

Dear Colleagues:

I write to share with you the sad news that the campus and the greater San Bernardino community has lost one of our stalwarts and trailblazers, Dr. Ernie Garcia.

The Garcia Center for the Arts, which he founded, released this message yesterday:

With a heavy heart, we share the sad news of Dr. Ernie Garcia's passing. Without Dr. Ernie's vision and commitment to the arts in San Bernardino, the Garcia Center for the Arts would not exist.

We are very fortunate to have met and learned from such an incredible human being like Ernie. Ernie was a community leader, who loved to share stories and jokes with everyone. Ernie was the type of person who influenced and made an impact on many.

We thank Ernie for all of his contributions and leadership. We will cherish his memory forever, and celebrate his incredible life.

We will be sharing more in the coming days and weeks, as services in honor of Ernie's memory are organized.

Dr. Ernest A. Garcia was a founding faculty member of the college that became Cal State San Bernardino. He was a retiree from the College of Education, and joined us as recently as the 2022 ribbon cutting for the re-named James R. Watson and Judy Rodríguez Watson College of Education. He also previously served on the College of Education Advisory Board and the Art Museum Advisory Board, to list just two of the ways he has supported the Watson College and CSUSB as an institution over his decades of work and engagement as part of our university community.

His passion and long-time dream became reality when the Garcia Center for the Arts opened in San Bernardino. In 2013, the San Bernardino Valley Concert Association and the San Bernardino Municipal Water Department approved the lease for the abandoned adobe building on 11th Street, and it was dedicated to both Ernie and his wife Dorothy. It formally received its name on November 16, 2015 [sbvca.org], to serve as a "home for creatives and art organizations" to create "a sturdy foundation for San Bernardino's art renaissance." Visual art, music, dance, writing and all the ways that the artistic spirit might be expressed are celebrated and performed at the Center.

Its vibrant Facebook page shares the wide variety of arts-related events which the Center continues to host. The support and well-being of the community remains at its heart, reflecting Ernie's dedication to enriching the lives of the neighborhood, the city, and the surrounding areas which make up our Inland Empire.

His was an incredibly richly lived life, which gave so much back. For those who were his students, his colleagues, his friends and his family, his loss leaves an enormous hole. My condolences to all who are grieving today.

Sincerely,

**Tomás D. Morales**  
President