



Highlights
Signature
Staories

2023 NEWSLETTER

Realizing Dreams:

Stories of Achievement
in the Humanities
and Social Sciences

CSUF | COLLEGE OF
Humanities and
Social Sciences



Message from the Dean

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Dear Friends and Colleagues of the College of Humanities and Social Sciences,

The stories in this year’s edition of Highlights and Signature Stories resonate with the synergy between memories and anticipation. It is always good to be reminded of the shoulders on which we stand. And so, we begin this edition with stories from an emeriti faculty member and donor and the opportunities they make possible for HSS students. Next, you will read about students from across the college, including students who are in the midst of their academic programs and those poised to leap into their futures. You can read about faculty members whose own research leads them from the archives to the forests, from the reflection in the mirror to the window of tomorrow. And we will introduce you to our newest colleagues, those who will begin their careers at Cal State Fullerton with us this fall and spring. By the time you have finished reading, I think you will agree that the intellectually rich experiences and far-reaching engagement of faculty are the sparks that ignite students’ minds, inspiring students to become the change that they so eagerly want and rightfully deserve.

I offer my thanks to the folks who generously shared their stories with us and to the team who helped make and distribute this year’s edition of Highlights and Signature Stories: Pia Claudio, Melissa Martinez, Reyna Perez, and Alan Van Fleet.

And as we prepare to say goodbye to the quiet of summer and welcome the noise and excitement of a new academic year, I send my wishes for your well-being and happiness and my gratitude for your commitment to the College of Humanities and Social Sciences and to student achievement, community connection, and faculty research.

Warmest regards,

Dr. Sheryl I. Fontaine, Dean of the College of Humanities and Social Sciences

Study abroad donors support unique experiences 'because it made our lives'

Dr. Lee and Mrs. Annette Gilbert have given philanthropic to Cal State Fullerton for over 36 years! Lee is an Emeritus professor from the Department of Modern Languages and Literatures, and his wife, Annette Gilbert, is an HSS Alumna with a master's degree in Linguistics. Together they established the Leon and Annette Gilbert Study Abroad Scholarship in 2012, which awards students funding to study abroad.

"Annette and I are passionate about studying abroad because it made our lives. I want to do everything I can to help other people have the same thing," Lee explains.

After graduating high school, Lee attended the University of Colorado for summer orientation and decided to study engineering. He met with an advisor, who looked at his high school transcript and asked, "With those math scores, you want to do engineering?" Lee admits he wasn't the best high school student. He had gotten C+'s and some B's all the way through and hadn't figured out how to study yet. Lee is a first-generation college student, like many of our students.

"When I decided to major in German, my parents must have thought

I was crazy. 'What are you going to do with that?' they asked. But I needed to do what I was passionate about."

One of the first people to significantly influence his decision to study German was a visiting exchange professor from Vassar College, Margaret McKenzie. Lee was taking his sophomore-level German grammar class with her. In the spring of that year, she invited students to perform the play *Jedermann* by the Austrian playwright Hugo von Hofmannsthal. After rehearsals had begun, one of the grad students who had taken a role had to drop out. Margaret asked Lee if he would take over the part. His involvement in that performance fueled his love of the language.

"At the end of my sophomore year, I was finishing up the lower-division requirements in German and taking one upper-division course. I found out that half of the students in that course were native speakers. I figured if I'm going to be successful at this, I have got to get to Germany."

In the fall of 1962, Lee boarded a transatlantic steamer headed for Europe. He originally intended to study at the University of Munich. The ship got held up by a storm for a week, and by the time Lee arrived in



Munich, it was too late to enroll in classes. "I had a friend studying at the University of Tübingen and asked if I could still get in there, and he said to come on up."

Lee describes his year in Tübingen as a life-changing experience. He returned from Tübingen at the end of that year and finished his German degree at the University of Colorado. "So, what do you do with a bachelor's degree in German? You do a master's degree, and then get a Ph.D.!" Lee exclaims.

Lee and Annette married two years later and traveled back to Tübingen for another year. They returned to the University of Colorado in 1969. He had completed all of his Ph.D. requirements except for his dissertation when the university asked him and Annette to set up a Junior Year Abroad exchange program with the University of Regensburg. The exchange program they created is active to this day.

While in Regensburg he saw a position for a professorship in German in the department of Modern Languages and Literature at Cal State Fullerton. He contacted his friend Jon Zimmerman, a professor in the department, and asked, "Do you think I should apply for the job?" Jon suggested that Lee send in his application, and the department hired him sight unseen. Sev-

eral years later, after Lee had been granted tenure, he applied to the Cal State system International Programs and was hired as the resident director for the CSU program at the University of Heidelberg.

Knowing how impactful this type of experience can be on a student's life, the College of Humanities and Social Science started a Study Abroad program in the early 1990's. To date, students have traveled to 19 far away countries such as England, Indonesia, South Africa, and Cambodia, to name a few. Many of the students at CSUF have never left the state, let alone traveled to another country. The College of HSS Study Abroad program allows them to earn college credits while experiencing the sights, sounds, and culture of another country. And thanks to donors like the Gilberts, students can apply for a scholarship which helps to reduce the overall expense and makes studying abroad a reality.

These experiences and a love of study abroad led Lee and Annette to create a scholarship for our students—a scholarship that is changing lives. Giselle Vargas is a first-generation student who recently graduated with a double major in Animation and Linguistics who dreamt of traveling overseas to study. After the pandemic, Giselle's financial situation made studying abroad appear to be an impos-

sible idea. The Leon and Annette Gilbert Study Abroad Scholarship allowed Giselle to realize her dream and study abroad. Because of Lee and Annette's generosity, Giselle participated in the HSS Study Abroad Program in Berlin, Germany during the summer of 2023.

"This award allowed me to explore the world that I had always appeared to be out of reach. I greatly appreciate Lee and Annette Gilbert's generosity in making the impossible a reality for me."

Lee believes that studying abroad opens students' eyes to things they would never think about were they never to leave their home country. "It opens you up to a new culture and language. It broadens your perspectives in ways that will not happen if you stay on campus for four years. If you're on the fence about studying abroad, get off the fence, do it." Lee encourages.

If you would like to support the College of Humanities & Social Science Study Abroad program or start a new named scholarship, you can scan the QR code below or contact Melissa Martinez, Senior Director of Development, 657-278-4847 or melissamartinez@fullerton.edu.

IT TAKES A TITAN

A DONOR'S GIFT BROUGHT HISTORY TO LIFE FOR ME.

– Jocelyn Aponte, '20 (B.A. history), graduate student in history

When Jocelyn Aponte, '20 (B.A. history), a graduate student in history, visited the Sachsenhausen concentration camp in Germany and saw the crematory, it hit her: "How many souls went through this place alone and lost their lives?"

These moments of discovery didn't come to Jocelyn while reading from a textbook. Instead, they came to her while studying abroad in Berlin. "There's a vast difference in learning about other people and their country when I'm physically in that space. I witnessed, in real time, how their society and culture work." She explains.

The program cost was a barrier for Jocelyn. She applied for Sandra DeAngelis Fund for Study Abroad and was awarded the funds she needed to fulfill her goal. "I would not have studied abroad without earning a scholarship, and I am most grateful to be a recipient," she explains.

It was not until Jocelyn visited Berlin museums and Holocaust memorials that she truly realized their

connection to America and how much work needs to be done to provide an inclusive history of our country's dark past. "The hands-on experience gives me an edge in the professional field. I have been able to model the research I've conducted, both in person and via literature, on German concentration camps to Alta California missions," she explains.

"My career aspirations are to become a historical interpreter for the National Park Service, translating collections and research into exhibits for the public. My goal is to create inclusivity by telling the stories of underrepresented populations, such as Indigenous groups."

Before the COVID-19 pandemic, the Sandra DeAngelis Fund for Study Abroad Endowment provided scholarships for seven students to travel to Costa Rica, Denmark, Germany, and South Africa. The endowed fund will continue to provide study abroad scholarships for one or two students each year.





Psychology Grad Aspires to Create Culturally Sensitive Interventions for Child Abuse Survivors



As a volunteer for Orange County’s Child Abuse Services Team, Yuliana Fernandez has helped children feel comfortable before providing testimonies for court use. The experience influenced her decision to pursue a career in providing culturally sensitive therapies for trauma survivors.

“Although it is difficult to hear everything these children have been put through, I’m more determined than ever to help this population by providing therapeutic services and researching new techniques that could benefit them,” shared the Class of 2023 master’s student in psychology and Alumni Association’s Outstanding Graduate Student.

Fernandez plans to pursue a doctorate and become a clinical psychologist.

“I fell in love with the field of psychology, but I realized therapy stems from a Eurocentric perspective,” she said. “I began to understand how important it is to tailor our practices

to people of color. This motivated me to want to not only provide therapy but also develop more culturally sensitive interventions.”

In CSUF’s Culture and Social Action (CaSA) Lab, directed by Lucía Alcalá, associate professor of psychology, Fernandez found a nurturing environment to explore her research passions.

“Dr. Alcalá’s lab was a place where I was able to find a community and a safe space to talk about microaggressions we experienced. Simultaneously, I was trained to be a culturally sensitive researcher,” shared Fernandez. “The lab provided me with the support I needed throughout my academic journey and continues to encourage me to aspire to bigger things.”

In the lab, she co-authored “How Yucatec Maya Children Learn to Help at Home.”

Fernandez received CSUF’s Graduate Equity Fellowship and Pa’lante Fellowship and was selected for the California State University Sally Casanova Scholars pre-doctoral program.

Her thesis focuses on the ethnic identity development of first-generation Mexican-American college students studying abroad in their parents’ home country.

Students in her study described feeling ashamed of speaking Spanish before studying abroad. However, exploring their culture gave them a stronger sense of ethnic identity,

better relationships with their parents, and advancement of their academic goals.

“I hope to use my findings to advocate for more funding for students of color who would like to study abroad in a country they share their heritage with,” she said.

“I hope to use my findings to advocate for more funding for students of color who would like to study abroad in a country they share their heritage with.”

Beyond her research, Fernandez works on campus in the Humanities and Social Sciences Student Success Center, supporting students who seek academic advising. She also was a mentor with the I Am First, Titan Scholars, and Psychology Peer Mentors programs.

“The core of her work is from an equity mindset, ensuring all students receive the support needed to achieve their goals,” said Britney Swanson, director of Humanities and Social Sciences academic advising. “The students who have connected with Ms. Fernandez

have received the optimal level of care.”

Adriana Sifuentes, an HSS Student Success Center colleague, shared: “She understands that each student’s academic path is different and tries her best to understand their current struggles, whether they are financial, personal, or mental. She was a transfer student, so she always puts in the extra work to make events, such as workshops for transfer students, as successful as possible.”



McNair Scholar Receives Full Ride for Doctoral Program in Sociology



After her high school graduation, Cal State Fullerton McNair Scholar Jessica Douglass-Eurich began college at the University of Nebraska at Omaha as a first-generation student and single mother.

She worked overnight shifts as a nursing assistant while caring for her young son and attending classes. Exhausted and struggling to keep up with college, she quit and returned to the fast-food restaurant where she worked in high school.

Douglass-Eurich married over the next 25 years, had a second son, and later divorced. She changed jobs and worked in various low-wage administrative positions at different companies.

After being laid off from a job a few years ago and unable to find a permanent position, she searched for more. Her younger son, a 2022 Titan graduate, encouraged her to return to college.

"As an aging worker with only a high school diploma, I was stuck in low-paying, dead-end jobs. I decided it was time to return to school and find the job I wanted," said Douglass-Eurich, a Class of 2023 graduate.

Douglass-Eurich enrolled at Cypress College and faced culture shock, unprepared

for how higher education had changed, mainly due to the technology used in the classroom. Determined to succeed, she earned an associate degree and transferred to Cal State Fullerton in the fall of 2020.

"College this time was wonderful. I realized I love learning," she said.

At age 51, with her sons cheering on the sidelines, Douglass-Eurich will soon cross the commencement stage and earn a bachelor's degree in sociology with a concentration in social inequalities.

But she isn't finished with college — just yet.

In August, Douglass-Eurich will begin her fully funded doctoral program in sociology at the University of Iowa. She plans to pursue a career in teaching and research at the university level.

Douglass-Eurich credits CSUF's Ronald E. McNair Scholars Program for helping her achieve academic success and realize that graduate school was possible. She is among the program's 13 graduates this year who will continue their studies to earn master's degrees and doctorates.

The program, funded by the U.S. Depart-

ment of Education, prepares underrepresented, first-generation, and low-income students for doctoral studies. McNair Scholars from across disciplines participate in research and scholarly activities, including completing a thesis.

"I knew that I wanted to go to graduate school, but I didn't know exactly what it was or how to get into it. When I learned about the McNair program, I realized that it was tailored to answer those questions," Douglass-Eurich said.

She also was selected as a 2022-23 Sally Casanova Scholar in the California Pre-Doctoral Program. The program supports California State University students who have experienced economic and educational disadvantages and helps them to succeed in doctoral programs.

In graduate school, Douglass-Eurich plans to continue and expand upon her study and work as a summer student researcher at the University of Iowa.

"I am pursuing a Ph.D. because there is so much more to learn. Through research, I hope to contribute to the existing body of knowledge and a better understanding of society and social behavior," she said.

Lost in Translation:

Student Researches Queer Language in Anime, Dramas

As a teenager, Pauli Cuellar Aguilar searched for queer media that represented him. Instead, he stumbled across queerbaiting, where show creators would hint at gay relationships that were never depicted.

Cal State Fullerton's Mellon Mays Undergraduate Fellowship program, designed to prepare students to pursue doctorates in the humanities, presented Aguilar with the opportunity and resources (mentoring, workshops, graduate school preparation and annual stipend) to take a deep dive into the topic.

His consumption of international anime, manga and dramas led him to his research topic — language translation in Japanese and Thai queer media.

"One night while I was rewatching my favorite show, 'Thai Boys' Love,' I decided to turn on the Japanese subtitles," Aguilar said. "I quickly realized there were many discrepancies in the use of gender markers between the original Thai dialogue and the Japanese translations."

The Class of 2023 graduate, who is majoring in linguistics and English, aspires to become a translator in the entertainment industry and to interpret digital media and books for international audiences.

As a Mellon Mays fellow and University Honors Program student, Aguilar has presented his research on queer sociolinguists, translation and intercultural communication at CSUF, USC, UC Berkeley and UCLA.

"In my sociolinguistic groundwork of research, I look at how translating queer language can be restrictive for individuals who attempt to demonstrate gender and sexuality expression through the use of pronouns," Aguilar said.

In the Thai television drama "Kiss Me Again" (2018), two male characters, Pete and Kao, are in a romantic relationship. In their Thai dialogue, the couple uses the same pronouns to speak to each other. However, in the Japanese subtitles, Pete uses hypermasculine pronouns compared to Kao's semi-masculine pronouns. The Japanese subtitles imply that

Pete embodies the male role in their relationship while Kao represents the female role.

"I found that a homosexual relationship can be portrayed as heterosexual by changing their pronouns and characterizing one as feminine and the other as masculine," Aguilar said. "It is easier and more common to do this in Japanese because of how gender restrictive their pronouns are compared to Thai pronouns, which are more flexible."

Continuing Queer Media Studies in Graduate School

After graduation, Aguilar will begin his master's degree in intercultural communication at Srinakharinwirot University in Bangkok, Thailand.

Aguilar chose the university because of its notable alumni in the entertainment industry and its College of Social Communication Innovation's partnership with GMMTV, the biggest producer of "Thai Boys' Love" dramas in Thailand.

He hopes to use the university's connections with GMMTV to continue his research in queer media. Reimagining an inclusive future for anime and media consumption, Aguilar said, "My dream is to eventually obtain a doctorate and work in academia to expand the field of queer linguistics and queer media studies."



LATINX LAB STUDENTS UNCOVER STRUCTURAL RACISM THROUGH PERSONAL STORYTELLING

Chicana and Chicano studies student Jasmine Garcia channeled her frustration to her classmates through the art of storytelling.

Immigrating to the United States from the Bracero program at 14, Garcia's grandfather faced racism, discrimination, and back-breaking labor for 50 cents per hour under the boiling sun. He became accustomed to his alcoholic father's abuse and continued the cycle of maltreatment in his bloodline.

During Cal State Fullerton's first Summer Social Justice and Storytelling Institute

(SJSI), 25 students learned how to confront social inequity and dismantle structural racism through the craft of diverse storytelling. The Summer Institute is an initiative of Latinx Lab for Storytelling and Social Justice. Funded by a \$1.2 million grant from the Mellon Foundation (2022-25), the Latinx Lab is a series of initiatives, both in-person and virtual, led by faculty in the Chicana and Chicano Studies Department at CSUF. Gabriela Nuñez, the Lab's director, and Associate Professor of Chicana/o Studies explains that Latinx Lab projects center storytelling as essential to creating vital and transformative knowledge. Nuñez

says, "Faculty projects such as new courses, podcasts, digital databases, among others fulfill the Latinx Lab's three main goals to 1) create a pathway for future Latinx humanities scholars 2) develop a digital hub to disseminate student stories and experiences, and 3) host student-centered symposia to foster new conversations and research in underdeveloped topics in Latinx Studies."

The SJSI instruction team included Alexandro Gradilla, Associate Professor of Chicana and Chicano studies, William Camargo, lecturer in art, and history graduate students Carlos Escobedo and Ashley Yniguez.

"Structural racism dehumanizes people. For people of color, singing, dancing, drawing, painting, performing, and storytelling are all tools of resistance and restorative practices," said Gradilla, the institute's faculty director. "Decolonized and abolitionist storytelling frees and liberates people to regain their humanity through small or daily acts of healing," Gradilla said.

In students' visual storytelling projects, they dug deep into their family trees,

compiling neighborhood images and family photos to weave a social justice theme to share with their classmates and on social media platforms.

"Western knowledge and its institutions have invalidated the values and knowledge of non-European populations. The outcomes of decolonized political and academic work are restoring and healing what has been devalued or stolen," Gradilla said. "As civil rights activist Audre Lorde reminds us, we cannot use the 'master's tools' to restore or heal subjugated populations — we make our tools or rely on the tools of our ancestors."

Camargo shared with students his five-year project, "Origins and Displacement: Making Sense of Place, History and Possibilities," which delves into the untold history of Anaheim. He unshelved archives of artists who exposed injustices that diverse communities faced.

"I use the city archives and create new artworks in response to archives that bring up segregation, violence against Brown people, and contemporary histories that have transformed

Anaheim," Camargo said. "There are also portraits, landscapes, street scenes of the city and the depiction of migrants' contributions."

Garcia said the institute provided her the space to heal through the visual storytelling project. Her project, "La Máscara de Mi Abuelo" ("The Mask of My Grandfather"), unveiled how her grandfather's struggle with alcoholism and lashes of abuse left lingering pain in her family.

She told the class that her aunt, the second oldest of her grandfather's children, passed away in 2019 due to substance abuse. Her uncle, the youngest of five children, struggles with substance abuse today.

"I felt that talking about this gave me the chance to free my family from this narrative and heal myself by releasing all the anger I had towards my Abuelo for all the pain he caused," Garcia said.

In addition to building their narratives, students heard from such notable speakers as Monica Garcia, a Los Angeles Unified School District councilwoman;

Judge Sergio Tapia, an assistant presiding judge of the Los Angeles Superior Court; and Judge Elizabeth Macias '95 (B.A. psychology, ethnic studies-Chicano studies), a CSUF alumna who serves on California Superior Court's felony trial panel.

They also worked on selecting graduate programs, blending social justice goals with career goals, creating resumes, writing a rough draft of a statement of purpose, and building a LinkedIn profile. Storytelling empowers students to become tomorrow's leaders, added Gradilla.

"Storytelling prepares students for leadership by giving them the skills to communicate with wide and diverse audiences effectively," Gradilla said.

"A significant part of social justice work includes working alongside communities and speaking a language understandable to all, instead of highly specialized audiences."



New CSUF Alum Sees Disability as an Asset, Challenges Society to Do the Same

Isaiah Piche is used to challenges and rising above them. That includes graduating from Cal State Fullerton earlier this year, a goal he set for himself in 2010. Piche, however, had to overcome some significant challenges on his way to earning that sociology degree.

The Class of 2023 graduate has cerebral palsy, a group of disorders that affect one's ability to move and maintain balance and posture, often causing exaggerated reflexes, involuntary movements, and unsteady walking. It is a lifelong disorder with no cure. As a result, he has had to make adjustments that most able-bodied people don't even consider.

Following his graduation from high school, when Piche was coming out as gay, he took a two-year sabbatical before starting at a community college.

"It was a rough time," he recalled. "My grandfather had died from cancer, my father was deported to El Salvador, and in 2016, I became aware that my special needs trust was being manipulated by a fraudulent trustee."

"The experience certainly took a toll on me, but with help, I managed to get back on track and transfer to Cal State Fullerton in 2019. I've wanted to be an attorney since high school, and my guidance counselor told me the best way to get

into law school was to join the moot court team."

Piche met with Pam Fiber-Ostrow, professor of political science and the moot court adviser, to discuss his options.

"I have never wanted anything more than to be part of that team," he said. "I was so nervous; I almost threw up before the interview."

Fortunately, Piche aced the interview. But he had challenges beyond preparing for competitions with the award-winning moot court team.

"Having cerebral palsy is quite expensive and sometimes heartbreaking, but not for the reasons most people believe," he said. "I love every part of myself, and I am proud of who I am and who I'm becoming. Yet, we still live in a society that is built for able-bodied people, and the rights of people with disabilities are trampled every day. It seems to me that society needs to overcome my disability, not me."

Piche and Fiber-Ostrow had to argue with an attorney and American Moot Court Association leaders for proper tournament accommodations and succeeded.

Because he never knows how his body may react, Piche does what few moot court participants do — memorize his arguments. Because of sometimes erratic movements over which he has no control, Piche can't count on being able to shuffle through notes or hit the right spot on an iPad.

"They call me the team encyclopedia," he laughed. "I don't really have a choice. The hardest part was working up the courage and controlling my nerves before going in front of the judges. Dr. Fiber-Ostrow literally trains future attorneys, so I am

truly grateful to her and the team."

"Isaiah is a natural in front of the judges, and I know he will be equally successful in front of actual judges as an attorney," said Fiber-Ostrow.

Piche participated in the third annual TEDxCSUF conference and admitted that he wouldn't have considered entering without the confidence he gained through moot court. Still, he wishes people better understood what it's like to live with a disability.

"I wish people understood that we are human, too," he said. "There are a number of ways that disabled people, in general, are dehumanized on a daily basis. We also come in a variety of sexualities. I would say yes, I am being judged every day."

Today, Piche recently launched a modeling career and is studying for the LSAT. He hopes to be admitted to UCLA next year.

"I want to see if I can break through representing disabled people in the media, particularly queer, disabled people of color," he said.



Study Shows How Changing Climate Influences Tree Growth in SIERRA NEVADA

As a graduate student, alumnus Raymond Villalba spent ten days on a camping and fieldwork trip to Sequoia and Yosemite national parks to collect tree samples for his research project on how changing climate influences tree growth.

Many of the trees sampled, including sugar pines, western white pines, and Jeffrey pines, were in hard-to-reach areas and at 11,000 feet. Villalba, his classmates, and faculty mentor Trevis Matheus spent eight- to 10-hour days hiking to various tree locations and collecting tree core samples.

"It's exhausting work and requires a team," said Villalba, who conducted the fieldwork as part of the "Mountain Field Geography" course.

For Villalba, who earned a master's degree in geography in 2020, his arduous work paid off. His research was published Nov. 7 in *The California Geographer*, the peer-reviewed annual publication of the California Geographical Society. Matheus, associate professor of geography and the environment, is a co-author of the paper and Villalba's graduate adviser.

Villalba's study focuses on a subfield of dendrochronology — the study of tree rings to record and date past events and environments. This subfield is called dendroclimatology, where he used tree rings to study climate.

The researchers revealed that the trees studied in the Sierra Nevada are severely impacted by modern-day warming and an increasingly drying climate. The driest recorded soil moisture in the study was in 2014, but this year is already drier, and researchers expect extreme drought conditions to continue.

"Drought and rising temperatures are impacting the region, making these trees much more susceptible to disease and fire," said Matheus, adding that, as a result, wildfires are becoming more frequent and devastating.

"California is in one of the worst droughts of the past 1,200 years. I like to tell my students that it is difficult to know where you are going if you don't know where you have been. We can look back at periods of time in the tree-ring record when the climate was warmer and drier, and this provides us a framework of what to expect as our climate warms in the near future."

Villalba explained that future temperature increases would leave forest trees vulnerable to droughts, and the snow and rain falling in the Sierra Nevada are a primary water source for California. According to his study, the Sierra Nevada accounts for 27% of the total precipitation in the state and provides 60% of the state's total water supply.

Matheus' students are contributing to his more extensive research to reconstruct the snowpack and precipitation of the Sierra Nevada over the last 1,000 to 2,000 years.

"This will hopefully better inform water policy and give us an idea of what to expect in the coming decades," Matheus said.

For Villalba, who earned a bachelor's degree in geography from Cal State Long Beach, his research and lab experience and learning tree-ring methods gave him the tools and knowledge to pursue a career in the environmental field.

Villalba works full-time in wastewater regulation for the Orange County Sanitation District, part-time for the city of Los Angeles in urban forestry, and as a geography tutor at Cerritos College. His long-term career goal is to teach geography at a community college.

"I look forward to passing down what I've learned at CSUF to future students, academics, and other professionals in the field. I hope that others will build upon my research and continue with this work to further our understanding of climate variability in California."



Outstanding Lecturer:

LGBTQ+ History



IS AMERICAN HISTORY

“Students rave about Craig Loftin’s classes. His passion for student learning, deep knowledge, energy, and curiosity make him a favorite within our department,” said Elaine Lewinnek, professor of American studies.

An LGBTQ+ historian and lecturer in American studies at Cal State Fullerton since 2006, Loftin teaches close to 250 students each semester in such courses as “The American Dream,” “Sexual Orientations and American Culture,” and “Introduction to Gender in the Humanities.”

Loftin’s success as a teacher can be seen in the overwhelming percentages of students (typically 90-100%) who report that his class discussions provoke them to think more deeply about the subject matter.

Loftin was recognized for his exceptional teaching dedication with Cal State Fullerton’s 2023 Outstanding Lecturer Award.

Colleagues within the Department of American Studies praise Loftin’s energy for teaching, scholarship of LGBTQ+ history, and mentorship of new lecturers.

“I would not be half the teacher I am today without learning so much from Craig,” said Patrick Covert-Ortiz ’09, ’12 (B.A., M.A. American studies), a lecturer in American studies who first met Loftin while a graduate student. “Over the past decade, I have seen countless students come to Craig’s office hours for guidance and express the astounding impact his courses have had on their personal development.”

Beyond the campus, Loftin engages in public-facing work that enriches local and national awareness of LGBTQ+ history. He actively implemented California’s FAIR (Fair, Accurate, Inclusive and Respectful) Education Act of 2011, which mandated K-12 education, including the contributions of people with disabilities and members of the LGBTQ+ community in textbooks and curriculum. He also trains teachers in Los Angeles and Orange counties in LGBTQ+ history and works with several nonprofit organizations to create LGBTQ+ history plans for K-12 schools.

Apocalypse: A Queer Journey Through 1980s Music Videos,” which explores how famous pop stars like Whitney Houston, Michael Jackson, Madonna, and Prince raise complex questions about race, gender, sexuality, and identity.

“As a scholar and teacher, I am deeply committed to incorporating LGBTQ+ history into mainstream narratives and curriculum,” said Loftin. “It is an honor to be recognized with this award, and I am humbled to be considered alongside so many talented and dedicated lecturers here at CSUF.”

“Professor Loftin has productively shaped the way LGBTQ+ history is taught, understood”

“Professor Loftin has productively shaped the way LGBTQ+ history is taught, understood, and accessed in a range of educational venues,” said Terri Snyder, professor of American studies. “His commitment to social justice-oriented scholarly activity embodies CSUF’s core mission of civic engagement and commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion.”

He is working on a manuscript titled, “New Wave



‘THE HAUNTING WITHIN’: PROFESSOR EXPLORES THE DUPLICITY OF DOPPELGÄNGERS

Adam Golub, professor of American studies at Cal State Fullerton, is interested in analyzing these inner monsters known as doppelgängers or “shadow selves.” Like traditional monsters, doppelgängers can appear in different forms — a robotic clone, a double from another dimension, or an alien body snatcher, but they always mirror a version of the original.

“Monsters represent something that does not belong in the community: a zombie, a vampire, a witch, King Kong, Godzilla, or Slenderman. These are monsters that come from elsewhere. They’re outsiders that are trying to invade, disrupt and haunt our lives,” said Golub. “The doppelgänger is a monster that is not apart from us. It’s a monster that is a part of us.”

Golub’s new book project, “America’s Shadow: A Cultural History of the Doppelgänger,” examines how doppelgängers have evolved since they first joined the “American monster mash” scene in the early 19th century.

From Edgar Allan Poe’s 1839 short story “William Wilson” to modern films like Netflix’s “Living with Yourself” starring Paul Rudd, Golub wants to understand why these narratives have survived the test of time and what they reveal about society’s broader fears and anxieties.

“Monsters are make-believe, but the fears that they embody are real, and how we act on those fears can have dramatic consequences for how we view ourselves and how we view others,” said Golub.

Throughout history, the doppelgänger narrative has evolved into a cross-disciplinary concept that appears in multiple expressive forms, including literature, film, television, poetry, music, pop culture, religion, folklore, crime, and politics.

Before doppelgängers appeared in the American cultural landscape, people feared sea monsters, witches, ghosts, and demons. By the late 1830s, their fears shifted to “the haunting within,” ex-

plained Golub.

Golub shared that by the 1840s, photography made it possible for people to “gaze upon themselves” entirely from the outside. This technological advance brought the idea of “double selves” to the forefront of people’s lives.

“There was also a growing fascination with psychology and consciousness during this period. Americans became interested in the idea of dual consciousness, the idea that the human mind has a divided quality to it,” said Golub.

One of the doppelgänger’s early historical appearances occurred in 1860 when Abraham Lincoln allegedly claimed to see two versions of himself staring back in the mirror before his presidential reelection. With America on the brink of civil war, Golub said that the story symbolized society’s fears about identity and duplicity as the nation was confronted with the possibility of splitting its existence into north and south.

His research also follows doppelgängers into the technological age of the 21st century with digital duplicates appearing online. He said that some of the most recognizable digital doppelgänger forms are people’s carefully curated personas for social media.

“Arguably, digital culture has us all feeling a little bit fragmented in our lives. We’re all navigating and negotiating these various online personas.”

Golub’s interdisciplinary research into the cultural relevance of doppelgängers will continue as he completes his book manuscript in the coming year. “America’s Shadow: A Cultural History of the Doppelgänger” will join ranks with his previously published work about monsters, fan culture, true crime and popular culture.





New Opportunity for Underrepresented STEM Majors Interested in Aging

Worldwide, our population is aging and becoming more diverse. We need ingenuity and fresh perspectives to solve the issues facing an aging society. We need to build a diverse workforce that understands and is passionate about older adults' needs and is trained at the highest levels of medicine, science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (MSTEM). Unfortunately, we lose many talented individuals based on how our educational system, from elementary school through graduate school, is structured. Most of these gifted individuals are underrepresented, including first-generation students, individuals from under-resourced backgrounds, ethnic minorities, LGBTQIA+, women in specific disciplines, and individuals with disabilities.

To increase diversity in the MSTEM aging research workforce, Laura Zettel-Watson, professor of psychology in the College of Humanities and Social Sciences, and

Jennifer Piazza, professor of public health in the College of Health and Human Development, received a \$1.54 million grant from the National Institutes of Health to create a new multidimensional aging science program at CSUF, entitled MSTEM Scholars Trained in Aging Research (MSTEM STAR). The MSTEM STAR program aims to provide the support necessary to train talented individuals from these underrepresented groups and prepare them to be competitive for medical school or graduate school in aging-related MSTEM fields.

The interdisciplinary MSTEM STAR program brings together aging expertise across four colleges (ECS, HHD, HHS, and NSM) and is designed to remove many of the barriers that underrepresented students often face when trying to attain the skills necessary to be competitive for graduate school. Students participating in the MSTEM STAR program will gain

two years of paid research experience with a CSUF faculty mentor, complete a paid summer internship at UCLA or UCI, earn a minor in aging science, and receive mentoring to improve professional skills and increase graduate school preparedness. Through numerous collaborations with the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute (OLLI), MSTEM STAR students will continually engage with and learn from older adults.

The MSTEM STAR program is currently recruiting underrepresented students with at least two years remaining at CSUF from the following majors: biochemistry, biological science, engineering, kinesiology, nursing, pre-med, psychology, and public health.

Visit the MSTEM STAR website to learn more and apply now:

<https://www.fullerton.edu/mstemstar>

Shining the Spotlight: 2023 New Faculty

Representing the humanities and the social sciences, seven new faculty members joined Cal State Fullerton's College of Humanities and Social Sciences in 2023



Brianna Harvey

Brianna Harvey is a community-rooted scholar, practitioner, and researcher, who critically examines collusive partnerships within systems like schools and the foster system. Her research investigates how these systems impose carceral logics on Black youth and their families through policies and practices, significantly impacting their lives. Simultaneously, utilizing liberatory praxis, she centers the experiences of the Black community, illuminating the ways they have historically resisted and subverted oppressive conditions. Brianna earned a Ph.D. in Education from UCLA and a Master of Social Work from USC.



Edward Watson

Edward Watson is an Assistant Professor of Sociology at California State University, Fullerton. He received his doctorate from the Department of Sociology at UC Irvine. His research examines race and education broadly, with a focus on bilingual schooling and school gentrification. He often asks, in what ways do school environments fluence demographic shifts, and what are the resulting effects? He has a professional background in charter school administration and curriculum programs. In addition, he cultivates and advances community educational partnerships. His current research interests examine school choice, equity and after school programs. His published work can be found in the fields of education, race, and pedagogy. Dr. Watson takes a student-centered approach to teaching and mentoring. Employing culturally relevant pedagogy, He is committed to creating stimulating educational environments that allow students to become critical thinking leaders throughout their academic journeys.

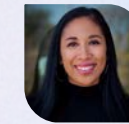


Goyland Williams

Goyland Williams comes to Cal State Fullerton from the University of Harford, where he was a Jackie McClean Fellow and Visiting Assistant Professor in the School of Communication. He has taught at various universities across the country and has coached two nationally-ranked Speech and Debate teams at Texas State University and Seton Hall University.

In bridging these seemingly disparate schools of thought, Goyland's scholarship think more broadly about the ways that conditions of Black life structure and undergird Black creative expressions and political imaginations. He has presented work at the National Communication Association, the Southern States Communication Association, Eastern Communication Association, the International Congress of Qualitative Inquiry, and the SXSW Interactive Festival. Specializing in Rhetoric and Performance Studies, his research is situated at the intersections of Black political and religious thought, social movement rhetoric, Digital humanities, Black masculinities, popular culture, African American (family) communication, and Black music.

With degrees in Philosophy, African American Studies, and Communication, Goyland's teaching, research, and service are strengthened by this transdisciplinary approach to knowledge-making.



Mei-Ling Malone

Dr. Mei-Ling Malone is an Assistant Professor of African American studies and the faculty advisor for the Black Student Union and Afro Ethnic Student Association. She is also a Ujima mentor, Nourish II Flourish fellow, and Scott-Jewett recipient. Professor Malone is an abolitionist, alchemist, lover and a mother of two little superheroes. She believes wholeheartedly in kindness, community, and holistic wellness. Dr. Malone received her doctorate from UCLA in Urban Schooling where she researched the school to prison pipeline.



Jihye Park

Jihye "JJ" Park is an assistant professor of criminal justice at the Division of Politics, Administration, and Justice. She earned her sociology Ph.D. at the University of Iowa. Her research and teaching interests center on social inequality and crime, and criminal punishment. In particular, her dissertation examines the social consequences of punishing immigrants. She also has taught courses including criminology, criminal punishment, and social control of formal institutions.

JJ Park has recently published her work in journals such as The British Journal of Criminology, Crime and Delinquency, and Race and Justice.



Brandi Wells

Brandi Wells is an Assistant Professor of Creative Writing at California State University, Fullerton. They have a PhD in Literature and Creative Writing from University of Southern California and an MFA in creative writing from University of Alabama. Their novel, Cleaner, is forthcoming from Wildfire/Headline (UK) in August 2023 and Hanover Square Press/Harpercollins (US) in March 2024. Their writing and research interests include speculative literature, dystopian literature, workplace novels, worldbuilding, and feminist and queer literature. Previously, they published a novella, This Boring Apocalypse (Civil Coping Mechanisms), and a chapbook of stories, Please Don't Be Upset (Tiny Hardcore Press), as well as short fiction in Chicago Review, Mid-American Review, Denver Quarterly, Puerto Del Sol, and many other journals.

For additional information or to learn more about opportunities for investment and support in the College of Humanities and Social Sciences, please contact Melissa Martinez at melissamartinez@fullerton.edu or 657-278-4847.

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