverside Art Museum and city of Riverside. ●

Education professor Enrique Murillo Jr. named to White House advisory commission on advancing educational equity and opportunities for Hispanics



Enrique Murillo Jr., CSUSB professor of education and executive director and founder of Latino Education and Advocacy Days (LEAD), has been named to the President's Advisory Commission on Advancing Educational Equity, Excellence, and Economic Opportunity for Hispanics, the White House announced in October. The commission was created to provide advice to President Biden on matters pertaining to educational equity and economic opportunity for the Hispanic and Latino community.

"It is my distinct honor to have been appointed as an adviser to the White House by President Joe Biden," Murillo said. "The competitive strengths of our nation will continue to depend, to a large extent, on the positive educational outcomes of Latino students."

Murillo has written and/or edited more than 180 publications and scholarly multi-media works, and has presented at more than 180 professional conferences. He has been recognized with more than 50 local, regional, state, national, international and congressional commendations. ●



CSUSB college formally renamed the **JAMES R. WATSON AND JUDY RODRIGUEZ WATSON COLLEGE OF EDUCATION**



Watch a tribute video to *James R. Watson and Judy Rodriguez Watson* at magazine.csusb.edu

Cal State San Bernardino formally unveiled the renamed College of Education as the James R. Watson and Judy Rodriguez Watson College of Education on Nov. 1, in recognition of the longtime support of the Watsons and their transformative gift of \$8.4 million to the college.

During the ceremony in the college's atrium packed with university faculty, staff, administrators, local elected officials, friends and family, James Watson said, "We have enjoyed our experience here for over 20 years.

"We have been blessed more than the university has been blessed by what we have been able to provide financially and in our involvement," he said. "It's truly been a wonderful experience for Judy and I. We understand the value of education, and the vital role Cal State San Bernardino has in the Inland Empire in providing an affordable and world-class education."

In naming the college after the Watsons, it becomes the second named college at CSUSB. The College of Business was renamed in 2016 to the Jack H. Brown College of Business and Public Administration to honor businessman and philanthropist Jack H. Brown.

CSUSB President Tomás D. Morales said the education college is just the fourth in the California State University named for a person, and Judy Rodriguez Watson said it was the first in the entire CSU to bear the name of a Hispanic person, which brought a standing ovation.

"Jim and Judy are no strangers to philanthropy," Morales said. "They constantly give their time and their resources to better their communities. And their continuous support of Cal State San Bernardino has been nothing short of extraordinary."

The Watson's gift will support student scholarships and establish a new Center for STEM Education. The STEM Center will

be the hub for outreach to K-12 students in the region and will include a Model STEM Exploratorium and a teacher residency program, Morales said. The gift will also support Project Impact, a new program in the college to recruit and prepare teachers to serve underrepresented students in public schools.

Funds will also be used to enhance the Watson & Associates Literacy Center's efforts in the Inland Empire. The center assists students in K-12 improve their reading, listening and writing skills, and is housed in the college.

And, Morales said, it will establish the Dean's Endowment Fund to support special projects by faculty and staff. "This Dean's Endowed Fund is the first for our campus," he said.

"This fall marked the public launch of Cal State San Bernardino's \$200 million, Our Defining Moment: the Campaign for CSUSB," Morales said. "And Jim and Judy's generous donation has made outsized impact in our progress to reaching this goal." ●



CSUSB recognizes individuals and organizations DEDICATED TO COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT



Cal State San Bernardino recognized two individuals and two organizations on Oct. 12 for serving as outstanding partners in community engagement with the university.

Awardees included CSUSB faculty members Nerea Marteache, an associate professor of criminal justice and director of the Center for Criminal Justice Research, and Francisca Beer, a professor of accounting and finance and director

of the Jack H. Brown College of Business and Public Administration Office of Academic Equity.

Marteache received the Outstanding Community Engagement Faculty Award for her deeply innovative and engaged academic work. Beer was recognized with the inaugural Community Engaged Scholarship Lifetime Achievement Award for her outstanding and sustained accomplishment in

community-engaged scholarship through research, creative activity, teaching, service and practice throughout her career.

Also recognized were the Inland Empire Resources Conservation District and the Carolyn E. Wylie Center for Children, Youth, and Families, which were both given the Outstanding Community Partner Award. ●

xREAL LAB RESEARCH reveals how smart avatars can increase empathy, engagement in students

Four CSUSB faculty and staff from the university's Extended Reality for Learning (xREAL) Lab were invited to speak during the Cal State Tech Connect 2022, a virtual conference held in late July that showcased CSU campuses and their notable work in technology.

The event highlighted how campuses enhance privacy and security; foster diversity, equity and inclusion; evolve technology, infrastructure and services; lead, partner and collaborate; and teach and transform the student experience.

Mihaela Popescu, professor of communication studies, Wagner Prado, assistant professor of kinesiology, and instructional technologists Bobby Laudeman and Yutong Liu presented "VR meets AI meets the Matrix: Using 'smart avatars' for experiential learning," which explored the ways in which the xREAL Lab uses embodied conversational agents in virtual reality to simulate realistic conversations for increasing students' empathy and engagement. ●



YOTES COME HOME!



One of CSUSB's most cherished and festive events – Homecoming Week – which brings together alumni, students, faculty, staff and the local community to celebrate the university's traditions, accomplishments and goals, was held the week of Oct. 17, culminating on Oct. 22 with the annual Homecoming Bash.

The event was an opportunity for everyone to connect – and reconnect – on campus.

The Bash, attended by about 2,500 people, featured campus tours, a college resource fair, food, giveaways, a photo booth, a student zone, interactive games, prizes, Family-Fun Kid Zone and live entertainment.

To cap it all off, the Coyotes women's volleyball team ended the night with a win over CCAA rival Cal State Los Angeles, avenging their loss in the 2021 NCAA West Regional. ●



Watch a homecoming highlight video at magazine.csusb.edu



From left: Conrad Shayo, professor, chair, Information & Decision Sciences, CSUSB; Carolyn Kim, communication partner, PNNL; Evangelina Shreeve, director, STEM Education, PNNL; Pamela Langford, associate vice president, Alumni, Government & Community Relations, CSUSB; Maral Hernandez, associate director, Government & Community Relations, CSUSB; and Jake Zhu, dean, Palm Desert Campus

CSUSB FIRST UNIVERSITY JOINING PROGRAM THAT WILL INCREASE CYBER WORKFORCE TO STRENGTHEN, PROTECT SPACE SYSTEMS

CSUSB is the first university to join a new program by the U.S. Space Force's Space Command System (SSC) and the Pacific Northwest National Laboratory (PNNL) designed to grow the cybersecurity workforce to build stronger, more flexible and secure space systems. There is a need to dramatically increase the cyber workforce, as officials estimate there are an estimated open 600,000 cybersecurity jobs.

In a memorandum of understanding signed in May, CSUSB formally joined the Cyber Halo Innovation Research Program

(CHIRP), which will work with government, industry, and colleges and universities to provide students a direct two-year pathway to a cybersecurity career at SSC or their industry partners.

Students selected for CHIRP will receive a Space Cyber Research Fellowship and commit to working at SSC or a selected industry partner, such as PNNL, after receiving their degree. CHIRP students will receive two years of intensive training specifically designed to equip them for careers protecting the nation's vital space-based technologies from cyber threats. ●

CONGRESSMAN TOURS CSUSB CYBERSECURITY CENTER AND MEETS WITH STUDENT LEADERS

U.S. Rep. Pete Aguilar, D-San Bernardino, visited the CSUSB campus on Aug. 29 to learn more about the university's Cybersecurity Center, of which he has shown great interest for its work to develop the next generation of cybersecurity professionals.

Aguilar talked to cybersecurity students, who shared their research on autonomous cars or driverless vehicles, and how they can be manipulated; fighting and preventing ransomware; the center's work with the U.S. Space Force Command in the Cyber Halo Innovation Research Program (CHIRP) and the center's partnership to create and develop a cybersecurity apprenticeship in the inland region.

Later Aguilar met with the executive committee of the university's Associated Students Inc. to discuss issues in higher education, student issues and concerns. In addition to the students, Aguilar also met with university faculty and staff.



In October 2020, Aguilar announced a \$10.5 million grant in federal funding and national recognition for CSUSB as the Community National Center for Cybersecurity Education by the National Security Agency. ●



From left: Joe Baca Jr., Fifth District San Bernardino County supervisor; state Sen. Rosilicie Ochoa Bogh, 23rd District; Ellen Weisser '68, donor; Lesley Leighton, music department chair; Trisha Owens, CSUSB music student; Terry Donovan Smith, theatre arts department chair; Ruyeling Chuang, dean, CSUSB College of Arts & Letters; Tomás D. Morales, CSUSB president; Rafik Mohamed, interim provost and vice president, Academic Affairs; Samuel Sudhakar, CIO and vice president, Information Technology Services; William "Bill" Stevenson '84, chair, CSUSB Philanthropic Foundation; Robert Nava, vice president, University Advancement, and executive director, CSUSB Philanthropic Foundation; and Stan Weisser, donor.

CSUSB BREAKS GROUND ON NEW PERFORMING ARTS CENTER

The record-breaking heatwave may have moved the Cal State San Bernardino Performing Arts Center groundbreaking ceremony indoors, but that didn't stop the event from being a lively and significant moment for the CSUSB community.

The Sept. 7 event brought nearly 300 CSUSB administrators, faculty, staff, students and community members together in the Santos Manuel Student Union South to officially break ground for the new 73,337-square-foot Performing Arts Center.

The center, which will be located south of the existing Performing Arts Building, will offer a 500-seat theater and music instruction space. The \$126,907,000 construction project is scheduled to open during the 2024-25 academic year.

"Providing our students with 21st century resources means that they require access to state-of-the-art facilities. Therefore, our campus needs both to refresh and build new over time," said CSUSB President Tomás D. Morales during the event. "I know that you agree with me that our students deserve the very best. They have that already with their faculty – now we need to ensure that they have it in their learning spaces."

Morales also thanked Stan and Ellen Weisser '68, longtime supporters of CSUSB whose generous and invaluable gift was the seed donation for the new Performing Arts Center. Their gift led the university to name the center's foyer the Ellen and Stan Weisser Performing Arts Foyer.

The center will provide modern teaching, rehearsal and performance spaces necessary for a dynamic performing arts program. At completion, the new 500-seat performing arts theater will be the only one of its size and quality in the Inland Empire, and will allow more of the area's community to experience the highly acclaimed productions from CSUSB student-performers and student-musicians. The building will also create a new "front door" to the campus that shows a modern and forward-looking face to visitors and the larger community.

"Once its doors open, we will be able to provide invaluable learning experiences for our students and further bridge the connection between our campus and local communities," said Morales. "Because this groundbreaking is for a groundbreaker of a project for the IE." ●



Watch a tribute video to Ellen and Stan Weisser at magazine.csusb.edu



CSUSB PROFESSOR BRIAN LEVIN AMONG FIRST APPOINTED BY GOV. NEWSOM TO CALIFORNIA COMMISSION ON THE STATE OF HATE

Brian Levin, founding director of CSUSB's non-partisan Center for the Study of Hate and Extremism, was appointed to the California Commission on the State of Hate by Gov. Gavin Newsom in September.

Levin, a professor in the School of Criminology and Criminal Justice, is among the first cohort of five commissioners appointed to the new panel.

In addition to monitoring and tracking hate crimes and proposing policy, the commission will provide information to state agencies and the public on the state of hate. Its policy recommendations will be aimed at promoting intersocial education to foster mutual respect and understanding among California's diverse population. The commission will host and coordinate at least four community forums on the state of hate per year and an annual State of Hate Commission Report.

Levin was also invited to participate in President Joe Biden's United We Stand Summit, aimed at countering "the corrosive effects of hate-fueled violence on our democracy and public safety," in September. ●

MORE THAN 1,200 STUDENTS NOW CALL CSUSB CAMPUS "HOME" AND LAUNCH THE 2022-23 ACADEMIC YEAR

Fall 2022 Move-In officially kicked off Aug. 18-21, as more than 1,200 residential students moved into their new digs at Coyote Village, Arrowhead Village and University Village. This year, move-in dates were staggered over a four-day period, rather than one day, to streamline the process.

CSUSB President Tomás D. Morales was on hand to greet students and their families, welcome them to campus, and offer his thanks to the student volunteers who were working at the welcome stations in the parking lot.

Jon Merchant, the director of the CSUSB Department of Housing & Residential Education, said this year's check-in was faster and more efficient than previous years, thanks to the student volunteers and the extended move-in period.

Student residents were required to show proof that they had received the COVID-19 booster or have a medical/religious exemption. Students also enjoyed move-in goodies to help them stay cool and hydrated during the move, as well as a pool day, an outdoor movie night, and Sunday brunch with their families. ●



SCHOOL OF COMPUTER SCIENCE & ENGINEERING DEGREE PROGRAMS EARN REACCREDITATION

CSUSB's School of Computer Science & Engineering (CSE) earned reaccreditation for its bachelor of science degree programs in computer engineering and computer science from the Accreditation Board for Engineering and Technology (ABET), which represents the gold standard in computing and engineering education.

ABET accreditation ensures that CSUSB's computer science and engineering programs meet the quality standards that prepare graduates to enter a global workforce. "The ABET reaccreditation also signals that the CSE produces engineering professionals and computer scientists ready to use innovative design thinking to solve complex challenges," said Khalil Dajani, CSE chair and professor.

The ABET Commissions reaccredited the CSE programs from August 2022 through 2026. The BS computer engineering program has been accredited since 2011 and the computer science program has been accredited since 1988. ●



KINESIOLOGY PROFESSOR GUILLERMO ESCALANTE IS FIRST CSUSB FACULTY MEMBER TO BE SELECTED AS FELLOW IN HACU LEADERSHIP ACADEMY

The Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities (HACU) named Guillermo Escalante as a fellow for its fourth Leadership Academy, La Academia de Liderazgo, a one-year program to prepare the next generation of culturally diverse leaders for executive and senior-level positions in higher education.

Escalante, a professor in CSUSB's Department of Kinesiology, is the first CSUSB faculty member to be named a fellow and is one of only 39 individuals selected from institutions throughout the U.S. to join the prestigious program.

Escalante has been a Dean's Fellow in the College of Natural Sciences since 2020. He is one of the co-authors of the PATHS grant, which provides nearly \$5 million in funding from the U.S. Department of Education to increase the number of



Hispanic and low-income students who graduate with degrees in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) fields.

The Leadership Academy is designed to increase the number of talented individuals who aspire to leadership positions of Hispanic-Serving Institutions (HSIs). ●

SMART CLASSROOM TECHNOLOGY ENABLES HIGH-QUALITY REMOTE TEACHING AND LEARNING

Cal State San Bernardino recently upgraded nearly 300 classrooms at both the San Bernardino and Palm Desert campuses with the latest audio-visual communication technology, enabling high-quality remote teaching and learning for faculty and students.

With a new virtual teaching and working experience dictated by the pandemic, the new classrooms provide faculty with the option of

teaching in-person or online, and give students the option of attending in person or virtually.

To take advantage of the upgrade, faculty receive detailed information and training on how to use the new tools to provide a hybrid (in-person and virtual) teaching/learning experience through the newly designed Next Generation Smart Classroom project (NGSC) Cosynchronous Teaching Program.

Tenure-line faculty and lecturers receive a \$1,500 stipend for completing onsite training in the effective use of the new NGSC equipment. Approximately 200 faculty are participating, giving thousands of students a flexible and effective instructional option when they are unable to attend class in person. ●



California State Assembly honors Native American elders, including father of CSUSB Elder/Culture Bearer In-Residence

During an August California State Assembly session, assemblymember and alumnus James C. Ramos, D-Highland, honored tribal elders for preserving Native American culture. "California Indians have been blessed with elders who, despite many obstacles, work to preserve language, songs and stewardship of natural resources," Ramos said.

"One example is World War II veteran Robert Levi Sr., a Torres Martinez Desert Cahuilla Indian from the Torres Martinez Indian Reservation. He is a mentor and a friend who taught me and many others throughout Southern California the traditional Kawai bird songs," said Ramos.

Levi Sr. is the father of Robert Levi Jr., who serves as CSUSB Elder/Culture Bearer In-Residence, mentoring Native American students. "Miyawxen, as the state of California honored my father, Robert J. Levi Sr., on the Assembly floor, I and his grandson, Robert III, stood in amazement when the Assembly all stood and applauded this recognition," Levi Jr. said. During the session, Ramos introduced Concurrent Resolution 137, which recognizes the importance of California Native American Day. ●

Robert Levi Jr.,
CSUSB Elder/Culture Bearer In-Residence



Working Behind the Scenes ★★★★★ EARNs CSUSB ★★★★★ THEATRE ARTS STUDENT KENNEDY CENTER FELLOWSHIP

Theatre Arts major Isabel Peña is the first CSUSB student to earn the prestigious Kennedy Center American College Theater Festival (KCACTF) fellowship in stage management, both regionally and nationally.

Peña, president of the university's theatre club, is one of only eight people to be awarded the 2022 fellowship by KCACTF, a national theater program involving 18,000 students annually from colleges and universities across the country.

"It's very exciting, because going in, I didn't have any expectations of winning. It was my first time even participating in the festival," she says. "So, winning it overall was ultimately a huge surprise."

Earning the fellowship required participation in numerous workshops and interviews, and the submission of a comprehensive "prompt" book filled with everything from scripts to reports.

The KCACTF fellowship includes scholarships and has introduced Peña to various stage management opportunities. In addition to the fellowship, she was invited to the Broadway Stage Management Symposium in New York City in late May. Unable to attend in person due to scheduling conflicts, she participated virtually.

"The symposium was really eye-opening and really engaging," Peña says, noting that Broadway stage managers came to talk about their experiences and gave the attendees advice. The symposium also provided resources, workshops and panel discussions. ●

"Having those resources, talking to actual Broadway stage managers, asking about their experiences, and talking to other stage managers, it was amazing," she says. "I loved it and I got a lot of information that I will definitely be using."

Peña credits Eric Mulz, professor and technical director of the CSUSB theatre arts program, for nominating her for the fellowship and guiding her not only through the process, but throughout her academic journey.

"He really took me under his wing," she says, particularly when her first stage-management project at CSUSB took place during the pandemic when the university was primarily virtual. "He had daily Zoom meetings with me to make sure I knew what needed to be done. He also had weekly updates with me. He would ask, 'How can I help you improve your craft?'"

Mulz describes Peña as thoughtful and hardworking. "[Isabel] is one of the quickest students at becoming a stage manager that I have seen in the last 20 years I've been training them."

Eager to learn even more about the field, Peña plans to obtain her master's degree in stage management after graduating with her bachelor's in spring 2023. She acknowledges that stage management is a male-dominated industry, which, she notes, makes it even more important for her to further her education. ●



OUR *Defining* MOMENT

**\$200 MILLION
CAMPAIGN**
*Finds CSUSB
'Poised for an
Unprecedented
New Era of
Growth'*

by Mary Kenny

Fernando Sanchez, B.A. '21

The beginning of each new academic year at Cal State San Bernardino brings an air of excitement, anticipation and possibility. In August, CSUSB President Tomás D. Morales kicked off the new academic year at Convocation, adding to the excitement by announcing the launch of a \$200 million fundraising initiative, the most ambitious in CSUSB's history.

"Our Defining Moment: The Campaign for CSUSB' is a 'blended endeavor,' seeking support from a variety of investors, including alumni, friends, and corporate and foundation partners, as well as revenue from sources not typically included in capital campaigns, such as government agencies and tribal nations, which will leverage the impact of overall support," he said.

"This is an incredibly exciting time for our university and, I believe, for our beloved Inland Empire," Morales continued. "Based upon the incredible success of our previous comprehensive campaign, I am energized by what we will be able to achieve with Our Defining Moment.

"Thanks to the leadership gifts we have received from our friends, alumni, corporations, foundations and government grants, we have already raised \$130 million toward our \$200 million goal," he added.

Longtime CSUSB friends and supporters James R. Watson and his wife, Judy Rodriguez Watson, are campaign co-chairs, leading the campaign effort with an \$8.4 million gift.

According to Morales, the Our Defining Moment campaign will run through 2025 and consists of four areas of focus, or fundraising "pillars," he explained.

The pillars include:

- Enhance student success, diversity and experience through scholarships
- Attract and retain world-class faculty to enhance learning experiences
- Improve and transform the region through programs and research
- Build innovative facilities, smart classrooms and creative spaces

"We want to further secure the foundations of Cal State San Bernardino to ensure that the university continues to be a vehicle for change for the people of our region, and to provide an exceptional experience for current and future students, one that anticipates immediate needs and leaves room for innovation," said Morales.

Pillar One

*Enhance student success,
diversity and experience
through scholarships*

The value of a CSUSB education is measured in the success of its students, who leverage the university's academic strengths – high-impact learning practices and an experienced, industry-connected faculty – into lifelong learning and career opportunities that influence the local, regional and global community.

For Fernando Sanchez, B.A. '21, research was a vital component of his undergraduate student experience, and provided hands-on learning opportunities that nurtured critical thinking and analytical skills. Today, he is earning a doctorate in history at the University of California, Berkeley in the Near Eastern Studies program – one of the oldest and most distinguished in the country. CSUSB "helped me immensely, in more ways that I can say," Sanchez said.

"I can't imagine being where I am today without going to Cal State San Bernardino. I can't overstate the significance of the research opportunities," he said. "CSUSB really does give students the ability to work with professors on a more personal level, while also allowing them to experience and get a handle on some of the one-level research. That, I believe, helped in preparing me for going straight from a bachelor's degree into a Ph.D. program."

As an undergraduate, Sanchez received the Mellon Mays Undergraduate Fellowship (MMUF), a two-year program that provides financial support, research mentorship and assistance with graduate school applications.

"CSUSB has helped me achieve my academic goals in a variety of different ways, particularly the Mellon Mays program," he said. "(Before the program,) I didn't really know what it took to apply to grad school, what needed to be considered. The MMUF really showed me available resources and how to utilize them to make myself as appealing as possible to these programs."

Sanchez credits the foundation he received at CSUSB as a key factor in getting into the Berkeley doctoral program, and said he took advantage of "just about every opportunity that CSUSB provides."



Cynthia Crawford, Psychology



Kate Liszka, History

CSUSB, he said, is “helping you define your future; it’s helping you realize that there are opportunities available to you that you can take advantage of that will help you realize ... not just your potential, but what you want to do in the future.”

The ultimate goal in his future, Sanchez says: a career in academia as a university professor.

Pillar One: “We believe students should focus on their academic careers and make the most of the college experience regardless of their financial circumstances,” said Morales. “Support for Our Defining Moment will help recruit students to CSUSB and sustain them as they successfully complete their education and realize their academic dreams.”

Pillar Two

Attract and Retain World-Class Faculty

Excellent faculty define a world-class university. “Our faculty are extraordinary, and are intently focused on each student’s well-being and success,” said Morales. “They mentor students in and out of the classroom and put extra effort into encouraging them to think and explore outside their comfort zones.

“Most importantly,” he continued, “Our faculty inspire our students to think critically and act boldly, achieving excellence through high-impact research, creative activities, groundbreaking scholarship, public service and interdisciplinary and international collaborations.”

Whether recruiting and retaining senior faculty who are distinguished in their fields or recent Ph.D.s who demonstrate high leadership potential, Cal State San Bernardino competes at the national level for the best and the brightest.

And a number of the best and the brightest CSUSB faculty members have become stars in their own right, highly sought-after industry experts who are inspiring students (and audiences) on and off screen.

For History Professor Kate Liszka, It’s a Wrap

Associate professor of history and the Pamela and Benson Harer Fellow specializing in Egyptology, CSUSB’s first-ever fully endowed faculty fellowship, Kate Liszka served as the Egyptological consultant for the Disney Channel’s movies “Under Wraps” and “Under Wraps 2” to ensure they were both culturally appropriate and historically accurate.

Her penchant for making subject matter palatable for students of all ages is evident in the titles she creates for her presentations, such as “Operation Amethyst: How Egyptian Kings and Queens got their Bling 4,000 years ago.”

Liszka spearheads the study of ancient Egypt at CSUSB. She teaches several classes on ancient Egypt and oversees the Certificate in Egyptology program. She also works closely with the university’s Robert and Frances Fullerton Museum of Art, which maintains one of the most spectacular collections of ancient Egyptian artifacts on the West Coast.

And halfway across the globe, she directs the Wadi el-Hudi Expedition in the Eastern Desert of Egypt. This archaeological project examines ancient Egyptian mining activities, their organization and individuals who participated in them.

Dozens of CSUSB students receive firsthand archeological experience in Egypt as part of the expedition, researching and helping publish the archaeological data about the expedition on campus. Liszka also integrates all of her

archaeological work into her teaching at CSUSB for students to learn directly from primary data and learn how to interpret the data to write their own histories.

Renowned Paleontologist Studies the Past, Sees the Future in CSUSB Students

Biology professor Stuart Sumida is a world-renowned paleontologist, award-winning faculty member and sixth-degree black-belt martial artist.

He’s also one of the most sought-after anatomy consultants to film animators, with credits on more than 70 films, television shows and video games, including the Academy-Award-winning animated films “Soul,” “Ratatouille” and “Zootopia.”

Sumida’s subject matter includes human anatomy and physiology, evolution and topics in zoology. The author of three books, he has also written more than 70 journal articles – many of them with students, as he introduces them to the research process and publishing in refereed journals.

Recently elected vice president of the Society of Vertebrate Paleontology, the largest professional organization of paleontologists in the world, he will become the society’s president in November 2024. He is the first CSU faculty member elected to the society’s leadership or presidency.

His dedication has garnered a number of honors, including CSUSB Outstanding Professor; the prestigious CSU Wang Family Excellence Award; and California Professor of the Year, awarded by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching and the Council for Advancement and Support of Education.

Of his many interests, Sumida said that he loves teaching science and working with students is the most satisfying.

"It's the students that I work with that are going to go out and help the Inland Empire, help the state of California, and help the country in general," Sumida said. "Those people are less than half my age – they're going to be doing this for decades to come."

Professor Evaluates Artisans on "Blown Away"

If CSUSB art professor Katherine Gray looks familiar to you, you're probably a fan of the Netflix series "Blown Away." A distinguished glass artist, Gray is the resident evaluator on the popular series, now in its third season. Each program features 10 master artisans from around the world who are given an artistic challenge; one contestant is eliminated each episode.

In 2020, Gray, professor and chair of the Department of Art and Design, was honored as a Fellow of the American Craft Council, a national nonprofit dedicated to advancing American craft. Her works range from blown glass to elaborate installations of found glass, and draw on rich traditions of glass blowing, fearless experimentation, and a fascination with glass as both a visual and experiential encounter.

In 2017, she received the Libenský | Brychtová Award from the Pilchuck Glass School for her artistic and educational contributions to the field. Her work can be found in the collections of the Corning Museum of Glass and the Tacoma Museum of Glass, among others, and has been reviewed in Artforum, the L.A. Times, and The New York Times design magazine.

As CSUSB's Outstanding Professor in 2020-21, she became the John M. Pfau Endowed Professor, named for the university's first president.

"I love teaching here at Cal State San Bernardino. I love that it's a state school. I love that it's affordable. I love that the students that I (see in my classes) are not necessarily the students you would think would pursue a career in glass or in art. And I love having (an) impact on their lives, and showing them the possibilities that are out there for how they can live a life in a creative field," Gray says.

Pillar Two: "It's essential that we fund endowed professorships to help recruit distinguished faculty with proven track records of outstanding teaching and research," said Morales. "The campaign will also support efforts to increase the number of faculty from diverse backgrounds who reflect the composition and demographics of CSUSB students and the communities of the Inland Empire."

Pillar Three

Improve and Transform the Inland Empire through Programs and Research

"Higher education is a vital component in building a resilient, sustainable and robust future for the Inland Empire (IE) region," Morales said. "At CSUSB, we have a number of innovative institutes, centers and programs, and engage and collaborate with partners throughout the region.

"From K-12 school districts, community colleges, universities, regional businesses and the community at large, we are working tirelessly to build a cradle-to-career educational infrastructure and to further realize the inherent potential of the IE," he explained.

Through award-winning community engagement, innovative centers and institutes, and dynamic program offerings, CSUSB is addressing the most pressing issues confronting the IE and Southern California, he said.

School of Entrepreneurship, First in California

In 2020, CSUSB launched the School of Entrepreneurship, the first of its kind in California. The unique program, one of less than 15 existing worldwide, further bolstered the university's already successful entrepreneurship program.

Today, the graduate program in entrepreneurship has been named as one of the top 15 programs in the West and one of the top 50 entrepreneurship programs in the nation, according to The Princeton Review and Entrepreneur magazine. CSUSB was the only CSU named to this competitive list.

Housed in the Jack H. Brown College of Business and Public Administration, the school oversees and coordinates eight major academic programs with strong cross-disciplinary areas of entrepreneurial concentrations. Students discover and master key entrepreneurial competencies and learn hands-on, innovative strategies to create, launch and manage a business venture, learning how to "think like an owner" early in their journey to success.

"The School of Entrepreneurship represents a truly wonderful and pioneering example of our mission in offering our students a challenging, yet rewarding, educational experience," Morales noted. "The school's offerings and



dynamic faculty inspire students to succeed and help prepare them for life after graduation where they will become our future business leaders and leading entrepreneurs."

Since its founding, the school has further galvanized CSUSB's high profile within the region and strengthened its ability to engage collaboratively with the business community, potential employers and other organizations, enhancing job and internship opportunities for its students.

School of Criminology and Criminal Justice Ranked Among the Best

In 2021, CSUSB launched the School of Criminology and Criminal Justice (SCCJ), raising the stature of its successful criminal justice program, which has consistently ranked among the best by U.S. News & World Report, Intelligent.com and Best Value Schools.

The school provides undergraduate and graduate students with a comprehensive foundation in criminal justice, from examining law enforcement, institutional corrections and the courts system to exploring the many aspects of crime, including gangs, drugs, white-collar crime and homeland security.

CSUSB students learn how the criminal justice system works, why people offend, how society and law react to crime, and how to conduct research for scientific study that can address policy and criminal justice reform.



Katherine Gray,
Art and Design



To fulfill its mission, the institute has a number of programs and projects on campus and in the community, each providing real-world experiences for undergraduate and graduate students through internships and practicums.

- The Infant Toddler Laboratory School (ITLS) provides care for children from ages 6 months to 36 months in a highly enriched, relationship-based caregiving setting. All staff are either current or previous CSUSB students.
- The Infant Toddler Success Project is an attachment-based parental education program, designed to increase the school readiness of young children by increasing parents' ability to provide early enrichment experiences and high-quality caregiving.
- The Parental Intervention Project is a parenting program for justice-involved parents at San Bernardino County jails. A collaboration between CSUSB and the San Bernardino County Sheriff's Department, the program focuses on parenting education, parent-child interaction time and individual counseling.

Additional ICDFR programs include Building Executive Functions for Academic Success Training (BEFAST), Quality Start San Bernardino, San Bernardino County Schools Foster Youth Program, and The Work Family Life (WFL) initiative.

Pillar Three: "An investment in Pillar Three will build a more promising future for the residents of the region CSUSB serves, while advancing academic excellence, energizing and expanding robust programs and creating new ways to address today's global challenges," said Morales.

And they learn from nationally and internationally recognized faculty, who understand that students will become the catalysts and advocates for positive change in the communities in which they serve and live. SCCJ faculty conduct research and mentor students in the school's innovative centers, which include:

- The Center for Criminal Justice Research, an independent research and training facility that contributes to the body of criminal justice knowledge, supports crime and intelligence analysis, and informs criminal justice policy. The center provides faculty, undergraduate and graduate students with comprehensive research opportunities to examine topics from gangs, drug trafficking and crime prevention to cybersecurity, white-collar crime and terrorism as they find innovative solutions that benefit the communities in which we live.
- The Center for the Study of Hate and Extremism has become a trusted resource and recognized leader in analyzing and tracking hate crimes and extremism, and is often called upon by news media and state and U.S. policymakers for its in-depth research, data analysis and expertise.

Institute for Child Development and Family Relations – Strengthening Bonds Across the Region

Children. Parents. Families. Their development and well-being are the central focus of the Institute for Child Development and Family Relations (ICDFR).

Created in 2002, ICDFR serves Inland Empire families, providing programs and resources backed by the ongoing research of CSUSB's Department of Psychology. The institute not only supports faculty who conduct rigorous science- and community-based research, it fosters the success of CSUSB's students by providing training and research opportunities that enhance their professional development, civic engagement and personal growth. The institute builds partnerships with community agencies, helps communities thrive by impacting public policy, promotes social justice and creates safe environments for children and families.

"The institute is an invaluable resource in so many ways," said Morales. "It offers direct services and expertise to low-income, underserved and marginalized children and families in the IE; provides high-impact experiences and paid internships for our students; increases faculty opportunities to further their research; and strengthens our bonds to the region."



Pillar Four

Capital Construction to Build Innovative Facilities, Smart Classrooms and Creative Spaces

The quality of a university's facilities has a profound effect on the campus community, particularly on students and their performance. Research shows that campus facilities positively affect student health, behavior, engagement, learning and growth in achievement.

Center for Global Innovation, a Hub for International Education

The Center for Global Innovation, which opened in 2019, includes 24 classrooms, administrative offices, reconfigurable multi-purpose rooms, a 250-seat auditorium and casual study lounges. Designed to accommodate collaborative learning, the center is home for all instructional needs and administrative operations for the College of Extended Learning, including all international student programs.

Considered the hub for international education at CSUSB, the center is a one-stop shop for international students and

those seeking a global learning experience through study-abroad offerings.

The center has also established a true pedestrian square for the CSUSB campus, with the large shaded plaza typically brimming with students and creating a vibrant gathering place for campus life.

As Morales noted when the center opened, "Studies have shown (study-abroad programs) can be the single most powerful game-changer in a student's academic career. Students who study abroad are significantly more likely to earn better grades and graduate from college," he said. "We are dedicated to student success and providing an enhanced college experience through an active and dynamic learning atmosphere, which includes those students who come to us from other countries."

Santos Manuel Student Union (SMSU) North — Space for Collaboration and Community

In March, CSUSB celebrated the grand opening and ribbon-cutting ceremony of the Santos Manuel Student Union North, the three-story, 120,000 square-foot, \$90 million expansion of the SMSU. The new structure includes a multi-purpose ballroom, an eight-lane bowling alley and game room, a pub, food service and retail space, collaborative spaces for student organizations and support centers, and the Coyote Bookstore.

The SMSU, through its programs, services, facilities and employment opportunities, provides safe and inclusive spaces for students, the greater campus and surrounding areas to foster community, promote wellness, develop leaders and offer enriching co-curricular experiences.

The overall SMSU, which consists of three buildings – SMSU North, SMSU South and SMSU East – is one of the largest building complexes in the 23-campus California State University system, named for an indigenous leader, Santos Manuel (Paakuma' Tawinat), Kiika' of the Serrano Indians, Yuhaaviatam Clan, who in 1866 led his people to safety following a 32-day campaign of genocide against Native Americans in San Bernardino County.

Grant Brings New Technologies to CSUSB Palm Desert Campus

While capital campaigns traditionally seek funding for brick-and-mortar structures – new buildings and facilities – funding for new technologies is critically important to enhancing teaching methods and improving student success, as well.

One such example is CSUSB's Vital and Expanded Technologies Initiative (VETI) grant that assists the campus in addressing critical expanded technology initiatives that directly support students' academic experiences.

The Palm Desert Campus recently received a VETI grant, which will increase technological resources to support curricular offerings. The funded initiatives range from using virtual reality to create immersive experiences in the Hospitality Management Program to keeping the vinyl spinning at Paws Radio in the event of power outages. Funding for the campus' Event Management System will provide new monitors mounted outside of classrooms so students can easily check the availability of the space for individual study or collaborative gatherings. And Academic Advising Services and Student Engagement now have new iPads, laptops, portable printers, iPad stands, cameras and flash drives to provide more mobility and flexibility when serving students during mobile sessions.

Pillar Four: "Modernizing facilities that enhance teaching and learning and creating new environments conducive to student and faculty scholarly endeavors is an essential component to sustaining a vibrant higher education community," said Morales. "An investment in Pillar Four is an investment in the future of this university."

OUR
Defining
MOMENT

The
CAMPAIGN
for
CSUSB

"We began as a state college in 1965 with an inaugural class of 293 students, and in less than 60 years, we've grown to become a major urban research university with two locations, more than 20,000 students and 115,000 alumni. Today, CSUSB is alive with ideas and opportunities, and with the help of our friends, alumni and the broader community, we are poised for an unprecedented new era of growth," Morales said. "This is truly our defining moment."



CYBERSECURITY CENTER RECEIVES \$12 MILLION GRANT to continue building a robust cybersecurity workforce



Cal State San Bernardino's Cybersecurity Center received a two-year \$12 million federal grant, with a potential for an additional third year with \$5 million more, in its efforts to develop a robust cybersecurity workforce in partnership with colleges and universities around the country.

Under the two-year grant from the National Center of Academic Excellence (NCAE-C), a program of the National Security Agency (NSA), the CSUSB Cybersecurity Center will continue in its designation as a Center of Academic Excellence Community National Center leading and supporting the more than 380 CAE institutions and projects focusing in three primary functions, said Tony Coulson, a professor of information and decision sciences and executive director of the Cybersecurity Center.

The functions are:

- Provide technical and logistical support for CAE National Centers, CAE events, initiatives, activities and curriculum
- Provide infrastructure including a portal of CAE resources for the community, geographic regions and the nation
- Engage and facilitate strategic initiatives for the nation in the areas of research, other national centers, student and faculty development, diversity, and workforce development activities to help solve the nation's cyber workforce crisis

Coulson said the focus as a national center "is really on collaboration. We try to get schools to all work together." ●



Exhibit aims to destigmatize addiction through stories told by families who have lost loved ones to substance use disorder (SUD)

The INTO LIGHT Project, which aims to change the national conversation around addiction, opened the California edition of its national exhibit at Cal State San Bernardino's Anthropology Museum Sept. 9, which will run through June 10.

The California exhibit is part of a nationwide effort by INTO LIGHT Project to have displays in each of the nation's 50 states.

The INTO LIGHT Project works to destigmatize the topic of addiction by highlighting portraits and stories, through the eyes of their loved ones, of 41 individuals who lost their lives to a drug overdose or drug poisoning. Broadening the discussion of SUD, addiction and overdose – and removing its stigma – helps provide some relief for families who have lost loved ones to the overdose epidemic, as well as encouraging those battling SUD to seek help. ●



Department of Biology expands its stem cell research opportunities to students

CSUSB will now offer a second stem cell-focused student training program thanks to \$2.9 million in grant funding from the California Institute of Regenerative Medicine (CIRM) Creating

Opportunities through Mentorship and Partnership Across Stem Cell Science (COMPASS) program. The new COMPASS program will recruit students early in their college careers, typically as sophomores, and support them through two years of training and mentored research projects related to regenerative medicine, genomics and biotechnology.

Over the course of five years of COMPASS funding, 32 students (four cohorts of eight students each) will participate in internships spanning two years. In addition to customized

training workshops and a rich course curriculum to prepare students for stem cell and biotech research, COMPASS students will be mentored in research projects in the laboratories of CSUSB faculty members in biology or biochemistry. At the conclusion of the two-year CSUSB research internships, students will conduct summer internships in stem cell research labs at partner institutions, including Loma Linda University, the City of Hope Beckman Research Institute, Children's Hospital Los Angeles, and Cedars-Sinai Medical Center. ●

BRIDGES RESEARCH AND THERAPY PROGRAM CREATES EXTRAORDINARY OUTCOMES, ABUNDANT OPPORTUNITIES FOR CSUSB STUDENTS



Nicole Bournias-Vardiabasis, professor of biology and Bridges program director

In 2000, as a new high school graduate from a low socioeconomic background, **Nicole Sparks**, MS, biology, '12, yearned to escape San Bernardino County. Neither of her parents completed college, and at the time, she didn't place a high priority on her education. She attended several universities "trying to find the right fit," and after several years, found it through Cal State San Bernardino's Bridges to Stem Cell Research and Therapy (Bridges) program. Today, 22 years later, she holds a Ph.D. in environmental toxicology and is heading up her own lab in the Department of Environmental and Occupational Health at the University of California, Irvine, researching the causes of birth defects and teaching both graduate and undergraduate students.

At age nine months, **Rosyli Reveron-Thornton**, BS, biology, '12; MS, biology, '14, left her birthplace in northern Mexico with her mother to join her father in Victorville. As a teenager, she dreamed of a career in medicine after losing a close friend to brain cancer. She began her post-secondary education at a community college after experiencing a string of obstacles stemming from her undocumented status. She then transferred to CSUSB and found the Bridges program. Today, she is a graduate of Stanford University's School of Medicine and is completing her second year of a seven-year surgical residency.

CSUSB undergraduate **Anthony Castro** had heard of the Bridges program, but "thought it was only for the cream of the crop, so I didn't even consider it." One day during a lab, his chemistry professor told him she had recommended him to the program's director. "When I heard about the Bridges opportunity, I thought 'I don't care how long it takes me to graduate. What matters to me is the experiences, the networking, the skills I develop to become a scientist.'" Castro switched his major from kinesiology to biology, is completing his internship at the Zhao Laboratory at the University of California, Irvine and is on track to graduate in December.



Sparks and Reveron-Thornton are two of more than 120 CSUSB graduates who have completed the Bridges program since 2009, and Castro is soon to follow. While their stories vary, there are some similarities: their parents either didn't attend or didn't complete college or graduate school, and they are people of color.

They also share distinct personality traits that have contributed to their success, according to professor of biology and Bridges program director Nicole Bournias-Vardiabasis. "We look for students who have a desire to learn, who are risk-takers, who are resilient and have a love of knowledge."

And all three credit Bournias-Vardiabasis, whom they refer to as Dr. Bournias, with changing their lives.

Funded by the California Institute for Regenerative Medicine (CIRM), the state's stem cell agency, the Bridges program prepares undergraduate and master's degree students for careers in stem cell research and therapy development to find treatments for patients with unmet medical needs. Stem cell research is being conducted to treat diseases from Alzheimer's, arthritis, autism, cancer and diabetes to sickle cell disease, spinal cord injury, stroke and vascular disease, among others. Twelve CSU campuses have Bridges programs funded through CIRM.

When Bournias-Vardiabasis began her career at CSUSB in 1988, she had been a scientist at the Beckman Research Institute of City of Hope, known for both its clinical excellence and its cutting-edge translational research.

"I left my position because I knew that in academia I would enable young biology students to realize their dreams, just like I had," she recalled. "As an immigrant and a first in my extended family to receive a Ph.D., I knew rather well the challenges that my new charges faced, and I have never looked back in all of these 34 years."

Bournias-Vardiabasis initially applied for CIRM funding in 2009, which launched the Bridges program at CSUSB, and has received more than \$8.5 million in grants since then. The program accepts 10 students every year and each student receives a \$3,000 monthly stipend, a full-tuition scholarship, and completes a 12-month, full-time internship at a major stem cell research lab, Bournias-Vardiabasis said. Master's degree students research their master's theses in their appointed labs, she noted.

To date, CSUSB has partnered with Loma Linda University; University of California, Riverside; University of California, Irvine; the Beckman Research Institute of City of Hope, Children's Hospital Los Angeles, the University of Southern California, Western University of Health Sciences and Cedars-Sinai Regenerative Medicine Research Institute.

EXTRAORDINARY OUTCOMES

Bournias-Vardiabasis points out that while it's a very competitive program in terms of the rigorous coursework, Bridges is not intended for the highest academic achievers. "The program accepts students with a 3.0 GPA, which in the sciences is not considered to be extraordinary."

However, she said, "You give the students this experience, this opportunity and you see extraordinary outcomes. Most students with a GPA of 3.5 would struggle to get into medical school. Through the Bridges program, they do get into medical school or into graduate school.

"The number one thing Ph.D. programs look for is laboratory research time. If students haven't been in a lab, they won't accept them, even if they have a 4.0 GPA, because they don't know if they're a match for laboratory science," explained Bournias-Vardiabasis. "The schools need to know if the candidates have the type of mind, the inquisitive approach, the skill set that is required to be successful as a Ph.D."

ABUNDANT CAREER OPPORTUNITIES

Through the Bridges program, career opportunities are both abundant and varied. "The program creates a workforce development pipeline to train students who can then become physicians, do stem-cell therapy, become Ph.D.s, go into academia, work for biotherapeutic and pharmaceutical companies, become entrepreneurs and want to start new labs — that whole concept of delivering cell therapeutics from bench to bedside," Bournias-Vardiabasis said.

Her commitment to student success has been remarkable, with more than 90% of the students she has mentored in the CIRM program going on to obtain doctoral degrees and/or work in meaningful careers in STEM. More than half are students of color.

"In all my years as a professor and mentor, I consider this role as my best," Bournias-Vardiabasis said. "The millions of dollars in grant money that I have received have ensured a pathway to success for many. It is that satisfaction that I will carry with me long after I retire."

A NEW WORLD OF POSSIBILITIES

Sparks said the Bridges program – and Bournias-Vardiabasis – opened up a whole new world of possibilities for her.

After earning her bachelor's degree in biology in 2007, she thought her career path was clear. "I loved science and I made the correlation that I would go to medical school. Coming from the (socioeconomic) background I did, it felt like the way out was to become a doctor. In my mind, that was the epitome of success," she said.

But in 2009, while working as a laboratory aide at Loma Linda Medical Center, a doctor pointed out that becoming a physician wasn't her only option, particularly if her goal was to help people. "He said clinical laboratory scientists conduct life-saving research every day. That's how I ended up at CSUSB for my master's degree."

Sparks said she had heard of the research being done by Bournias-Vardiabasis and sought her out. "I wanted to study developmental biology and I wanted to do birth defects research. (Dr. Bournias) was doing teratology-style research and had been doing it for a long time," Sparks said.

When Bournias-Vardiabasis secured the first CIRM grant in 2009 that placed students in renowned research labs, Sparks recalls thinking, "This is it. This can really change my career and help me go further beyond what I was thinking I would do. My thought was, 'OK, I'm going into science, I'll work at CSUSB and teach like she does and have my own lab.' It really opened up my eyes."

As a Bridges scholar, Sparks conducted her master's degree research in the lab of Professor Nicole zur Neiden at UC Riverside and graduated in 2012. She stayed on in the same lab for her post-graduate work and completed her Ph.D. in 2018.

"I knew I wanted to do research and run my own lab one day. A few months before I completed my Ph.D. I was awarded a grant through the University of California's President's Office – the UC President's Postdoctoral Fellowship awarded through UC Riverside. It funded me as a post-doc and includes a hiring incentive for any UC school that hires you as a tenure-track assistant professor. It increases faculty diversity and it also helps the university financially," she said.

She also received a MOSAIC K99/R00 National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences award to support promising young scientists on the path to become independent principal research investigators. After receiving those awards, any doubts she had about her future dissipated. "I thought, 'All right, I'm meant for this world,'" she said, laughing.

A LIFE-CHANGING EXPERIENCE

Much like Sparks, Reveron-Thornton said her introduction to CSUSB and Bridges was "serendipitous."

"It ended up being one of the best experiences of my life. In my last year at CSUSB I took Dr. Bournias' genetics class. She mentioned that she'd just started the CIRM grant and recommended that I apply. I spoke of my undocumented status with the certainty that it would've been the end of that conversation.

"She replied, 'Apply, we will make it work.' That simple phrase would go on to be the start of an incredible transformation into the Stanford surgeon I am today. It has pretty much been a life-changing experience since then."

As an undergraduate in the Bridges program, Reveron-Thornton began conducting brain cancer research in the lab of Dr. Karen Aboody at the Beckman Research Institute of City of Hope, and completed her bachelor's degree in biology in 2012. She continued her master's degree and the Bridges program at CSUSB, as well as her research at the City of Hope. She went on to become a DACA recipient in 2015 and a permanent resident in 2017.

"Sometimes, coming from the background I came from, and a lot of the people at CSUSB that I speak to come from, their neighborhoods and their families, they don't offer too much help, unfortunately, because they have never traversed this road," said Reveron-Thornton. "You have to rely on other people quite a bit – mentors, people that you meet, connections that you make. This is one program that facilitates that so much, so quickly, and a vast amount in just the year or two years that you decide to do it. It's an incredible program.

"I published scientific literature and contributed to the advancement of immunotherapies because of Dr. Bournias' support. The education, training and opportunities that have stemmed from my mentorship by Dr. Bournias is the reason I went on to attend Stanford University School of Medicine

and joined the general surgery residency program at Stanford Hospital.

"Dr. Bournias is the epitome of a California State University professor. Her tenacity, mentorship and dedication to her students has changed hundreds, if not thousands of students' lives," Reveron-Thornton said. "I am one of many examples. I truly believe that my life would not be the same had I never met Dr. Bournias. (She) will forever hold a special place in my heart," she added.

POWERFUL ALUMNI TESTIMONIALS

Many Bridges program alumni who are now working in stem-cell-related fields return to campus to share their career experiences with students in Bournias-Vardiabasis' tissue culture class, a required course in the program. Their stories have had a profound impact on Bridges student Anthony Castro.

Initially, Castro said, he thought a biology degree could only prepare him for a degree in medicine. The Bridges program has expanded his worldview.

"There are so many people Dr. Bournias has brought in to speak about (stem cell research) and their careers," he said. "It was eye-opening. I don't think I would have gained the appreciation or the passion for research if it wasn't for their stories, these people who have actually sat in the seat that I am in. Seeing where they're at now was inspiring. It allowed me to believe, despite my doubts, that this isn't something that's impossible."

Up until that point, "I thought these opportunities were saved for these golden model students, which I didn't consider myself. But seeing these people, I realized it's not what school you're at, it has to do with how much time you're devoting to your craft.

"Dr. Bournias believed in me. Knowing she believed in me gave me the hope to keep pursuing it. I stuck with it, I kept going with it," he said. "Her expectations were high and I didn't want to let her down."

At this point in his academic career, Castro intends to pursue a career in health care. "My ultimate goal is to become a physician's assistant, and go into street medicine to help out the community, the homeless population, people who are neglected in the health care system.

"This program has helped me find my direction," he said. "Bridges is not here to get you to become a doctor. It gives you the skills to allow you to go in any direction — skills that can be applied to research, to medicine, to biotech companies, to academia. It's just limitless what we can do. This program turned my life around." ●



NEW ONLINE BA IN ADMINISTRATION PROGRAM NAMED AFTER STATER BROS. MARKETS

CSUSB has named its online bachelor of arts in administration program after Stater Bros. Markets to recognize the grocery chain's work to promote higher education, and education in general, and its ongoing service to the community. The program will be known as the Stater Bros. Markets Online Bachelor of Arts in Administration Degree Completion Program in the Jack H. Brown College of Business and Public Administration. The college is named after the company's late chief executive officer and philanthropist, Jack H. Brown.

Through this partnership, CSUSB will provide a pathway for the grocery chain to offer a significant online educational opportunity for its employees to earn a BA degree. The partnership will have a major impact by providing access to a high-quality educational program and opportunities to increase the college attainment rates of Inland Empire residents. ●



CSUSB COMMUNICATION STUDIES ALUMNUS CONTINUES HIGHER ED JOURNEY IN PRESTIGIOUS DOCTORAL PROGRAM

Naim Aburaddi, M.A. communication studies, '22, was named the College of Arts and Letters' Outstanding Graduate Student as well as Outstanding Graduate Student in the Department of Communication Studies. A native of Gaza in Palestine, Aburaddi has already completed a successful — albeit unconventional and challenging — higher education journey.

His journey continues as he begins a doctoral program at the University of Colorado, Boulder with full funding and a research assistantship position.

Aburaddi completed his undergraduate degree at the University of Istanbul, arrived in the U.S. through a cultural exchange program and presented speeches throughout the country about the obstacles he faced in Gaza and Istanbul. After meeting at a conference, Ahlam Muhtaseb, CSUSB professor of media studies, encouraged Aburaddi to apply to CSUSB's graduate program.

Looking ahead, Aburaddi said, "I am excited about taking the next step of attending a Ph.D. program that will deepen my study of the digital media's misrepresentation of Palestinians, Arabs, Muslims, and other indigenous communities, and how members of those populations utilize digital technologies to share their self-representations and contest decolonization," he said. ●



WE ARE CHAMPIONS!

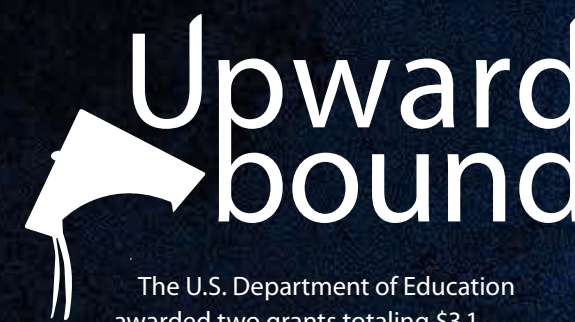
CSUSB was named a 2022 Equity Champion of Higher Education by the Campaign for College Opportunity, which recognizes the university's exemplary work in implementing the Associate Degree for Transfer (ADT).

CSUSB is recognized as a top performer specifically for its work in supporting and increasing Latinx and Black students through the ADT. More than half of the university's 2021 Latinx and Black undergraduate transfer students were ADT earners, and out of those ADT earners, more than half were on a guaranteed pathway.

CSUSB NAMED A 2022 EQUITY CHAMPION FOR HIGHER EDUCATION

"Being named an Equity Champion in Higher Education is especially rewarding for our campus, as we are a proud Hispanic-Serving and Minority-Serving Institution, where more than 80% of our students are the first in their families to attend college," said CSUSB President Tomás D. Morales. "It is an honor to guide our gifted students in their educational journeys and we thank our hardworking faculty and staff for helping them succeed."

CSUSB was recognized at the virtual 2022 Champions of Higher Education Celebration on Nov. 1. ●



RECEIVES \$3.1 MILLION IN GRANTS TO HELP STUDENTS ADVANCE ACADEMICALLY

The U.S. Department of Education awarded two grants totaling \$3.1 million to CSUSB's Upward Bound program, which will provide academic support and guidance to help 130 students in Rialto and San Bernardino graduate from high school, then go on to college and graduate.

Upward Bound will help the students with one-on-one academic guidance and support; individual and group tutoring; access to college

campus visits throughout the state; providing real-life college experiences through the Summer University held at CSUSB; and providing guidance and instruction on successfully navigating all aspects of the complex college-going and completion process.

"The continued funding award from the U.S. Department of Education through the two grants in the amount of \$1,562,400 each will allow the program to further its operation for

five more years to deliver TRIO Upward Bound services to students," said Dalia Hernández, Upward Bound director, who is also a TRIO alumna.

The federal TRIO Programs are outreach and student services programs designed to identify and provide services for individuals from disadvantaged backgrounds. TRIO is comprised of eight programs — including Upward Bound. ●

TOP 10: CSUSB's online MBA ranks high in California

CSUSB's online Master of Business Administration (MBA) program, which is accredited by the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB), ranked in the top 10 on Online MBA Report's list of the top online MBA programs in California for 2022. The program placed CSUSB at No. 6.

"In addition to a forward-looking curriculum emphasizing conceptual knowledge and practical skills, our MBA program also provides extracurricular activities that enhance our students' experience, such as a leadership development program, and opportunities to connect with and be mentored by our MBA alumni and executives," said Tomás Gomez-Arias, dean of the Jack H. Brown College of Business and Public Administration, which houses the MBA program. "Our efforts have led to solid student engagement and alumni are proud to be affiliated with the CSUSB MBA program."

To determine the rankings, Online MBA Report evaluated more than 400 U.S.-based online MBA programs and gathered information via surveys that asked schools offering online MBA programs for their input as to which schools they view as the "best." •



U.S. NEWS & WORLD REPORT RANKS CSUSB AMONG TOP NATIONAL UNIVERSITIES IN THE COUNTRY

CSUSB was ranked among the top national universities in the country in two categories: No. 13 for Social Mobility and No. 31 for Best Value in the 2022-23 U.S. News & World Report Best Colleges rankings.

"This is tremendous news as the rankings indicate our university's determination to provide an outstanding higher education experience to our students, especially in the areas of social mobility and providing a best value," said CSUSB President Tomás D. Morales. "It is especially gratifying as it reflects the hard work and dedication of our amazing faculty and staff."

The national university rankings come after CSUSB was designated an R2 institution earlier this year by the Carnegie

Classification of Institutions of Higher Education (CCIHE), recognizing the university's development from a master's level-comprehensive university to one that awards research/scholarship doctorates.

The U.S. News & World Report rankings are determined on a number of factors that include: Graduation and retention rates; social mobility; graduation rate performance; undergraduate academic reputation; faculty resources for the 2021-22 academic year; student selectivity for the fall 2021 entering class; financial resources for students; the average alumni giving rate; and graduate indebtedness. •



A PASSION FOR RESEARCH DRIVES FEHN MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS

In September, CSUSB biology students Anthony Castro and Breanna Ramirez were recognized with the 2022 Richard Fehn Memorial Scholarship for their outstanding research as undergraduate students.

"Both Anthony and Breanna have done excellent research in the spirit of our beloved Richard Fehn. I am sure they will continue to demonstrate scientific excellence and leadership in the years to come," said Sastry Pantula, dean of the College of Natural Sciences.

The scholarship was created to help meet the cost of education for CSUSB biology students who have demonstrated a commitment to biological research and to pay tribute to Fehn and his work. Fehn, who passed away in 2007, was a dedicated professor known for his passion for teaching and his commitment to student research.

Castro was nominated for the award by professor of biology Laura Newcomb while he was a student in her virology course. "Anthony missed one answer on one quiz, out of 14 quizzes, proving clear comprehension," Newcomb said.

Castro was then offered a chance to assist in an ongoing coronavirus research project. The experience gave him the opportunity to work collaboratively, learn more about viral prevention and earn his first publication as a scientist.

"These research experiences have been essential to my early success as a young scientist. I am beyond grateful for the mentorship and motivation I received from my professors," said Castro, who is currently in a California Institute of Regenerative Medicine-funded research internship in the Zhao Lab at UC Irvine.

When Ramirez arrived at CSUSB, she envisioned becoming a wildlife veterinarian. However, after conducting several alligator-related studies, she was introduced to new career possibilities.

"My undergraduate experience was transformative because it gave me a chance to try and consider research as a career," said Ramirez. "Research was the missing piece for what I wanted for myself and my education."

After joining associate professor Tomasz Owerkowicz's research lab, Ramirez quickly rose through the ranks where she completed two studies. Her first centered around alligators' bone integrity and was completed during the 2020 lockdown. Her second study focused on alligators' brain temperature, which earned her a spot at several conferences locally, regionally, nationally and internationally.

Ramirez is enrolled in the master's program at CSUSB to finish her research project on alligator thermoregulation. After getting her doctorate, and doing one or two postdoctoral research projects, Ramirez aims for an academic career in wildlife and conservation biology. •

CHECK PRESENTATION CEREMONY HELD FOR NEW STUDENT SERVICES BUILDING AT CSUSB PALM DESERT CAMPUS

A check presentation ceremony was held on Oct. 19 at the CSUSB Palm Desert Campus to celebrate the \$79 million state budget allocation to build Phase I of a new Student Services Building at the CSUSB Palm Desert Campus.

State assemblymembers Eduardo Garcia, 56th District, and Chad Mayes, 42nd District, shared remarks and presented a \$79 million check from the state of California to the Palm Desert Campus.

When complete, the new 23,700-square-foot building will include an advising/tutoring center, career center, expanded campus library, group study space, a cross cultural center, campus bookstore, food services, a student health center and a recreation and wellness center, and provide enhanced services and support for students at the Palm Desert Campus.

It will vacate approximately 10,200 square feet of existing space in the campus' Mary Stuart Rogers Gateway Building, Indian Wells Center for Educational Excellence and Palm Desert Health Sciences Building. That space will be repurposed for the expansion of academic programs on the campus, including additional faculty offices and classrooms. ●



GRADUATE STUDENT – WORKING ON THIRD CSUSB DEGREE – EARNS PRESTIGIOUS CSU TRUSTEES’ AWARD



2022-23 ROGERS SCHOLARS CELEBRATED AT CSUSB PALM DESERT CAMPUS

Sixteen undergraduate students from CSUSB's Palm Desert Campus were celebrated at the annual Rogers Scholarship reception held in the campus' Indian Wells Theater on Oct. 4.

CSUSB Palm Desert Campus Dean Jake Zhu welcomed guests and introduced members of the Rogers family, who have been committed to providing scholarships to PDC students since 1994. CSUSB President Tomás D. Morales thanked the Rogers family for their continued support of PDC students for so many years.

Each recipient received a special ring and gave a short speech to thank the Mary Stuart Rogers Foundation and those in their life who have contributed to their success.

To be selected as a "Rogers Scholar," a recipient must demonstrate a sincere commitment to their own personal growth, compile outstanding academic records, demonstrate leadership qualities and show a desire to serve their fellow students and communities. ●



CSUSB College of Education student Miselle "Ellie" Tolliver was selected for the 2022-23 California State University Trustees' Award for Outstanding Achievement, the CSU's highest recognition of success. She has been named the Steinhauser Family Scholar for the donor-funded CSU Trustees' Award and will receive a \$7,000 scholarship.

"I feel so humbled to be chosen to represent our campus and Coyote community," she says. "It's such an amazing feeling to have all your hard work, time and sacrifices recognized."

Only one student from each of the CSU system's 23 campuses is selected for an award, which is based on superior academic performance, exemplary community service and significant personal accomplishments.

On Sept. 13, Tolliver and the other 22 CSU recipients met at the CSU Board of Trustees meeting in Long Beach for an

awards ceremony, where the Trustees and interim Chancellor Jolene Koester congratulated the honorees in person.

For Tolliver, a first-generation student who is earning her third college degree – each from CSUSB – education has always been a refuge, a safe space where she could be herself, and, in her own words, a source of hope in her life.

"It has always challenged me to believe in things greater than myself and helped me recognize the many possibilities there are in life," she says. "It taught me that if I worked hard enough, I could achieve my aspirations; I could grow into a person that can make a difference in this world."

Growing up bi-racial, Tolliver struggled with her identity and self-esteem, and yearned for a sense of belonging. Often faced with bullying and racism, Tolliver found comfort in

learning. Her experiences have led her to an academic journey and career in education, with the goal of providing an inclusive, safe space for all students to learn and grow.

"Education helped me grow up and develop the skills necessary to not only help myself, but to help others," says Tolliver, who earned her bachelor's in English literature, MBA in management and is currently working toward her master's in education – Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL). She has followed her passion to work in education and currently teaches in CSUSB's English Language Program (ELP) in the College of Global Innovation.

"What can I say, I love CSUSB, and I am a Coyote for life!" she affirms. "The reason why CSUSB was and is my university of choice is because of the unwavering support I received throughout my college career." ●

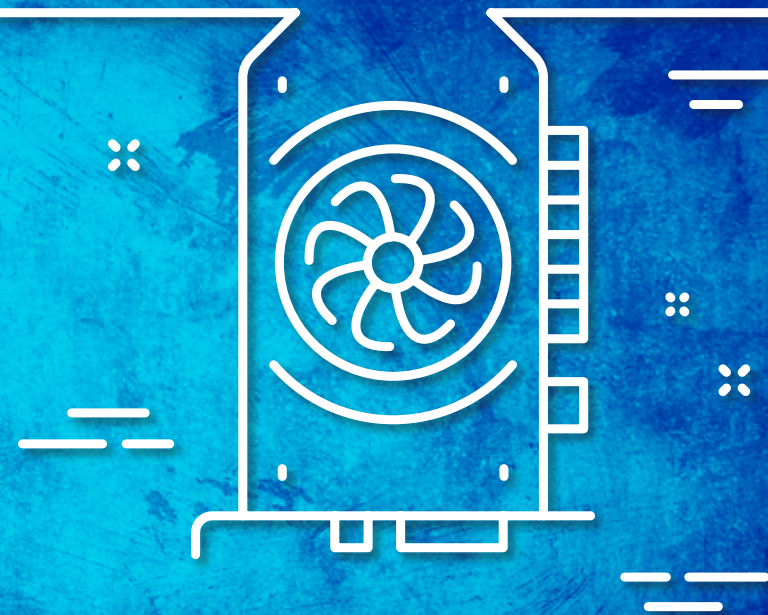
CSUSB ACCELERATES RESEARCH through connections to high performance computing

CSUSB was selected as a sub-awardee, along with San Diego State University (SDSU), in a National Science Foundation (NSF) grant.

The five-year, \$6.7 million grant will help train and create cyber infrastructure professional positions to support faculty research. CSUSB and SDSU will lead the way to serve Hispanic-Serving Institutions and Minority-Serving Institutions. CSUSB's portion of the sub-award is \$1.2 million over five years.

Last year, due to the volume of research computing by CSUSB faculty, the university was selected to have its own graphics processing unit (GPU) node, providing access to computing resources normally available only to Research 1-classified universities.

The new GPU node provides a boost to CSUSB's High Performance Computing Initiative, which provides the university's faculty, students and staff with access



to high-performance computing resources at various supercomputing centers.

As described by Intel, GPUs are used in graphics and video rendering. Originally tied to gaming, they are becoming increasingly important in artificial intelligence, or AI. GPUs complement central processing units in computers and accelerate computer graphics workloads. ●

INLAND EMPIRE ENTREPRENEURS HONORED FOR THEIR WORK

The Association of Fundraising Professionals Inland Empire chapter named Reginald and René Webb as Excellence in Philanthropy Honorees for 2022. The Webbs, who were recipients of the CSUSB Honorary Doctorate in Humane Letters in 2021, were named the Community Champions of the Year Award.

CSUSB President Tomás D. Morales called the award "a significant and well-deserved honor of the Webb family for their dedication to help others succeed."

"Our family, the Cooperative Economic Empowerment Movement's boards of directors, members and staff are humbled that our work and commitment to improving life in the Inland Empire is recognized in this special way," said Reginald Webb. "Rest assured that we are inspired to continue to evolve and grow more contributive in light of this honor."

As founder and chief executive officer of Webb Family Enterprises, Inc., Reginald Webb owns over 15 McDonald's restaurants that span the Inland Empire to Los Angeles, providing employment for over 1,100 Southern California residents. Related firms include Webb Family Investments (which contains other family investments) and Cooperative Economic Empowerment Movement (which provides resources such as entrepreneurial workshops and support to Black businesses to help redirect and circulate capital in the Black community). ●



Grant helps students who are migrant farmworkers

A five-year, \$2.3 million federal grant was awarded to CSUSB to help students who are migrant/seasonal farm workers or the children of migrant/seasonal farm workers.

The College Assistance Migrant Program (CAMP) grant from the U.S. Department of Education was awarded to CSUSB and the One Future Coachella Valley, a Palm Desert-based organization that seeks to assure students succeed in college, career and life – expanding and enhancing the local workforce so that our youth and economy thrive.

The CAMP grant's objectives are that participants complete their first year of college and continue onto their second year of higher education, increase their workforce readiness skills and provide opportunities for holistic student support and enrichment, including social, emotional and academic needs.

The grant, which started July 1 and will serve 50 students annually, works out of CSUSB, the CSUSB Palm Desert Campus, the One Future Coachella Valley and the Boys & Girls Club of Coachella Valley – Mecca Club. ●



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Cal State San Bernardino is a volunteer force in the community, with Coyotes contributing more than 100,000 hours of volunteer service each year.

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