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How the Richter Center led Leah Rath to a career helping children and families

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CLASS NOTES

Pragati Desai (2008) graduated with her MBA in 2008 and is now a CPA working for a local firm, Bean Hunt Harris & Co. She works on tax preparation, IRS disputes and bankruptcy.

Ezra David Romero (2012) of Valley Public Radio has won the Golden Mike award for "Best Radio Feature News Series Reporting" for his coverage of California's drought. His reports included the stories of people who have lost water in their homes due to the drought, the effects on local beekeepers and forest restoration projects inspired by Native Americans. Counting Romero's wins from last year, this is his third Golden Mike Award.

Kerri Horn (1986, '98) has been named the new Director of Finance, Investments and Administration for the Central Valley Community Foundation -- formerly known as the Fresno Regional Foundation.

Cole Popovich (2010), a former Fresno State football player, is now coaching for the New England Patriots of the NFL. He began his coaching career with Los Angeles Valley College in 2010 as the strength and conditioning and offensive line coach. Popovich moved on and joined Fresno State's staff from 2011-13. In 2013, he joined Utah State as the football team's offensive graduate assistant, and stayed with the Aggies for two seasons helping the team to a Mountain Division championship and a Poinsettia Bowl victory. Minot State hired Popovich in 2014 as the team's offensive line coach; he was then promoted to run game coordinator in 2015.

Adam Stirrup (2003, 05) has become a Partner of the law firm of Baradat & Paboojian, Inc. Stirrup has also received an AV Preeminent rating from the Martindale-Hubbell Peer Review Ratings. He currently serves as the president of the Fresno State Alumni Association.

Gary Soto (1974) has authored the new book titled "You Kiss by th' Book: New Poems from Shakespeare's Line." Drawing on moments from the sonnets, "Hamlet," "Macbeth," "A Midsummer Night's Dream," "Romeo and Juliet," and others, Soto illuminates aspects of the source material while taking his poems in directions of their own, strategically employing the color of "thee" and "thine," kings, thieves, and lovers.

Linda Lima Cano (1992, '98) has been named the executive director of the Sonoma Valley Museum of Art. She was formerly in the same position with the Fresno Art Museum.

Amy Shuklian (1987) is a candidate for Tulare County Supervisor. She has served as the Mayor and a City Councilmember for the City of Visalia.

Dr. Kent Karsevar (1994, 2012) has been appointed Executive Director of Ronald McDonald House Charities Central Valley. He most recently served as Director of Development for the College of Social Sciences at Fresno State. In the past eight years, Kent was asked to take on additional Director of Development roles with the College of Science and Mathematics and the Lyles College of Engineering during Fresno State's first comprehensive campaign; which ended in 2013 and raised \$214 million dollars. Also, during his time at Fresno State, Dr. Karsevar received a doctoral degree in educational leadership from the Kremen School of Education. His doctoral dissertation was recognized internationally and awarded the 2013 John Grenzebach Research Award in Philanthropy for Educational Advancement by the Council for Advancement and Support of Education (CASE) and the Giving USA Foundation.

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12**

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LOCATION

Smittcamp Alumni House
2625 Matoian Way, Fresno, CA 93740

**MAR
14**

The CSU New York/Tri-State Alumni Reception

Join other alumni from the California State University system for a great networking opportunity in your area! This is the perfect opportunity to reconnect with Fresno State and professionals and friends in your area.

LOCATION

The University Club of New York
1 West 54th Street New York, NY 10019

**APR
25**

CSB Alumni and Friends Annual Spring Golf Tournament

We invite alumni and the community to play in the The Craig School of Business Alumni and Friends annual golf tournament and/or be a sponsor of the event. All tickets are \$200 per player. We offer additional activities including an opportunity drawing with prizes from a wide variety of Central Valley businesses as well as our exciting Helicopter Golf Ball Drop!

LOCATION

San Joaquin Country Club & Golf Course
3484 W Bluff Ave, Fresno, CA 93711

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Photos courtesy of Leah Rath

How the Richter Center led Leah Rath to a career helping children and families

By ELISA NAVARRO, Student Writer

With a volunteer base of 14,863 students (just this past year), Fresno State is helping individuals serve the community through the Jan and Bud Richter Center for Community Engagement and Service-Learning—with 20 distinct initiatives open to both students and alumni, the Richter Center is the first center of its kind in the CSU system.

Chris Fiorentino (1987), a Fresno State alum, is the Director of the Jan and Bud Richter Center for Community Engagement and Service-Learning has worked at the center since its beginnings in 1993. He has seen the center grow, while making an impact not only in the community, but in students’ lives as well.

“Anytime [students] get involved with service—it gives them an opportunity to build their resume, develop their own skill set, to have experiences that advance their career skills, all of those things. And every student is different—every experience is different,” Fiorentino said.

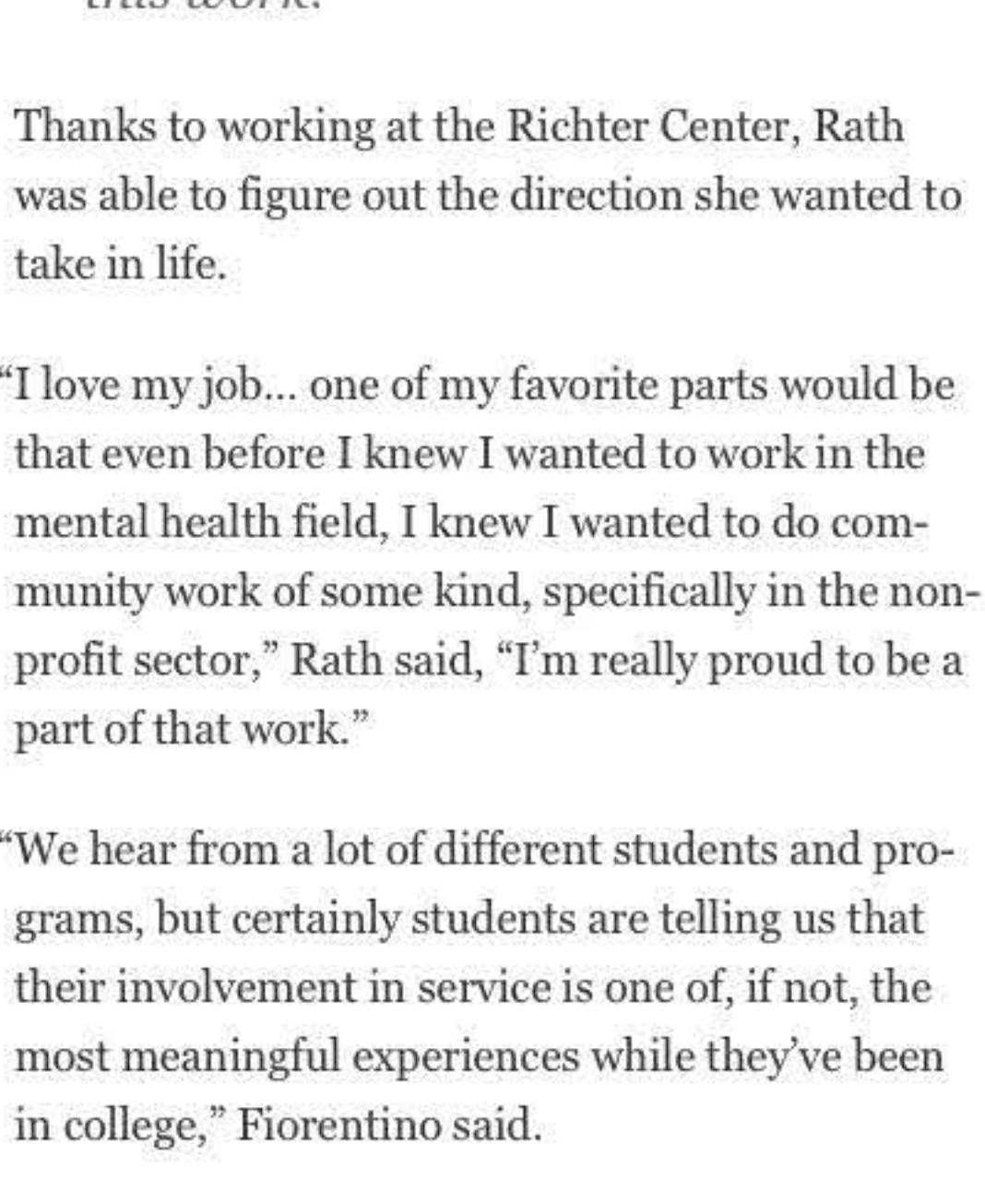
“They can come and get involved in service work at any time. So if you walk into the office tomorrow, we could connect you with service experience that is most meaningful for you. Something related to your major or something that you just care about. Something that fits your schedule,” Fiorentino said.

Leah Rath (2012), is one of the thousands of Fresno State students who served as a student ambassador at the Richter Center. She said her life has been positively impacted by serving the community. When she began her undergraduate studies in 2008 and got involved with the Richter Center, she helped launch the center’s Ambassador Program.



“I had been deeply involved in community work at my high school, so for me, it was a nice transition. So, I think that my best memory of Fresno State would be that first day that we came together. I remember it so clearly because I sat with these people who were complete strangers and felt connected to everybody,” Rath said.

While working towards her bachelor’s in psychology, Rath, like many students, didn’t know what kind of career path to pursue. All she knew was that she wanted to help people. So in 2010 she began exploring volunteer opportunities and, through the Richter Center, found Exceptional Parents Unlimited Children’s Center (EPU).



“I had done a lot of work with people who had disabilities, and that’s really how EPU is known. So, I called and went there and had a tour, and I didn’t want to call any other agencies. That’s where I wanted to do volunteer work,” Rath said.

After receiving her bachelor’s degree, she was immediately hired in August of 2012 as the Children Services Coordinator at EPU. She was later promoted to a Family Education Specialist. After receiving her masters degree in Counseling from Fresno State in 2015, Rath began working as a Mental Health Clinician.

“It’s hard to imagine what my path would have been like had it not been for the Richter Center. So much support—and I saw so many students get the same support. The staff there is so passionate about this work.”

Thanks to working at the Richter Center, Rath was able to figure out the direction she wanted to take in life.

“I love my job... one of my favorite parts would be that even before I knew I wanted to work in the mental health field, I knew I wanted to do community work of some kind, specifically in the non-profit sector,” Rath said, “I’m really proud to be a part of that work.”

“We hear from a lot of different students and programs, but certainly students are telling us that their involvement in service is one of, if not, the most meaningful experiences while they’ve been in college,” Fiorentino said.

If you are interested in volunteering with the Richter Center, or would like to have students volunteer with a non-profit organization you are affiliated with, you can connect with the Richter Center through [Facebook](#), or by calling (559) 278-7079.

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Members of the Viticulture Club's original charter, c.1950

Viticulture Club provides networking and education opportunities for grape and wine students

By Britt Foster, Henry Madden Library

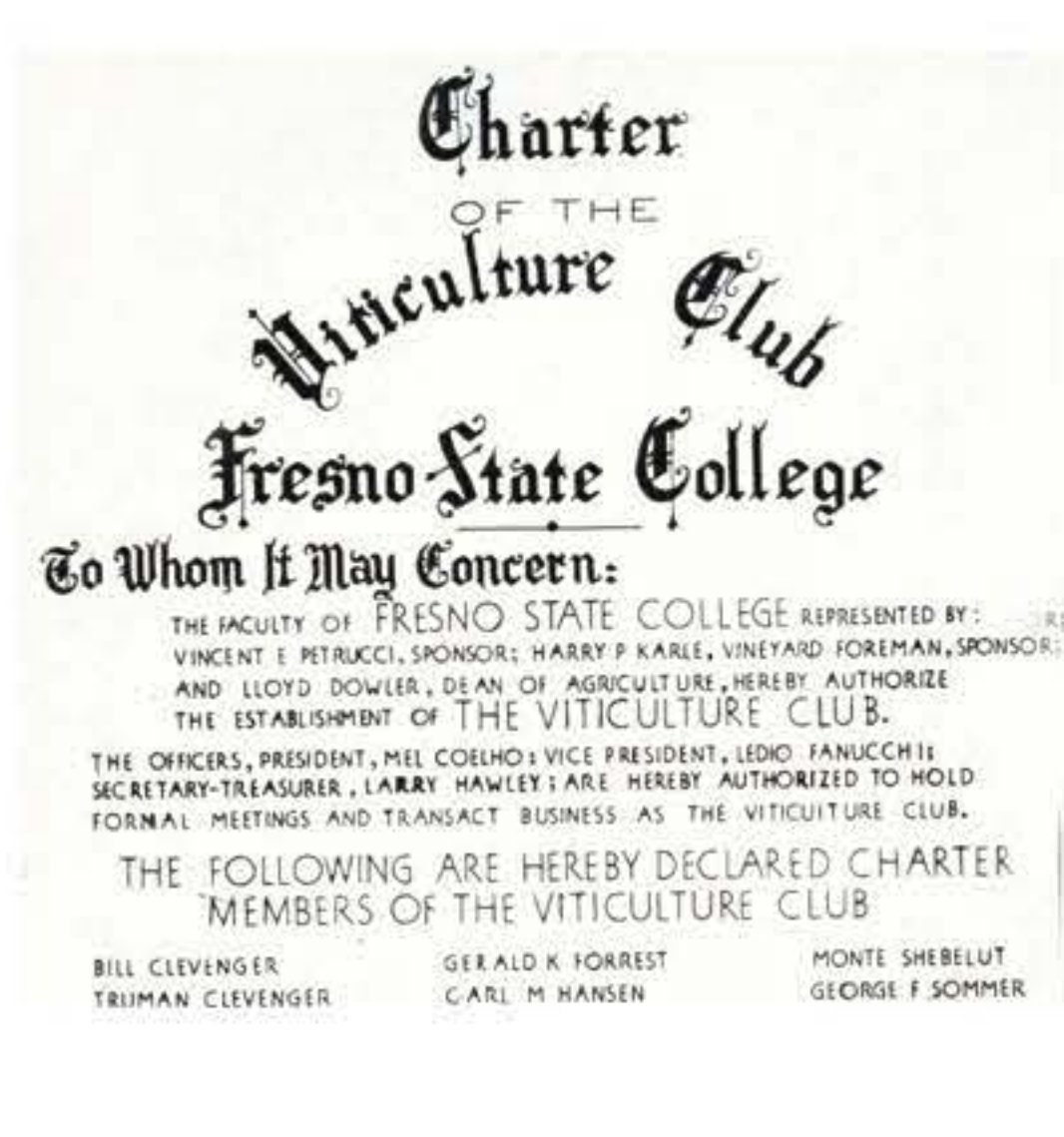
The Viticulture Club is a student club in the Department of Viticulture and Enology, committed to allowing students to explore their passion for grape growing. Founded in 1949 and chartered in June 1952, the Viticulture Club is the student club with the longest continuous charter on Fresno State's campus, with a long history of providing students opportunities to explore grape growing and winemaking beyond their coursework. The club is also very active in the community, supporting Fresno State and other individuals and organizations through service and volunteer work.

When the Viticulture Club was founded, sponsor Dr. Vincent E. Petrucci wanted to be close to the students, and to have the students be close to each other.

"I always felt the association outside the classroom was very important," Dr. Petrucci says, "I believe this is why we have such a strong alumni network, and that continues to this day."

Charter member and alumnus Jack Farrior found his experience in the Viticulture Club to be very helpful.

"We gained exposure to different ideas: you had the experiences of all the members, a shared experience," he says, "I'm very pleased that the connection between alumni and students is still strong."



Original charter of the Viticulture Club

In its earliest years, the Viticulture Club was the founding host for the California State Vine Pruning and Vine Judging contests, and has been recognized by Future Farmers of America (FFA) for its commitment and leadership in providing young agriculturalists training in best practices for pruning and judging grapevines. The Viticulture Club would travel the state, visiting high schools and FFA chapters, demonstrating to students how to prune and examine vines according to the variety or type of grape. The Viticulture Club and the Department of Viticulture and Enology still participate in the vine pruning and judging contests, along with alumni and high school students from all over the state.

On Sunday, April 17th, the Viticulture Club will sponsor the 5th Annual Papa Petrucci Vineyard 5K, a fundraiser for the V.E. Petrucci Library, a collection of Henry Madden Library at Fresno State. To pre-register for the Papa Petrucci 5K, please visit <https://squareup.com/market/fresno-state-vit-club>

Are you a former member of the Viticulture Club? Follow them on [Facebook](#).

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FOUR VALLEY EDUCATORS EARN KREMEN SCHOOL ACCOLADES

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FOUR VALLEY EDUCATORS EARN KREMEN SCHOOL ACCOLADES

Four Valley educators will be honored at the annual Kremen Noted Alumni Dinner at 6 p.m. Thursday, March 17 at Fresno State.

The Kremen School of Education and Human Development Alumni and Friends Chapter will honor these alumni in the University Dining Hall on campus:

- **Robert Aguilar**, superintendent (retired) and educator – Delano Union School District;
- **Kim Mecum**, chief academic officer – Fresno Unified School District;
- **Pauline Sahakian**, director – University of California, Merced Writing Project;
- **Richard Kinney**, science teacher – Buchanan High School, Clovis Unified School District

"We selected these individuals for their significant contributions and passion for education," said Jim Yovino, president of the Kremen Alumni chapter of the Fresno State Alumni Association. "Each honoree is clearly outstanding and deserving of this recognition."

The banquet is open to the public. Tickets are \$40 and available at the Kremen School's Office of the Dean, 559.278.0215.

2016 Kremen noted alumni:

Dr. Robert Aguilar's appointment in 2007 as superintendent of the Delano Union School District was a homecoming for the educational leader, who was a student there in the 1950s and a teacher in the 1960s. Under his leadership, the district opened a new education complex, expanded learning programs and received state recognition for academic achievement.

Aguilar, who was a recipient of the 2015 Top Dog Alumni Award for the Kremen School of Education and Human Development, currently serves as a Kremen School Community Council member and is a driving force behind an initiative to create a teacher pipeline between Fresno State and the South Valley.

Kim Mecum, chief academic officer for the Fresno Unified School District, traces the roots of her journey to executive leadership to her experience in both competitive sports and academics. The Fresno State alumna began her career as a teacher and softball coach in the Central Valley and credits much of her success to being coached by Margie Wright on Fresno State's softball team.

Mecum has worked for Fresno Unified since 1996, rising up the ranks and distinguishing herself as a leader. After a decade serving as associate superintendent of Human Resources and Labor Relations, she was appointed to her current role in 2014, where works with the University on many projects and grants including the Fresno Teacher Residency program, which prepares 300 new teachers in a partnership with the Kremen School.

Dr. Pauline Sahakian was born and raised in Fresno and double majored in English and drama at Fresno State. After earning a secondary teaching credential, she began a 33 year teaching career with Clovis Unified School District. Three times during her teaching career, Sahakian returned to Fresno State, first as a fellow in the San Joaquin Valley Writing Project, then for a master's degree in English, and ultimately to earn a doctoral degree in Educational Leadership. Today she continues to train teachers as the founding director of the UC Merced Writing Project, a position she has held since September 2000. She also taught freshman composition at Fresno State and content area literacy for single subject credential candidates in the Kremen School.

Richard Kinney loves teaching science and earned both his bachelor's degree and teaching credential from Fresno State. He has worked for Clovis Unified School District since 1987, where he currently teaches, mentors, coaches and leads "all things science." He has taken his passion for science to Kastner Intermediate, Alta Sierra Intermediate, Reyburn Intermediate and Buchanan High School, where he currently teaches science, energy technology, and chemistry. He is also robotics team mentor, Science Olympiad assistant coach, and coordinator of the Buchanan Energy Academy and Environmental Research Center. Buchanan was one of 19 schools chosen to participate in the Solar Suitcase Project. Under Kinney's leadership, students will assemble portable solar panel and battery units that will end up in orphanages and health clinics in Kenya.

By Tom Uribes | March 2nd, 2016 | Categories: ALUMNI | Tags: Education Kremen alumni award teaching | 0 Comments

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CSU TRUSTEES TO NAME WELTY CENTER AND BENNETT STADIUM

The California State University Board of Trustees will vote Wednesday to honor Fresno State President Emeritus John D. Welty and former baseball coach Bob Bennett by naming a leadership center and athletic facility, respectively, after them. The CSU Committee on Institutional Advancement approved the naming Tuesday and sent the item to the full board for action.

With this vote, the Central Valley Educational Leadership Institute at Fresno State will become the John D. Welty Center for Educational Policy and Leadership. The Center was established in 2002 under Welty's leadership to elevate educational leadership and eliminate the achievement gap for students in the Central Valley.

"Dr. Welty championed the role of higher education as a catalyst for educational and economic growth in the San Joaquin Valley," Fresno State President Joseph I. Castro said during today's meeting in Long Beach. "The Welty Center for Educational Policy and Leadership at Fresno State will honor his decades of work and continue to improve the San Joaquin Valley region."

The naming recognizes the contributions of several donors in the amount of \$1.1 million to Fresno State's Central Valley Educational Leadership Institute in honor of Welty. These funds will be used to establish a permanent endowment to build the Center into a national model for policy, leadership training and professional development.

Welty is the seventh president in Fresno State's 105-year history. He championed the role of higher education as a catalyst for educational and economic growth. Under his leadership, the University doubled its graduation rate and tripled the number of Hispanic students who earned a college diploma.

The board of trustees will also vote to add the name of Bob Bennett, two-time Fresno State alumnus, student-athlete and coach, to Fresno State's baseball stadium. The facility is now known as Pete Beiden Field at Bob Bennett Stadium.

"Bob Bennett has made many extraordinary contributions to Fresno State baseball," said Castro. "He is a true Bulldog, someone who boldly dedicated his life to this University. We are pleased to show our appreciation for his years of service to Fresno State and the entire San Joaquin Valley through the naming of Bob Bennett Stadium."

Bennett, a Fresno native, became the winningest baseball coach in the University's history, leading the Bulldogs to a 1,302-759-4 record over his 34 seasons. Under his leadership, Fresno State was consistently a national leader in college baseball attendance. As a community leader, Bennett helped spearhead the campaign to raise \$2.2 million to refurbish Beiden Field in 1983.

New signage at the stadium will be revealed during the official ceremony celebrating the new name on May 7.

By Kathleen Schock | March 8th, 2016 | Categories: ALUMNI, CAMPUS & COMMUNITY | Tags: Baseball, Bennett, education, leadership, Stadium, Turstees, Welty | 0 Comments

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CSU Chancellor Extends Research Study into Student Hunger, Homelessness Issues

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Food and housing insecurity impact more than 100,000 CSU undergraduates

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California State University Chancellor Timothy P. White announced today that he is extending ongoing research to better understand and address the housing and food security needs (/csu-system/media-center/documents/migrated/cohomelessstudy.pdf?10000) of college students across the 23-campus system. The CSU is the first public university system in the nation to conduct extensive research on these issues with the aim of developing systemic solutions that will enable students to succeed and graduate.

The number of students who experience food insecurity is largely undocumented and unknown, and the number of homeless students is underreported. Students who experience homelessness are not required to identify themselves, and because of the stigma associated with homelessness, they can be reluctant to seek help.

“Systems need to be implemented in every college and university in the country to find these students and ensure that they reach their full potential without worrying about where their next meal is coming from or where they will be sleeping,” White said.

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By commissioning further study into these issues, White affirmed his commitment to the principle of achieving excellence through inclusivity. "It is our shared responsibility to chart the course that is responsive to the needs of all students and to empower student success by combining quality education with opportunity."

The first phase of the study began in April 2015 as part of White's focus on inclusive excellence, which he defines as "recognizing that a university's success depends on valuing, engaging and including a rich diversity of campus voices." Phase II will be led by Rashida Crutchfield, Ed.D., MSW of CSU Long Beach and Jennifer Maguire, Ph.D., MSW of Humboldt State University. Both campuses have pioneered campus-based support through student emergency intervention and food cupboard programs.

Over the next two years, the goal of the qualitative and quantitative research will be to use the findings of the initial study, which included a survey of faculty, staff, students and administrators, to confirm the scope of the problem and identify best practices with the aim of launching campus-based intervention programs to support student success and degree completion efforts.

According to the Phase I study results, an estimated 8 to 12 percent of students live in unstable housing situations, and 21 to 24 percent are food insecure. The study also found that students who are experiencing food or housing instability report high levels of stress and the need for single points of contact on campus.

The study found that 11 campuses offer programs for food insecure students, and five incorporate students' needs into their campus mission and student success initiatives. Examples include:



"3 Wins" for Students, Participants and Communities...

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STUDENT SUCCESS



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- Cal State Long Beach's Student Emergency Intervention Program provides meals, short-term temporary housing, emergency funds, and linkages to on and off campus support services.
- Humboldt State's Oh SNAP! Campus Food Programs offers free non-perishable food, local farm produce, cooking classes for healthy meals on a budget, food recovery programs, and access to government-funded food assistance benefits.
- Cal State San Bernardino's Delivering Emergency Nourishment (DEN) is a food pantry stocked by contributions from the community.
- Cal Poly Cares at the San Luis Obispo campus offers support for housing, meals, school supplies, clothing and emergency funds.
- Sacramento State's Hornet Proud Fund helps students in financial crisis and nutritious food through a new food pantry.
- The Hungry Wildcat Program at Chico State has helped more than 100 students avoid hunger since its inception in 2012.
- CSU Dominguez Hills offers a food pantry and Hot Meal Card program.
- And, Fresno State has its Food Security Project that offers students in need healthy food, hygiene items and educational programs.

Based on the Phase I study, researchers made several recommendations:

- Establishing a systemwide policy, institutional

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leadership and sustainable financial support for training and support services;




- Conducting further research on student experiences;
- Implementing best practice models; and
- Increasing advocacy participation.

White emphasized that, although several campuses have already put programs in place to deal with the problem, more campuses are being urged to follow the trend. In addition, he said funding for further research and piloting is essential “if we are going to enhance our understanding of this student population, their experiences, services and rates of retention.”

###

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ALUMNI JAN KAHN, SARAH CLARK WOOLF NAMED TO FRESNO STATE ADVISORY BOARDS

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ALUMNI JAN KAHN, SARAH CLARK WOOLF NAMED TO FRESNO STATE ADVISORY BOARDS

President Joseph I. Castro has appointed two Fresno State alumni to advisory boards at the University.

Jan L. Kahn will join the University Advisory Board, a panel of community members who provide advice to Castro on improvement and development of the University. Kahn is a founding partner in the law firm of Kahn, Soares & Conway, LLP. The firm has offices in Hanford and Sacramento.

Kahn's areas of practice include agricultural law, land and water resource issues, business transactions, eminent domain and employment and labor law.

Kahn earned a degree in social sciences in 1969 from Fresno State and a Juris Doctorate at the University of the Pacific, McGeorge School of Law. He is a member of the board of trustees of the San Joaquin College of Law and the College of Sequoias Community Advisory Committee, and a member of the board of directors of the ALLY Foundation.

Sarah Clark Woolf will join the Fresno State Agricultural Foundation Board. Woolf is president of Water Wise, a water management company for farmers in the San Joaquin Valley. She is also a partner and active member of the family business, Clark Bros., which is engaged in farming, land leveling, heavy construction and rental properties.

Woolf and her husband participate in over 30,000 acres of farming operations in Westlands Water District, Fresno Irrigation District and many other smaller water districts throughout the state. She is a director on the board of Westlands Water District.

Woolf, a native of Dos Palos, earned a degree in agricultural business from Fresno State in 1993. She previously worked in produce sales and served as district director and chief of staff for Rep. Calvin Dooley. She also worked in public relations and as a community outreach consultant for Westlands Water District.

"These two distinguished Fresno State alums, who have significant expertise regarding agriculture and the Central Valley, will be valuable partners in further strengthening our campus programs and ties to the community," Castro said.

By Shirley Armbruster | February 12th, 2016 | Categories: ALUMNI, CAMPUS & COMMUNITY | Tags: Advisory Board, Agriculture, alumni, Castro, Law | 0 Comments

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BILLEN WINS AACTE AWARD FOR INSTAGRAM STUDY

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BILLEN WINS AACTE AWARD FOR INSTAGRAM STUDY

Monica Billen, assistant professor in the [Kremen School of Education and Human Development](#), was presented the 2016 Outstanding Dissertation Award at the [American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education \(AACTE\)](#) conference in Las Vegas. The award recognized Billen for her study, [#Learningtoteach: Using Instagram to Elicit Pre-service Teacher Reflection](#), completed at the University of Tennessee. The study looked at an innovative reflection method utilized by teachers in training, which combined photo reflections with written and oral reflections. Dr. Paul Beare, dean of the Kremen School, called Billen's a "unique, innovative and rigorous" study that used a "cutting-edge method that has not been done in education before."

By Tom Uribes | March 7th, 2016 | Categories: [PRESS RELEASES](#) | Tags: [faculty/staff](#) | 0 Comments

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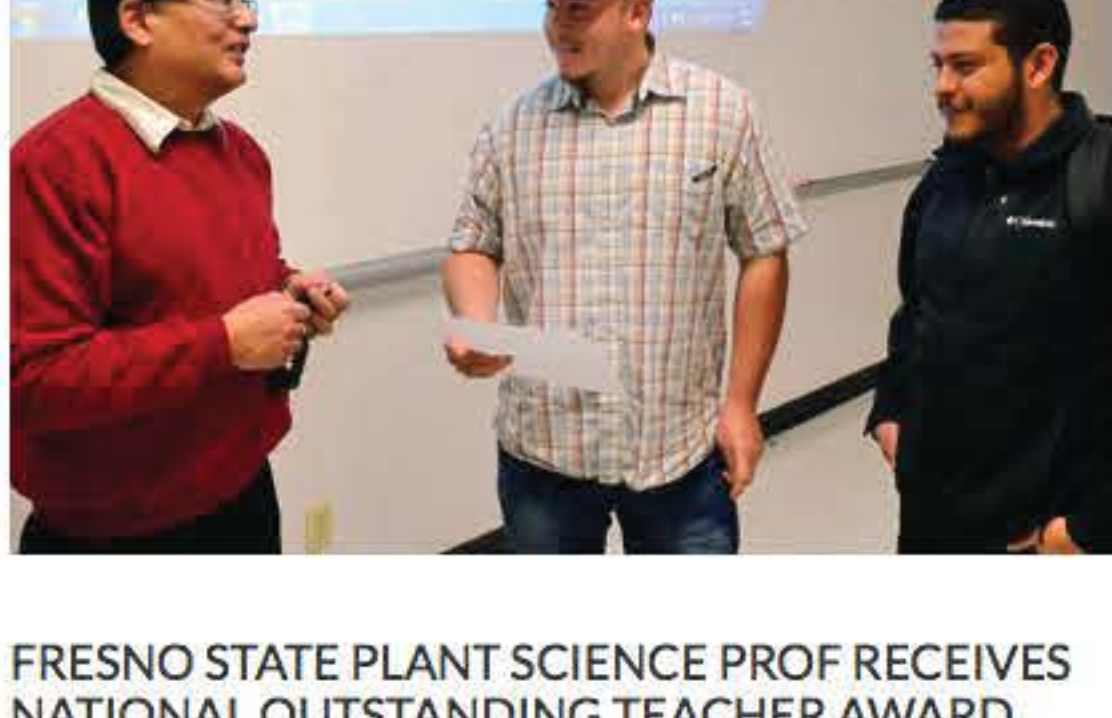
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FRESNO STATE PLANT SCIENCE PROF RECEIVES NATIONAL OUTSTANDING TEACHER AWARD

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FRESNO STATE PLANT SCIENCE PROF RECEIVES NATIONAL OUTSTANDING TEACHER AWARD

Fresno State plant science professor Dr. Anil Shrestha received the Weed Science Society of America's Outstanding Teacher Award at its national conference Feb. 9 in San Juan, Puerto Rico.

Shrestha was one of 30 honorees that received various national awards based on teaching effectiveness, published research, graduate student advising, prior awards, academic and professional leadership roles and student honors.

"It is wonderful to see that the Dr. Shrestha has been recognized nationally for his excellent work," said Sandra Witte, interim dean for the Jordan College of Agricultural Sciences and Technology. "His unique style of educating students through real-life learning experiences makes him truly deserving of the award."

Shrestha teaches classes in plant health, plant science, biometrics, weed science, pest management and crop productivity. His primary research is in integrated vegetation management in agricultural and non-agricultural systems.

His other research interests include weed biology and ecology, crop-weed competition, herbicide resistance management, vegetation management, cropping systems, agroecology, conservation tillage and organic farming.

"Dr. Shrestha is known for including students in his research and encouraging them to attend conferences where they can network with future colleagues," Witte said. "Several of his students have been recognized on campus for their own outstanding research, and they are grateful for the part that he plays in their success."

Last spring he was honored with the Provost's Award for Excellence in Teaching — the University's top faculty honor — and a campus-wide outstanding adviser award.

He also received the 2014 California Weed Science Society Award of Excellence and 2013 Weed Science Society of America Outstanding Review Award. Last August he was named Winrock International's August 2015 Volunteer of the Month for helping create a weed science graduate program and faculty biometric training sessions at universities in Nepal.

He serves as a committee member for the Western Integrated Pest Management Center. He previously served as executive chair of the University of California Weed Workgroup and as a member of the California Department of Pesticide Regulation Director's Agricultural Pest Control Advisory Committee.

For a complete list of 2016 Weed Science Society of America award winners, visit [2016 Award Winners Named by Weed Science Society of America](#).

By Eddie Hughes | February 12th, 2016 | Categories: [PRESS RELEASES](#), [RESEARCH](#) | Tags: [Ag](#), [Anil Shrestha](#), [Jordan College of Agricultural Sciences and Technology](#), [Outstanding Teacher Award](#), [plant science](#), [weed science](#), [Weed Science Society of America](#) | [0 Comments](#)

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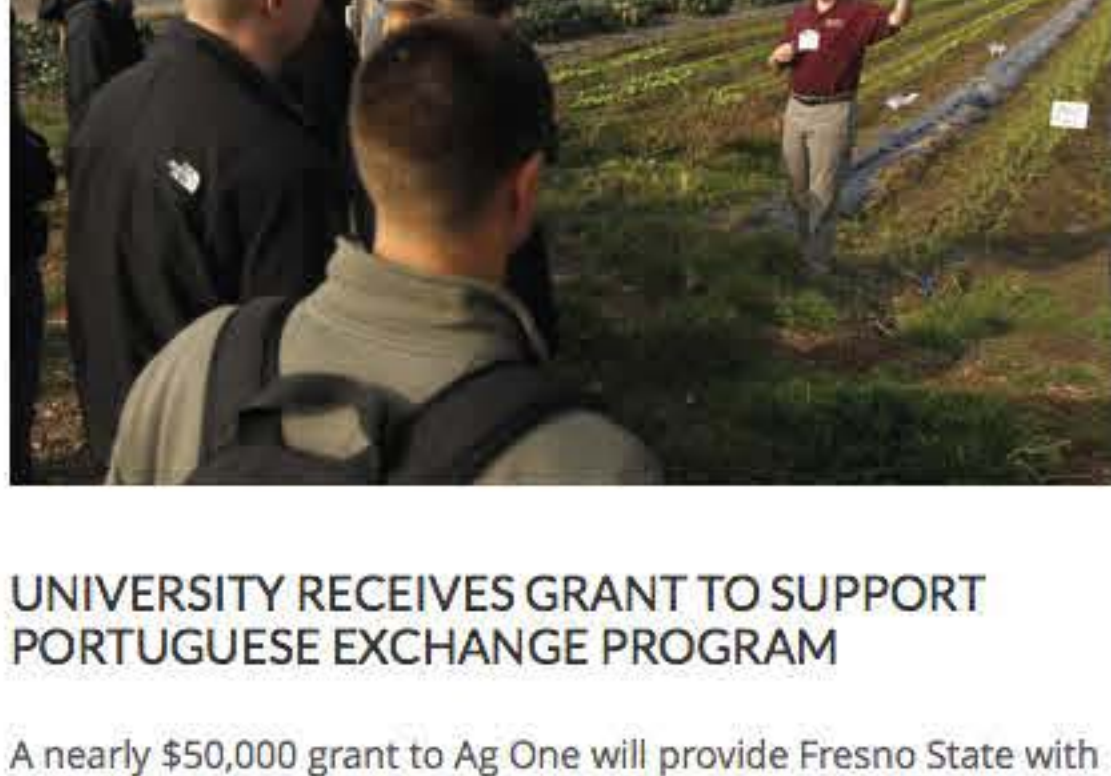
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UNIVERSITY RECEIVES GRANT TO SUPPORT PORTUGUESE EXCHANGE PROGRAM

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UNIVERSITY RECEIVES GRANT TO SUPPORT PORTUGUESE EXCHANGE PROGRAM

A nearly \$50,000 grant to Ag One will provide Fresno State with seed funding to forge a new international relationship in support of agricultural education.

Lisbon-based Luso-American Development Foundation (FLAD) gave \$49,000 to launch a partnership between Fresno State and the University of the Azores, which will open educational and research opportunities for students and faculty at both institutions.

“This incredible grant from FLAD provides the startup support necessary to cultivate an international partnership with a region of the world that has significant economic and cultural ties to the Central Valley and the Jordan College,” said Dr. Sandra Witte, interim dean of the Jordan College of Agricultural Sciences and Technology. “This support paves the way for an ongoing partnership that will benefit agriculture both the Central Valley and the Azores for years to come.”

FLAD president Dr. Vasco Rato, along with fellow executive board member Dr. Michael Baum and director Miguel Vaz, will join Fresno State President Joseph I. Castro and other University officials for a reception and gift announcement at 4 p.m. today in the Fresno State winery. Also joining them will be the University’s First Lady Mary Castro, who is of Azorean descent.

The partnership is expected to offer a two-way exchange, creating opportunities for Fresno State students to study in Portugal, as well as for faculty and students from the University of the Azores to learn about agriculture, government relations and Portuguese-American culture in the Central Valley.

“FLAD is happy to contribute to this new exchange program that will indeed be important for the bilateral relations between Portugal and the United States in an area that is so important to the Azores and the Central Valley: agriculture,” said Rato.

Since its founding in 1985, FLAD has supported projects involving scientific institutions, universities, the business community and other organizations from Portugal and the United States. With a focus on economic and scientific cooperation between the two nations, as well as on promoting Portuguese language and culture in the U.S., Fresno State offers an opportunity to connect to the deep agricultural ties of the Portuguese community in the Valley.

“We greatly appreciate the vision and leadership of Dr. Rato and FLAD toward furthering the relationship between Fresno State agriculture, Portuguese-Americans in the Central Valley and the Azores. As a native of the Azores myself, this is an especially amazing day,” said Alcidia Freitas Gomes, executive director of Ag One and senior director of development for the Jordan College.

Efforts are underway to raise additional support to further fund the partnership between Fresno State and the University of the Azores. The two institutions are expected to finalize their agreement this summer.

For more information or to discuss support opportunities for this program or the Jordan College, contact Alcidia Freitas Gomes at 559.278.4266 or alcidia@csufresno.edu.

By Kathleen Schock | March 7th, 2016 | Categories: ACADEMICS | Tags: Ag one Foundation, Philanthropy Agriculture Portugal Exchange | 0 Comments

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Saturday, March 12, 2016

10:00 am – 12:00 pm

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Fresno State

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