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# Alum's life work: Transforming hate into love in Africa and around the globe

## TOP STORIES

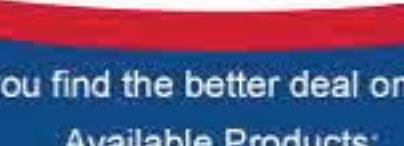


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[Ofelia Gamez installed as national HEP/CAMP president](#)

[University Theatre announces 2015-2016 season schedule](#)

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[NIH grant charts path to UC Merced Ph.D. for Fresno State students](#)

## CLASS NOTES

**Dr. Scott Sailor (1988)** is the new president of the National Athletic Trainers' Association (NATA).

**Bruce Batti (1977)**, owner and operator of Jeffrey Scott Advertising, was awarded the Fresno Advertising Federation's 2015 "Agency of the Year."

**Jim Pardini (1968)** opened The Annex Kitchen, an Italian-inspired restaurant.

**Matt Morse (2010)** of KMPH FOX 26 was awarded the Fresno Advertising Federation's 2015 "Professional of the Year."

**Mark Torres (2008, '10)** is an account manager at TechValidate Software in Emeryville, CA.

**Esther Ramos (Alumna)** of Univision was awarded the Fresno Advertising Federation's 2015 "Outstanding Media Sales Person of the Year."

**Timothy John Woods (1992)** is the vice president of instruction at Fresno City College.

**Grant G. Bedrosian (2008, '11)** is now teaching sixth grade with Central Unified School District.

**Janice Noga (1968, '80) and Oscar Speace (1971)** produced an Off-Off Broadway run of "Janka," starring Noga in the one-woman piece written by Speace.

**Jordan Rossi (2012)** has been named the new executive director of the Museum & Archives of Rockingham County (the MARC).

**Brittany Giersch (2007)** is the store manager of lululemon athletica, the trendy sportswear retailer that just opened its first Fresno full-sized store in Fig Garden Village.

**Christina Louise Kwock (2008)** was awarded a doctor of medicine degree from the University of California, San Francisco on May 19.

**Raymond F. Ensher (1956)** recently received two awards from the California Retired Teachers' Association: Ron Ely Award for Communications and Mickey Matheson Award for Advocacy. He also established the Raymond Ensher Creative Achievement Theatre Arts Award – and endowed scholarship with the Fresno State Alumni Association that annually supports the overall most promising student from Fresno State's University Theatre.

**Michael Feldman (1995)** was recently named the head of the Wealth Markets Union for Union Bank.

**Tejpal Singh Mahil (1999)** of Madera was named to the University Advisory Board.

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## EVENTS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

AUG 28

### Sigma Chi Golf Tournament

Join us for the Sigma Chi Golf Tournament to benefit the Epsilon Eta chapter ritual. 18 holes with a 12 p.m. start time and shotgun start. Lunch is included. Tickets are \$80 per player.

#### LOCATION

Fig Garden Golf Course  
7700 N. Van Ness Blvd, Fresno, CA

SEP 16

### The California State Society's Back to College Night

Join us, the Fresno State Alumni Association, for a networking opportunity at The California State Society's Back to College Night! The event is free to attend. Register by September 14.

#### LOCATION

Rayburn House Office Building Cafeteria  
Capitol Hill, Washington, D.C.

OCT 9

### 2015 Top Dog Alumni Awards Gala

Make your reservations for the 2015 Top Dog Alumni Awards Gala at the Save Mart Center! The Fresno State Alumni Association is proud to award more than \$147,000 in student scholarships this year, leading the 23 CSU campuses in student scholarship giving.

#### LOCATION

Save Mart Center  
2650 East Shaw Avenue, Fresno, CA 93710

NOV 7

### 2nd Annual Winemaker's Dinner

Join us for the 2nd Annual Winemaker's Dinner at The Narrow Gauge Inn just minutes away from the beautiful Yosemite Valley. This is your chance to meet and mingle with our new winemaker, Matt Brain. We are very happy to have him on the winery team! Enjoy an evening in the woods eating a delectable 5 course meal, paired with Fresno State's finest wines.

#### LOCATION

The Narrow Gauge Inn  
48571 CA-41, Fish Camp, CA 93623

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How cute is this paw print art project?! We think @VictorEBulldog needs to make one...

@FresnoStateAlum 5:35 PM - 10 Jul 2015

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# Alums life work: Transforming hate into love in Africa and around the globe

By ESRA HASHEM, Student Writer

Photo by Esra Hashem

For Professor and Rev. John Stanfield II (1973), earning four university degrees, an illustrious career in academia researching sociological theories and publishing multiple titles could not compare to the rewarding, hands-on international work he is doing now in developing countries.

“This is my way of making a major transition in my career and life, from the United States to Africa,” Stanfield said. “I am very much interested in doing what I can to apply my skills for the empowerment and development of Africans. And you can’t do that unless you do it globally.”

Stanfield is a professor of African studies, American studies and international studies at Indiana University Bloomington, where he will soon be emeritus. He is also the director of the Research Project on Transcultural and Intercultural Studies at the university.

He is currently on leave to work internationally. For the 2014–15 academic year, Stanfield served as a distinguished professor and founding director of the Mogae International Development and Governance Research Institute of the recently established Botswana International University for Science and Technology in Palapye, Botswana.

But his journey toward academia and activism started as an [Educational Opportunity Program](#) (EOP) student at Fresno State.

Travelling from the Sacramento area to Fresno for schooling, he received his bachelor’s degree in sociology in 1973. He later pursued his master’s and Ph.D at Northwestern University, completing his doctorate at the young age of 25. Stanfield also possesses a master’s degree in sacred theology from Boston University, which he received in 2005.

He said it was professors at Fresno State who inspired him to pursue an academic career in sociology.

“You have to understand that there was a lost era in Fresno State’s history: The era of 1970 to 1975,” Stanfield said. “Usually, when you think of activism, you think of the 1960s here at Fresno State and all the commotion that happened here. But there was something else that happened here, even more amazing, and it was structural: The development of a brand new department, called the Department of Sociology.”

Professors like S. John Dackawich, Robert “Dugan” Webber and William Beatty particularly inspired Stanfield.

Dackawich, Stanfield said, made sociology relevant by creating a culture of pushing students toward graduate school. Webber, who taught classical theory, was a mentor who challenged undergraduates with advanced coursework. Beatty was an anthropologist who was considered to be “the most demanding professor in the College of Social Sciences.” A class he taught about minorities would typically start the semester with 35 students and end with about 15, according to Stanfield.

*“It was people like that, who weren’t just teachers, but in their own right were activists,” Stanfield said. “They told us to be very diverse in how we approach the world ... I wouldn’t be sitting here if they didn’t see something in me. They insisted that I move ahead in a quality way.”*

Stanfield has since had a dynamic and fulfilling career working in prestigious universities like Yale, University of Texas at San Antonio, University of Tennessee, College of William and Mary, University of California, Davis, Morehouse College (the alma mater of Martin Luther King, Jr.) and, in his current position since 2002, at Indiana University Bloomington.

“But eventually I decided it was time to do some international work,” Stanfield said. “Before then, everything was theoretical. Even though I used to teach comparative studies of race and racism, it was all really based upon what I read.”

Stanfield has worked in South America, Europe, Asia and Africa, consulting numerous nonprofit and government boards in his effort to pursue restorative justice for oppressed, marginalized, stigmatized and neglected people in communities globally.

Working on usually eight to ten projects at one time, Stanfield meets with policymakers and scholars on a regular basis, helping them come up with an alternative way to deal with issues in deeply divided societies and nation states that have been devastated through slavery, apartheid, civil war and genocide.

*“What I want to be remembered for is helping people—be they policymakers, government or ordinary citizens—helping people develop best practices in societies where people basically grew up hating each other,” he said. “How do we transform hate into love? How do we transform being separated and segregated into being inclusive? Understanding that, at the end of the day, we’re all human beings—how do we do that?”*

Stanfield calls himself a motivator, and said he is gifted in bringing people together who don’t ordinarily meet—people who need to work together to make something happen of significance.

Working with people and being open with others is a tool he hopes sociology students today learn early on in their careers.

*“Something that is so hard to learn when you’re young and you’re driven is the importance of building good relationships with people,” Stanfield said. “Never ever take yourself or others for granted. Learn how to say hello to everybody. You don’t know who’s sitting next to you in the classroom, or on the plane or a train. Be genuine, because when you’re like that, you don’t have to be plotting to get to the next point. Things will come to you.”*

What is Stanfield’s next step? Nigeria, he hopes. He said he is part of an effort to build a system supporting private universities across Africa and private historically black universities in the U.S. Meanwhile, he is transitioning into the global virtual doctoral studies faculty world while residing in Johannesburg, South Africa, and is a visiting scholar in two South African universities.

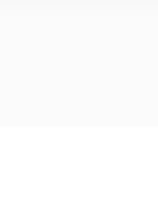
“I guess you could say that my academic career has been one of self-actualization rather than being a step-by-step career person,” he said. “I do what I think is right to do, where I can be helpful. And God has taken care of me meanwhile, in every place I’ve been.”



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# Life after a life-changing accident: How one alum turned his life around

By HANNAH POORE, Student Writer

Photos by Cary Edmondson

Harry Sager (1987) thought he had everything figured out before he got in the car accident that changed his life forever.

Sager grew up in Fresno. He was popular at school and had many friends; he was athletic, a three-sport athlete at Clovis High; he played instruments. But his family was “dysfunctional” — he was beaten at home by his father, he never felt good enough at anything he did and he was never told he was loved. He began using drugs in the eighth grade. He didn’t value grades or classwork, didn’t know how to study and didn’t apply himself to his schoolwork.

After high school he attended Fresno City College, where he began to apply himself, earning straight A’s. He transferred from Fresno City College to Fresno State in 1980.

Sager said he had a great time at Fresno State. He joined Lambda Chi Alpha fraternity, and made many friends while living what he called a “sex, drugs, rock ‘n’ roll lifestyle.” The fun came at a price, though. Sager lost focus on his grades and his GPA plummeted to 1.9. Unfortunately, he never experienced any negative consequences from his poor grades, so he saw no reason to change his lifestyle.

Then one night in 1985, after an evening of heavy drinking and cocaine use—a common occurrence for him and his friends—he was at Olive and Armstrong avenues in Fresno when it happened. He was thrown out of his car onto the road, where another car ran him over. He was the only person in his car and the roads were empty, so when he was thrown onto the road, he stayed there until someone drove by and saw him.

*The accident left Sager, at age 26, in a coma for an entire month. He had brain damage, and after he woke up from the coma, was in a daily rehabilitation program for ten months where he had to relearn everything — “How to take care of myself, how to survive,” he said.*

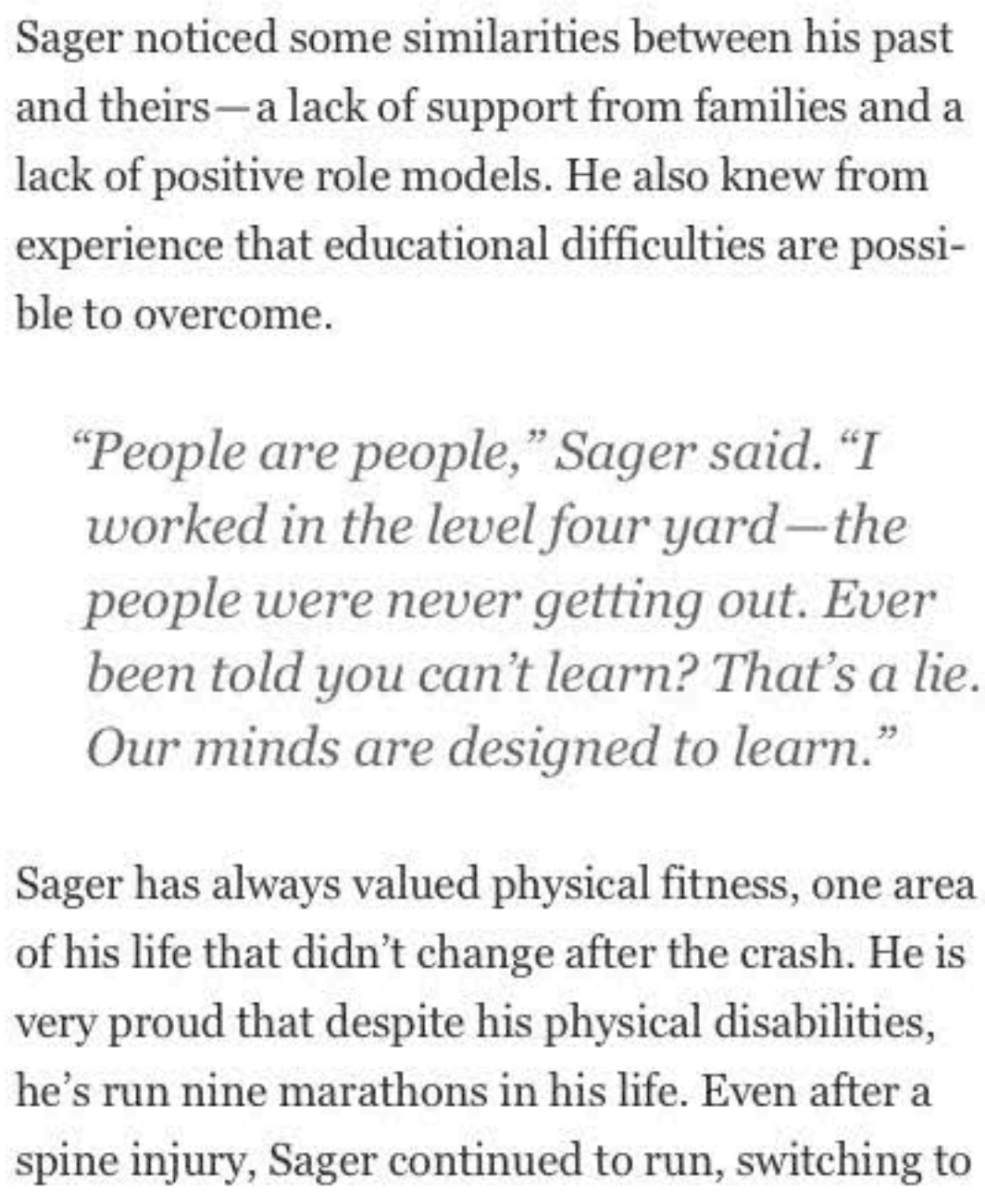
When he woke up from his coma, he learned that he had been surrounded by support the entire time. Friends visited every day, and his mother never left the hospital during his entire stay.

Nurses brought mattresses into the waiting room so his visitors could spend the night near him. He felt so thankful for all of the support.

After the crash, Sager said his life took a complete 180-degree turn in the opposite direction. Instead of filling his life with “sex, drugs and rock ‘n’ roll,” he filled it with Jesus, accepting Jesus into his life as a mentor, something he had never had before.

After the accident, Sager said, “I had a strange presence that I was never alone. I wasn’t alone and I had a purpose: To live for God.”

Just two years after the accident and relearning how to function during rehabilitation, Sager finished his degree in agricultural science at Fresno State, managing to bring his GPA up to a 3.3, something he’s very proud of.



After a short stint working at a ranch, Sager spent 12 summers working at Wild Water Adventure Park in Clovis. Being older than most Wild Water Adventures employees, semi-disabled, and having difficulty speaking, Sager said that most of his coworkers avoided him and didn’t show interest in getting to know him or his story. To overcome this, Sager began writing a feature article in the company’s newsletter. He called the story “Wild Harry’s Adventure.” It was his testament of how Jesus had worked in his life. The story helped bridge the divide, helping him and his co-workers develop better relationships.

Sager’s long-term goal was to become a teacher and motivate others. He worked as a substitute teacher for 13 years in the Fresno Unified and Central Unified school districts. In 2002, he obtained his master’s in education degree in multicultural teaching, earning a 3.6 GPA. After that, he taught a basic education class at a jail in Selma. His students were all inmates that were serving life sentences.

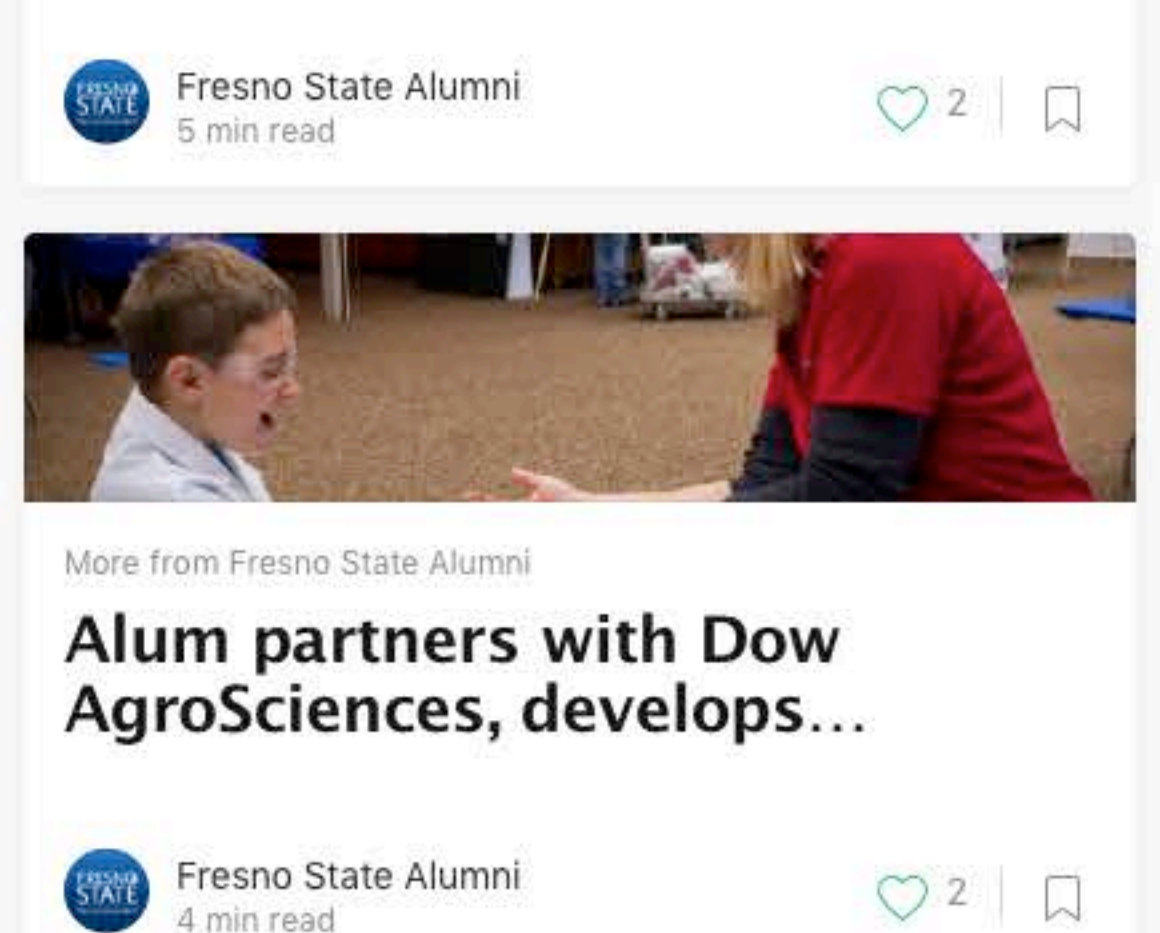
Sager noticed some similarities between his past and theirs—a lack of support from families and a lack of positive role models. He also knew from experience that educational difficulties are possible to overcome.

*“People are people,” Sager said. “I worked in the level four yard—the people were never getting out. Ever been told you can’t learn? That’s a lie. Our minds are designed to learn.”*

Sager has always valued physical fitness, one area of his life that didn’t change after the crash. He is very proud that despite his physical disabilities, he’s run nine marathons in his life. Even after a spine injury, Sager continued to run, switching to running in a pool. He said staying active, whether in the water or at GB3, his gym which he calls a support group, helps him with his movements.

Sager is a member of Fresno churches The Well and Northwest Church.

“I like to be part of big groups,” he said. “The Lord has me at two different churches.”



He also sings in two choirs, the choir at Northwest Church, and Hearts on Fire in the Tower District, a rock ‘n’ roll choir that often sings Michael Jackson songs and performs at places like nursing homes. Singing helps Sager with his vocal impediments, and allows him to be a part of other groups of people.

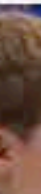
He volunteers as a mentor at a couple of Fresno schools every week, and encourages others to stay away from the kind of life he lived before his crash and to strive for the kind of life he lives today.

He has also volunteered at Fresno State. Since being interviewed by Rabina Lally, a student ambassador with the Fresno State Alumni Association’s Discovery Program, Sager has volunteered at the FSAA Beer and Wine Garden during Vintage Days and at the 2015 Commencement ceremony.

Sager’s advice to others? “Find Jesus. Jesus is the whole point. God is love. We were created to praise Him.”



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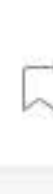


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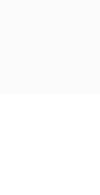
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Photo courtesy of Colleen Sullivan

## Bulldogs staying connected across the nation

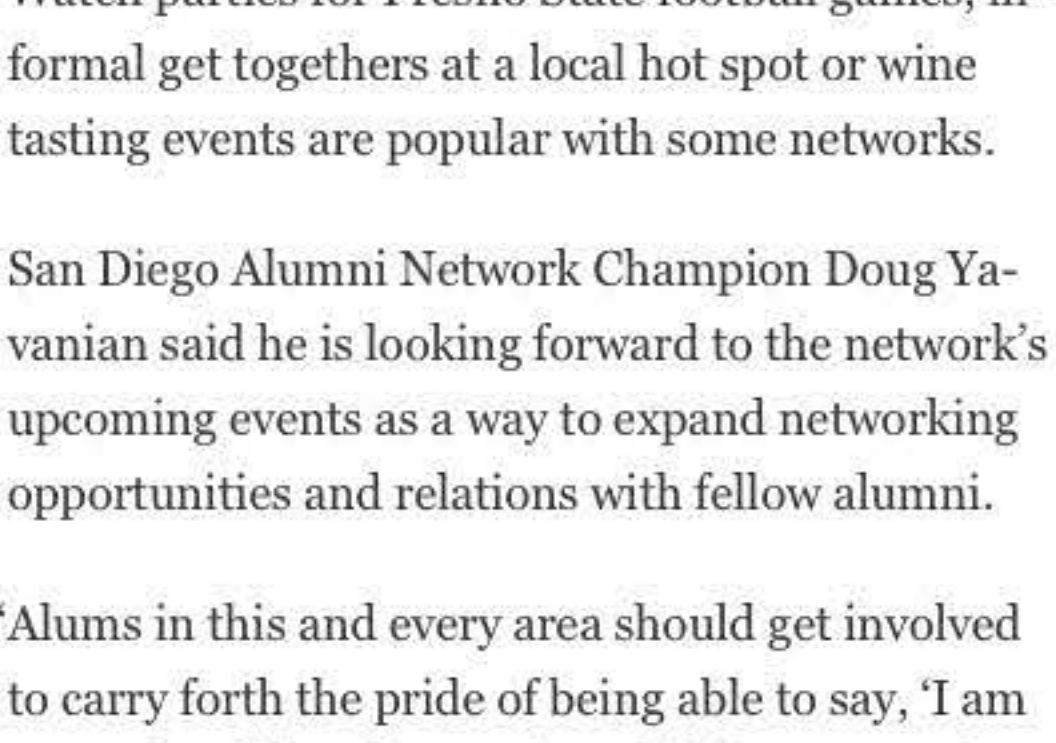
By **ESRA HASHEM**, Student Writer

With more than 123,000 Fresno State alumni living outside of the Central Valley, how do they stay connected with one another as Bulldogs? The Fresno State Alumni Association maintains regionally-based groups — called networks — in areas throughout the nation. These groups are opportunities for alumni who live outside of the local area to connect with each other and support Fresno State.

Currently, there are six existing networks: the Beach Cities Alumni Network (Long Beach, Seal Beach and Huntington Beach), the Las Vegas Alumni Network, the San Diego Alumni Network, the Seattle Alumni Network, the SF Bay Area Alumni Network and the Washington D.C. Alumni Network.

Each network has at least one champion, or alum from the region who have said they would like to lead the charge. Champions stay connected directly with the alumni association and provide opportunities for alumni in their network to engage with each other.

*“The great thing about networks, just like with our chapters and clubs, is really it’s for anyone who is a supporter of Fresno State,” said Matthew Schulz, who oversees the alumni association’s chapters, clubs and networks. “So, certainly it’s for our alum, but you could be a donor to Fresno State or just be a friend to Fresno State. Somebody that is passionate about Fresno State, about the university, about Bulldogs. Anybody can get involved with a network.”*



Bay Area alum at a Fresno State football watch party / Photo courtesy of Mark Torres

Networks usually hold two core events per year. Watch parties for Fresno State football games, informal get togethers at a local hot spot or wine tasting events are popular with some networks.

San Diego Alumni Network Champion Doug Yavanian said he is looking forward to the network’s upcoming events as a way to expand networking opportunities and relations with fellow alumni.

“Alums in this and every area should get involved to carry forth the pride of being able to say, ‘I am a proud Bulldog.’” Yavanian said. “We recognize that these [networks] are not for everybody, but the participation of those who get involved will certainly help enhance the stature of the university as one of the best in the CSU system.”

Fellow champion of the San Diego Alumni Network and young alum Colleen Sullivan agrees, adding that she is looking forward to future tailgates, watch parties and wine tasting events the network might hold soon.

“Because they’re more regionally based, we really want to develop networks so that they are a reflection of the interests of our alumni in that geographic location,” Schulz said. “Our thinking is that if we can help them identify and meet each other, then as often as they’d like to do things—whatever it may be—they can get together and do that. It’s really kind of organic in that regard.”

Las Vegas Alumni Network Champion Andrea Alires said she is looking forward to connecting with Bulldogs in the southern Nevada area this fall. On September 12, alumni from the area will gather together at Nacho Daddy in Henderson, Nevada for a Fresno State football watch party.

“We are excited to develop a social and business connection for the group,” Alires said.

*“It is important that all members—whether you are a recent graduate or a seasoned alum—have the opportunity and experience to stay engaged with fellow Bulldogs.”*

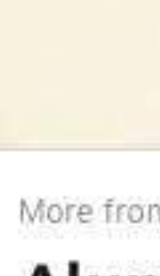
Some networks that are currently in the works, or that are areas of consideration for networks, include New York, the greater Los Angeles area and the south Central Valley (Tulare, Bakersfield and Visalia).



Find your local network on Facebook by visiting <http://www.fresnostate.edu/alumni/chapters/networks.html>

If you’d like to get involved in your local network, visit the alumni association’s website to contact your area’s champion or join the network’s Facebook group.

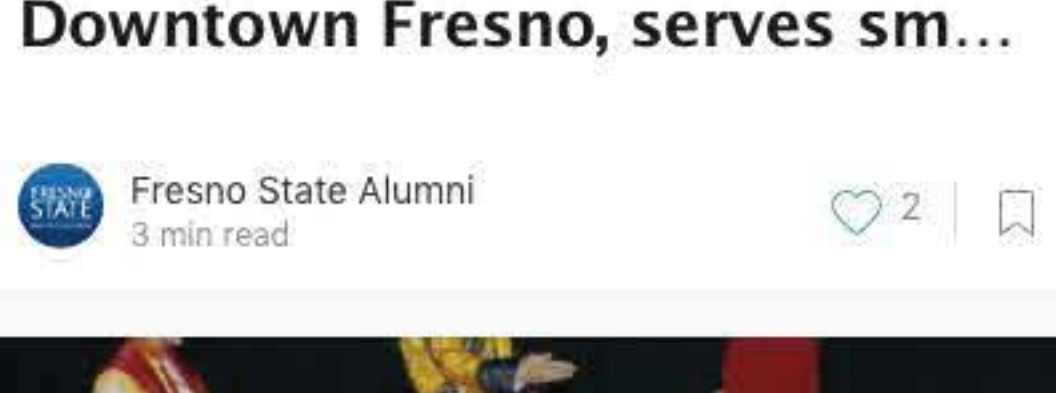
If you are interested in establishing a network in your area, contact Matthew Schulz at [mschulz@csufresno.edu](mailto:mschulz@csufresno.edu).



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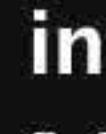




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# Graduate students bring art and the university into the city

By **ESRA HASHEM**, Student Writer

Photos by Cary Edmondson

Fresno State graduate students have been utilizing a new downtown facility dedicated to providing them work space and enhancing Fresno's art culture. The Graduate Art Studios, Fresno State's first satellite campus, was opened on May 7. The facility is a collaboration between the College of Arts and Humanities, Granville and downtown Fresno.

*"It's probably one of the first of its kind here in Fresno County," said Miguel Flores, a Fresno State alumnus and graduate student studying painting. "It's the spirit of bringing the university into the city, rather than having the city and the community come to Fresno State. We are now putting ourselves out there."*



The facility, which is on the corner of M Street and Tuolumne Street, contains a conference room, galleries and 15 private working studios for the students. It is a 6,000-square-foot space that is part of Granville's 22,000-square-foot M Street Arts Complex.

At any given time, graduate students like Flores can be found in the Graduate Art Studios researching, collaborating with other artists and faculty or simply working quietly on their art.

Flores, who graduated from Fresno State with his bachelor's degree in 2012, is now part of a small cohort of graduate art students utilizing the facility.

Prior to the launch of the Graduate Art Studios, he and his cohort shared a working space with undergraduate students on the Fresno State campus. The on-campus studio was often used to host several painting classes throughout the day and could not house the graduate students' work.

Flores said that studio was at times "limiting," and that the Graduate Art Studios has made a world of difference for him and his fellow artists.

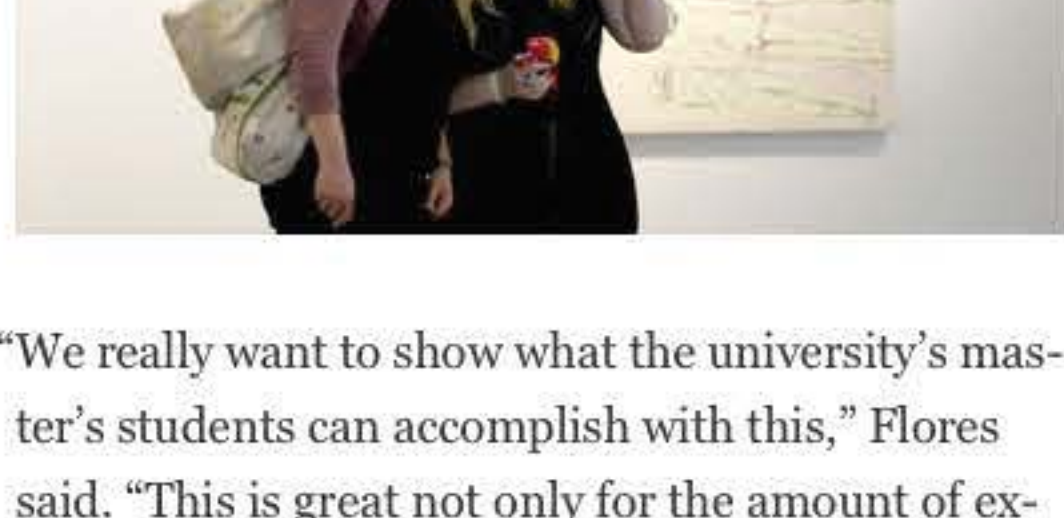


"It's very necessary for our master's students who have already gone past a standard bachelor's degree and want to further enrich themselves in this program," Flores said. "This studio is large enough to accommodate my work and it allows me to work on multiple pieces at one time. It greatly benefits my work."

Jamie Boley, also a Fresno State alumna pursuing her master's degree in art, said she too appreciates the new facility.

*"To have a studio makes a huge difference in your work," Boley said. "It's a great place to continue to research and get ideas. It just motivates you to do what you're doing. There's just something about having a studio that, as an artist—it's invigorating. I can't even explain it. There's just something about it."*

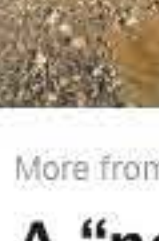
The Graduate Art Studios will exhibit student artwork this fall during the Fresno Arts Council's ArtHop. College of Arts and Humanities Dean Jose Diaz said there are also plans to schedule additional open hours later in the year.



"We really want to show what the university's master's students can accomplish with this," Flores said. "This is great not only for the amount of exposure for our work, but it also brings the community closer. It adds to the artistic culture in Fresno. And I hope with this studio, with this facility, the whole art culture in Fresno grows even more—that the Central Valley can be seen as a place where the arts are taken seriously."

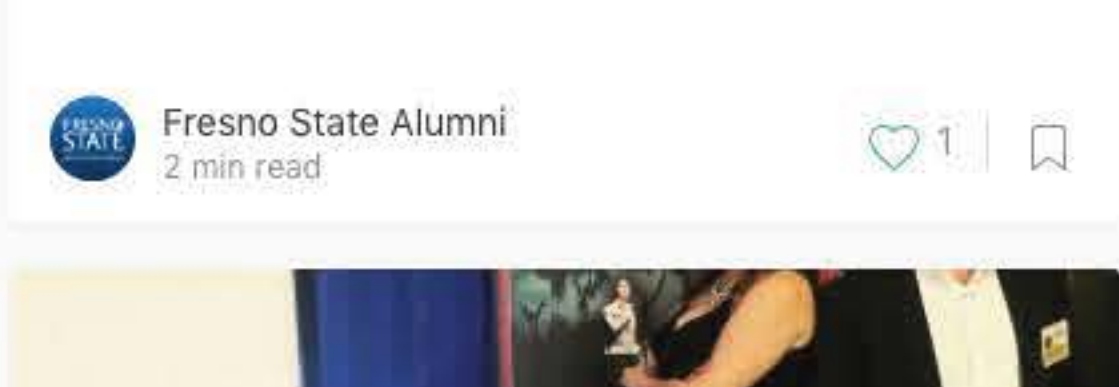


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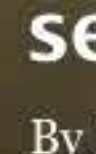
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## ANNALS OF THE ENTOMOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF AMERICA

ty

Photos by Cary Edmondson

While the position is a new one, Falke

cts. His parents were like

people with a spectrum of disabilities, and Falke remembers volunteering there as a child, years before he worked there in his professional career.

*cally engaged as well, and so I just kind of think it was sewn into the fabric of my upbringing that when we have a lot to give, or I should say, when we have a lot in general that we have received, that really giving back is a key part of that,” Falke said.*

With these strong childhood experiences, as an adult, Falke served as executive director of Storyland/Playland for six years, and director of corporate development and mission-driven business at

"I just think I was craving a new challenge to lead in our Valley," Falke said. "I have a great deal of passion for the Central Valley and a great deal of passion about the challenges and the opportunities I think that we have here in the Valley. And so, when I saw the posting for the executive direc-

Falke holds his undergraduate degree in communication from Fresno State, a master's degree in theology from Fresno Pacific University, and is currently pursuing an MBA from the University of Warwick in Coventry, England through a dis-

*"I'm a big advocate for life-long learning, and I think that Fresno State definitely had a key role to play in my understanding of how important education is."*

...not all the time people think their education is just something they have to get through and then they kind of get to move on to real life, so to speak," Burke said. "I think that's the wrong approach. I think if you think about your education from the standpoint of wanting to care for it, you want to let it grow, you want to invest as much as you possibly can, then you'll see that the returns will be that much bigger. And I think that's certainly one of the things I learned at Emerson State, just

how important that time was in terms of getting me to really be on the level of the career path track that I've been able to be on."

The American Red Cross was founded in 1881. The organization exists to provide compassionate care to those in need, and to prevent and relieve suffering in the United States and abroad.

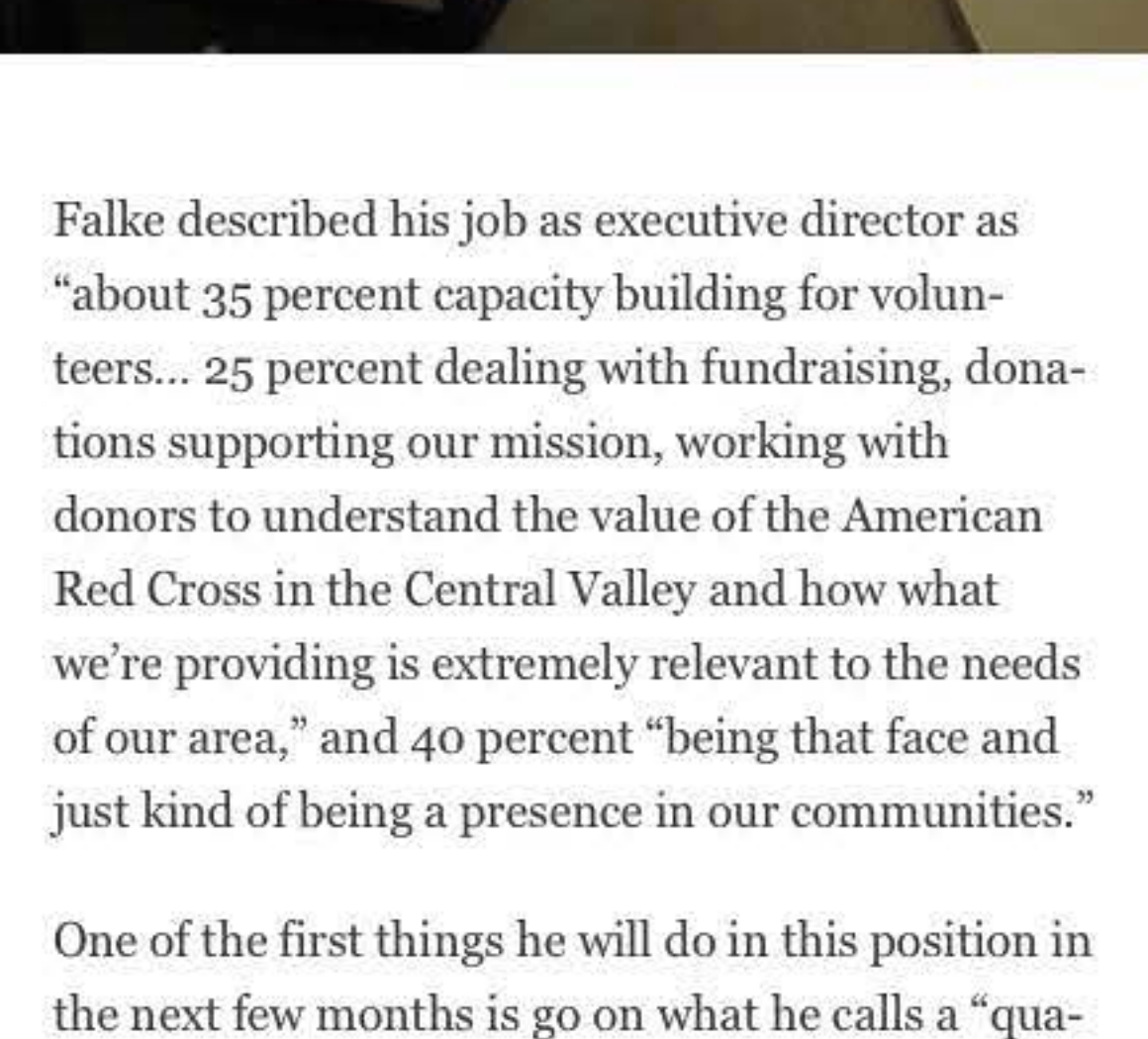
"My job—and what we do here each day—is really just to alleviate human suffering by mobilizing volunteers to respond to things, and teaching our communities to be more resilient communities," Falke said.

The Central Valley chapter often responds to dis-

contributing to other parts of the American Red Cross mission, such as supporting America's military forces, promoting blood donations and offering health and safety services and courses.

"We have such a wonderful, wonderful team of volunteers who really, ultimately, are the ones out there implementing our mission... It's become

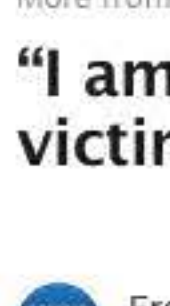
and the ability for me to work with them, to see us have greater mission and have mission in the right places, building that is something that I do love and am going to continue to love.”



across the Valley, listening to leaders and considering, "What does a strong American Red Cross look like in the community of Atwater? Or what does a strong American Red Cross look like in the community of Tulare? Just really asking questions of their leaders to see what their perception

When asked about why he has chosen to spend most of his career in the community benefit organization sector, Falke said, "I have always been very much influenced by my family, and I am very fortunate to have always been raised in a family where service was a priority."

to represent the American Red Cross throughout the entire Central Valley.”



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## Fresno State Alumni

Stories celebrating Bulldog alumni.

Jul 30, 2015 · 3 min read



Photo courtesy of Stan Oken

# Public service scholarship highlights local legend

By ESRA HASHEM, Student Writer

A scholarship to support students interested in public service careers in the Central Valley has been established through the Fresno State Alumni Association.

Dr. Lynnette Zelezny, Fresno State provost and academic affairs vice president, founded the Stan Oken Scholarship endowment through a \$5,000 gift supporting students interested in public service.

“I was on the Fresno Board of Visitors Bureau and said, ‘We need to support students who want to promote Fresno,’” Zelezny said. “And we wanted to do that in honor of somebody who embodies that. Everyone said, ‘Oh, that’s Stan Oken.’”

Zelezny calls Oken a “local legend.”

Oken was born in Chicago and spent his early childhood years in East Los Angeles. He earned his bachelor’s degree at California State University, Los Angeles.

Oken has nine years of experience as a Fresno County supervisor and is the co-founder of Domus Mitis, a foundation set up to assist abused and dependent women and children.

Oken formed and served as the first president of the Fresno City and County Visitors Bureau. He also served on the Fresno Convention and Visitors Bureau from 1984 to 2003.

He is the owner of family-owned Wonder Valley Ranch Resort and Conference Center. Zelezny said Oken has a background in youth camps and has a “big heart” for foster children.

“I had never met him at that point,” Zelezny said. “So I reached out to him to ask him about what we wanted to do, that we wanted to name this scholarship in his honor. He was very gracious. He got teary and said, ‘Young lady, I don’t know who you are or how you’ve heard of me, but this is the one of the nicest things anyone’s ever done for me.’”

Oken said having the scholarship in his name is very humbling.

“It’s an honor to think that there are people out there who have appreciated the work that I’ve done. And to direct this toward students at the university level ...It’s just terrific,” he said.

The scholarship is awarded to an undergraduate or graduate student at Fresno State who has a minimum GPA of 3.0 and has demonstrated an interest in a public service career in promoting Fresno City and County as a tourist destination.

“I think something like this is so important, because when we look at our statistics, most of our alum stay in the Central Valley,” Zelezny said. “The real idea of who we are as a university is to support students to be the future civic leaders of this region. [Oken] is so honored, as well as his family.”

The Stan Oken Scholarship is one of seven newly-endowed scholarships established through the Fresno State Alumni Association after receiving \$99,000 in donations during the 2014–15 academic year. Zelezny also founded the Alan Button Memorial Scholarship, a gift honoring the memory of late Fresno State psychology professor Alan Button, who died in 2010.

Zelezny said she feels passionately about creating student scholarships in honor of inspirational individuals.

“It’s a win-win about connecting people who have made a difference with student opportunities,” she said. “I feel passionately about creating a legacy for those who have made such an impact and truly deserve it. And I think the students will truly embody the essence of these scholarships.”

*To learn more about how to support student success by giving, contact [Peter Robertson](mailto:probertson@csufresno.edu) at [probertson@csufresno.edu](mailto:probertson@csufresno.edu). Those interested in donating toward the Stan Oken Scholarship can visit [www.fresnostate.edu/alumni/support.html](http://www.fresnostate.edu/alumni/support.html).*



## Fresno State Alumni

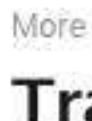
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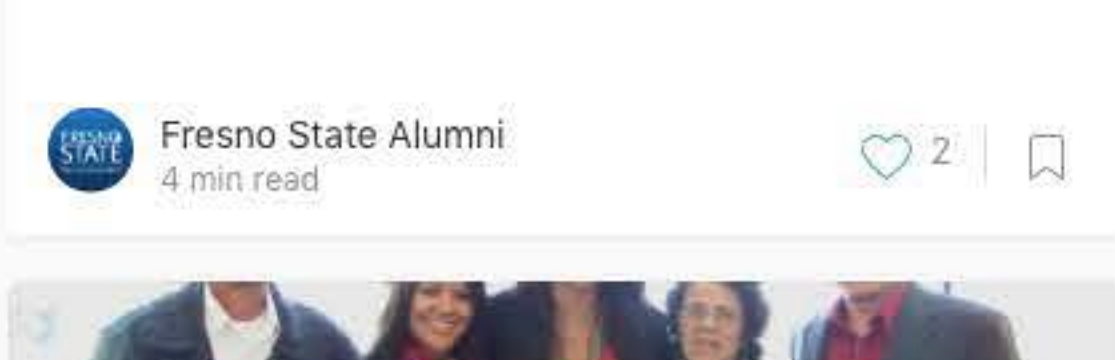
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# Alumnus serves as U.S. diplomat in Japan

By HANNAH POORE, Student Writer

Photos courtesy of Neil Gibson

Neil Gibson (2005) is the United States Diplomat of Economics in Japan. He, his wife Momo, and his three sons, Troy, 7, Truman, 3, and Owen, 6 months, live in Tokyo, where he researches trade issues and international investments, analyzing what's happening in Japan and reporting back to policymakers in Washington, D.C.



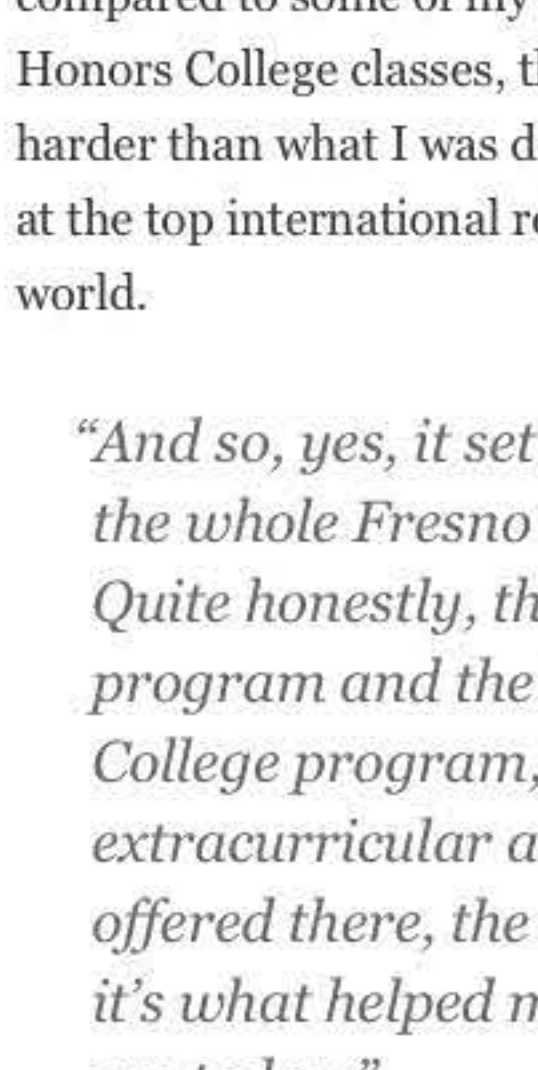
A Smittcamp Family Honors Scholar at Fresno State and Associated Students, Inc. president, Gibson majored in agricultural business and minored in classical studies. After graduation, he attended Johns Hopkins University in Washington, D.C., earning his master's degree in international relations with a focus in China studies. He studied Chinese at both schools.

After graduating from Johns Hopkins, he decided to apply to become a U.S. diplomat. The application process to become a U.S. diplomat is a long one—it usually takes over a year of essays, resumes, SAT-type exams, full-day interviews, health checks, language checks and background checks.

His first assignment was in the Philippines, then he worked in Taiwan and today, he works in Japan. Gibson said that there is no “typical day” in his job, but a “snapshot” of things he does throughout the day includes: meeting with government officials and local businessmen to get their opinions, collect ideas and see what people are thinking; collecting and analyzing the things he learns; and reporting the information back to policymakers in Washington, D.C. policymakers.

Many meetings with Japan's local leaders happen over shared meals, which help to create a more cordial environment.

*“It's very, very important, because these opportunities are where people are more relaxed and you can make friendships, build new relationships that are beneficial for the United States,” Gibson said.*



Along with other diplomats, Gibson serves as a host when United States leaders visit Japan.

“When we have VIPs come out to Tokyo, for example, congressmen or senators, or secretary of state, even the president,” Gibson says, “It's my job and the job of other colleagues—we're their host. So we have to help set up their meetings and pick them up at the airport and make sure they get fed and are going to the right hotel, because you know, it's scary if you've never been to the country and you can't speak the language—so our job is to make sure that they have a successful visit so that they can push forward their policy agenda while they're here.”

Gibson's favorite part about his job is “making relationships with new people, and just meeting new folks and making new friends from around the world, and just seeing how people view the world, understanding new ways of thinking.”

When asked about how valuable his time at Fresno State was, Gibson replied, “Immensely. Absolutely. It's huge. I'm very grateful for the education I received at Fresno State, it was outstanding. It was world class.

“And to be frank, the international relations program at Johns Hopkins ... was ranked top, number one in the world, and I would say that compared to some of my Fresno State Smittcamp Honors College classes, that some of those were harder than what I was doing at my grad school, at the top international relations program in the world.

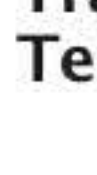
*“And so, yes, it set me up for success, the whole Fresno State experience. Quite honestly, the agricultural program and the Smittcamp Honors College program, all the amazing extracurricular activities that are offered there, the service leadership, it's what helped me bring me where I am today.”*

Gibson's favorite part about his time at Fresno State was the friendships he made—friendships that continue today, even across continents. He remembers all of the fun they had and the random things they did, from inner tube water polo to turning his dorm room into “campaign central” when he ran for ASI president, to playing little pranks around campus.

*“I just did all kinds of random things, and it all gives you great experience and ideas and ways of thinking and it all builds to what you'll be,” Gibson said. “And so just try everything, and who knows what you're going to love. Because there's no risk with trying, so that's my advice ... There's so many cool things to do at Fresno State. Just try everything!”*

After he's done with his three years in Tokyo, Gibson said he's looking to come back the U.S. and work at the U.S. Department of State headquarters in Washington, D.C.

“And then after that, who knows where's next!” Gibson said. “And that's what makes the job exciting, and it's fun, and it's interesting, and you get to learn new skills and new things along the way.”

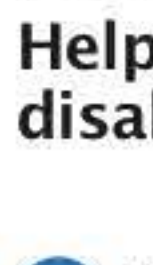


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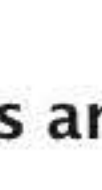
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## UNIVERSITY GIVES MORE THAN 1.3 MILLION HOURS OF SERVICE IN LAST YEAR

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## UNIVERSITY GIVES MORE THAN 1.3 MILLION HOURS OF SERVICE IN LAST YEAR

Fresno State reached a new milestone in community service by students, faculty, staff and administrators during the 2014-15 academic year, volunteering a record 1,324,843 hours of service. This is the 6th consecutive year the university community has contributed over 1 million hours of service in a single year. A total of 14,910 volunteers spent time serving local community benefit organizations and community events in the past academic year.

According to philanthropic standards, the estimated economic impact of Fresno State's community service exceeds \$36.4 million.

Much of Fresno State's volunteer efforts are coordinated through the [Jan and Bud Richter Center for Community Engagement and Service-Learning](#), directed by Chris Fiorentino. "The real impact is seen in the lives of students who serve and the lives of those their service touches," Fiorentino said. "Research shows that Fresno State students who are involved in service during their undergraduate years have greater academic and career success when compared to their non-serving peers."

Among the dozens of projects and organizations supported this year are [Central California Blood Center](#), [Mediator Mentors](#), [Reading and Beyond](#), [Jumpstart Fresno](#), [Bulldog Pantry](#) and [Alternative Spring Break](#), ASI's Community Revitalization effort, and [Humanics at Fresno State](#).

Classes for Fresno State's 2015-16 academic year start Aug. 25 and Fiorentino believes the campus will maintain its level of engagement. "Each year we set out to build on the momentum we have established and I am confident we will once again surpass one million hours of service in the upcoming academic year."

This year's efforts will kick-off with the annual Community Service Opportunities Fair 10 a.m. – 2 p.m. September 2 in front of the Kennel Bookstore. Over 70 agencies will be on hand to share information with students about service opportunities. Students will also have the opportunity to take part in on-site mini-service projects through the "Taste of Service" event, held directly adjacent to the Community Service Opportunities Fair.

For more information, contact Chris Fiorentino at [christf@csufresno.edu](mailto:christf@csufresno.edu).

### Fresno State honored with Carnegie Designation



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By Kathleen Schock | July 29th, 2015 | Categories: PRESS RELEASES | Tags: [alternative spring break](#), [bulldog pantry](#), [Community Service](#), [humanics](#), [Jan and Bud Richter Center for Community Engagement and Service Learning](#), [jumpstart](#), [reading and beyond](#) | 0 Comments

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CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, FRESNO  
5241 N. Maple Ave.  
Fresno, CA 93740  
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## Prime Minister Pereira goes from Fresno State to leading West African Nation

by *Akyia Westley*

In May 1994, Domingos Simões Pereira walked across the stage at Fresno State's commencement ceremony and received his master's degree in civil engineering. Fast forward 20 years, and Pereira walked a much bigger stage as he was elected prime minister of the West African nation Guinea-Bissau.

It's a challenge he has long dreamed of accomplishing — to help his country rebound from years of political instability and repeated economic shock by instilling a future of peace, human security and openness.

As Fresno State's first alumnus to become a prime minister or president, Pereira is now in a position to make a difference in his home country.

"I remember taking a class on city planning and annoying everyone with my plans on how to transform my city back home," Pereira says in a video message to the Central Valley.

"The first two years were tough, because of English, but also because the system was very much different from what I had learned before."

Born in Farim, Guinea-Bissau, in 1963, the year power struggles began against Portuguese colonization, Pereira grew up in a humble family with his father (a teacher), his mother (a housewife) and his four brothers. After completing high school, he moved to the former Soviet Union, where he earned his bachelor's degree in civil engineering in 1988.

Two years later, Pereira came to Fresno State to pursue a master's thanks to a scholarship provided by the United States Agency for International Development and The Africa-America Institute.

After earning his master's, Pereira returned to his home, where he served in such roles as minster of public works and the Portuguese-speaking secretary executive.

During this period, unrest and instability continued in Guinea-Bissau, and Pereira was eager to make a change. He called on his friends and colleagues to act, which eventually led to his victory in the 2014 election as prime minister, the highest-ranking government position in the country.

Pereira's job as prime minister has been a busy one. As the Ebola virus epidemic spread throughout Africa and other regions in August 2014, Pereira decided to close his country's borders in an effort to protect his people. Determined to transform Guinea-Bissau, Pereira continues to seek international support by meeting with different countries and bodies of the Economic Community of West African States, the United Nations, the Community of Portuguese Language Countries and other countries and international institutions, including those in Fresno.

Pereira maintains his connection through Guinea-Bissau's partnership with the West African Vocational Schools based in Fresno and Seattle. The nonprofit organization is dedicated to transforming the small country by providing post-secondary education in computer basics, auto mechanics, sewing and English, and offering job training that gives students skills that translate into jobs.

Chris Collins, director of West African Vocational Schools, met the prime minster in 2013.

"He is someone who is intelligent and stands out but also very calm with a quiet confidence," Collins said. "He really knows his stuff."

[Watch video on YouTube](#)

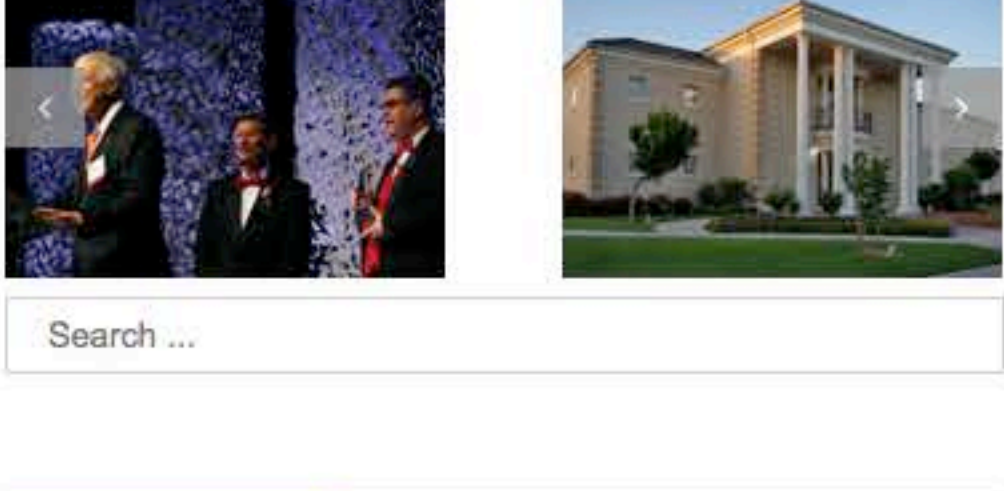


– *Akyia Westley is a student news assistant for University Communications at Fresno State.*

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## THE SQUARE AT CAMPUS POINTE GRAND OPENING: URBAN STREET CENTER THRIVES

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## THE SQUARE AT CAMPUS POINTE GRAND OPENING: URBAN STREET CENTER THRIVES

(Updated July 18, 2015) — The Central Valley took another step forward in urban street resurgence when Fresno State celebrated the grand opening of [The Square at Campus Pointe](#) from 4-7 p.m. Friday, July 17.

The event included entertainment, specials and prizes including tickets to the Bulldogs football home opener in September and Save Mart Center events such as the Kenny Chesney and Dierks Bentley concerts and Nitro Circus.

Located directly across from the Save Mart Center just off Highway 168, the new retail development formally opened with three tenants and another five that are scheduled to open in the near future.

In April, anchor tenant Maya Cinemas opened. The theater has been joined by Beach Hut Deli and Mad Duck. Scheduled for opening soon are Cold Stone Creamery, Screen Works, Yogurtland, Pieology and Wahoo's. All participated Friday offering prizes and specials (see list below).

Fresno State's own Rue and Gwen Gibson Farm Market, located north of The Square on Chestnut, was also showcased at the event.

Fresno State Bulldog fans celebrated by meeting student leaders and athletes and chances to win tickets to the Dogs' first home football game Sept. 3 in Bulldog Stadium.

Guests participated in various activities such as posing for photos with the University's mascots, Timeout and Victor-E III, Fresno State's new live Bulldog.

The famed Bulldog tunnel was set up for the occasion and Bully Rescue brought out some dogs for adoption.

Providing the entertainment for the day was Fresno's Only New Rock station, 104.1.

"This new urban street retail center will offer something very exciting, which will transform the quality of retail services for our campus and surrounding community," said Debbie Adishian-Astone, Fresno State's interim vice president for Administrative Services and associate vice president for Auxiliary Operations, who has overseen the project for the University.

"The Square at Campus Pointe will be a new place for our students to patronize and hang out and a destination where our Bulldog fans can meet their friends for all of their pre- and post-game activities," she said.

The Square at Campus Pointe is located on Chestnut Avenue north of Shaw Avenue, east of the Save Mart Center (Shaw west exit off Highway 168).

For more information, contact Adishian-Astone at 559.278.2083 or Steven Baronian at Lance-Kashian & Co., at 559.360-0453.

The Campus Pointe website also is now live:

[www.campuspointe.com](http://www.campuspointe.com).

### PARTICIPATING TENANTS

**Beach Hut Deli** – *WWE ticket giveaway with Save Mart Center. Various food and drink specials and giveaways.*

**Mad Duck** – *food and drink specials, all day happy hour with Mad Duck's Draft Craft Beer specials. Dierks Bentley ticket giveaway with Save Mart Center.*

**Cold Stone Creamery** – *Will donate the event's proceeds to a Fresno State Scholarship fund.*

**Screen Works** – *Free screen protectors and cell phone cases for the first 20 guests, along with various other giveaways. Nitro Circus ticket giveaway with Save Mart Center.*

**Maya Cinema's** – *July 17-19 \$1.50 popcorn, \$1.50 hotdogs, free movie posters (while supplies last).*

**Yogurtland** – *The first 200 attendees of the Campus Pointe grand opening will receive free yogurt from Yogurtland. All attendees will be able to spin a prize wheel for premium giveaways and receive a VIP pass redeemable for 10 ounces of free frozen yogurt when Yogurtland opens. The VIP passes expire Sept. 30.*

**Pieology** – *Will be distributing scratchers to guests for use when it opens including 15 percent off, free drink, free cinnamon strips or free pizza.*

**Wahoo's** – *Tickets giveaway for the Kenny Chesney concert Nitro Circus at Save Mart Center, Wahoo's Skateboard Deck giveaway and other prizes.*

### CAMPUS POINTE BACKGROUND

*The Square is the retail portion of the 45-acre mixed-used development project, a public/private partnership between the California State University, Fresno Association, Inc. (a recognized California State University auxiliary organization), and Kashian Enterprises, the master developer of the project. The project is the largest mixed-use public-private partnership in the CSU with \$250 million expected to be invested by the private sector once the project is fully built out. The Campus Pointe project funded its own utility infrastructure and street improvements, totaling close to \$12 million. The annual ground lease revenue generated by the project will support retirement of the Save Mart Center bonds as well as the University Agriculture Laboratory for the loss of ag land.*

*Campus Pointe's resident phase already has more than 1,000 tenants: Palmilla, the workforce housing project opened for occupancy in July 2009; and Palazzo, the student-friendly housing project opened in June 2010. Future phases of the development plan for Campus Pointe include office buildings, a hotel and a senior housing project. When fully built out, Campus Pointe will have approximately 1 million square feet of space.*

*The project will provide educational benefits to Fresno State such as jobs for students and internship opportunities for those studying business, hospitality, tourism, marketing and gerontology. A joint use agreement will allow the University to use the theater for Fresno State events and classes if growth space is needed in the future.*

[nggallery id=73]

#### Related links:

- [Square at Campus Pointe](#)
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## NEW CAMPUS PROGRAM TO HELP VETERANS EARN DEGREES

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## NEW CAMPUS PROGRAM TO HELP VETERANS EARN DEGREES

Fresno State will offer a new program to help U.S. veterans earn college degrees thanks to federal funding from the U.S. Department of Education.

The new [Student Support Services Veterans](#) Program is one of two programs each receiving five-year grants totaling \$2.5 million along with Fresno State's [TRiO Student Support Services Program](#), said Dr. Frank Lamas, vice president for Student Affairs and Enrollment Management.

Fresno State is the only California university to receive TRiO funding this year.

*"We are very appreciative of federal support to better serve our students and impact student success," Lamas said. "This funding strengthens the services we provide our veterans who served our nation."*

This is the first time Fresno State has been awarded funding for a TRiO veterans program. TRiO is comprised of eight federally-funded outreach and student services programs that identify and help low-income individuals from disadvantaged backgrounds who are first-generation college students, and individuals with disabilities, to progress from middle school to post baccalaureate programs. It began as three programs created through the Higher Education Act of 1965, hence TRiO.

The programs receive five-year cycle funding. Fresno State's programs will receive annual allocations of \$220,000 for the veterans program and \$292,340 for the Student Support Services Program during the new cycle that begins Sept. 1.

Systemwide, 20 California State University campuses were awarded a total of \$8,067,854 from the U.S. Department of Education for TRiO Student Support Services.

Fresno State now administers six TRiO programs. In addition to Student Support Services, the others are Upward Bound, Educational Talent Search, Education Opportunity Center and McNair Scholars.

The purpose of TRiO Student Support Services is to provide academic support and activities to help undergraduate participants remain in college and graduate.



Under the leadership of Eluterio Escamilla, director of the programs, the Student Support Services Program has 200 students enrolled who are served by counselors, a reading/writing specialist, a program assistant, three peer mentors and two academic facilitators.

The new veterans program will serve 120 students with its own counselor, two peer mentors, and two academic facilitators. The reading/writing specialist and program assistant are assigned to both programs.

Escamilla is a veteran of the U.S. Marine Corps and a graduate of Fresno State earning a master's degree in International Relations in 1998.

He said the program will work with two other veterans programs on campus to help identify students: the [Veterans Services](#) office in Admissions and the [Veterans Education Program](#) (Division of Continuing and Global Education).

To be eligible for either program, participants must be a first generation, low-income student enrolled in 12 or more units at Fresno State and/or have a learning or physical disability. For the veterans program, the student must also have an honorable discharge from military service.

For an application, contact Jennifer Garzon at 559.278.5725 or visit the Thomas Building, Room 122.

For more information, contact Escamilla at 559.278.5727.

### Related links:

- [Full DOE press release](#)
- [Student Support Services Veterans \(SSSV\) Program](#)
- [TRiO Student Support Services Program \(SSSP\)](#)
- [CSU press release](#)



By Tom Uribes | July 24th, 2015 | Categories: [PRESS RELEASES](#) | Tags: [student support service](#) | 0 Comments

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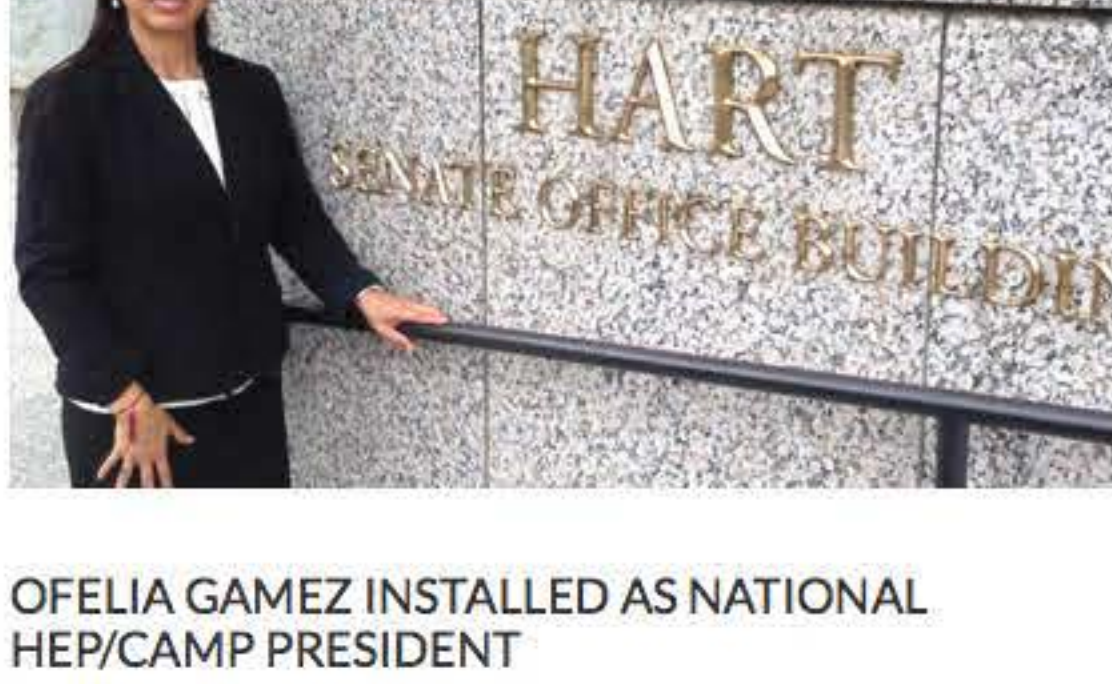
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## OFELIA GAMEZ INSTALLED AS NATIONAL HEP/CAMP PRESIDENT

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## OFELIA GAMEZ INSTALLED AS NATIONAL HEP/CAMP PRESIDENT

Ofelia Gamez, director of Fresno State's [College Assistance Migrant Program \(CAMP\)](#), was installed today as president of the national [High School Equivalency Program \(HEP\)/CAMP Association](#) at its annual directors meeting in Washington, D.C.

Gamez, who was a CAMP student in 1990 and has directed Fresno State CAMP since July, 1999, will serve two years as national head of the federally funded program that supports students who are migratory or seasonal farm workers, or the children of such workers, during their first year of undergraduate studies.

The program serves approximately 2,000 students annually nationwide. There are 60 CAMP students enrolled at Fresno State for the coming fall.

As national president, Gamez will have the opportunity to advocate on behalf of migrant workers. One of her first actions today is to meet with legislators including Sen. Dianne Feinstein (D-Calif.) and Department of Education officials. Tuesday she will meet with Reps. Jim Costa (CA-16) and David Valadao (CA-21). Legislative meetings will continue through the week.

She credits migrant programs with helping her reach her goals – as early as kindergarten through the Migrant Education Program (MEP) on through CAMP in college and now as director and national president.

"I will serve this program with a passion and make every effort to translate the successes our Fresno State program has earned to the national level," said Gamez, who began her professional career here with CAMP as an academic adviser in 1997.

After graduating from Firebaugh High School in west Fresno County, Gamez earned a bachelor of science degree in psychology in 1995 and a master of arts in counseling and student services in 1997 as well as a pupil personnel services credential and later an administrative credential, all at Fresno State.

"I am pleased to be able to give back and help other migrant or seasonal farm working students reach their educational goals as I did through our programs," the alumnae said

Last year, Fresno State's CAMP received funding of \$2.125 million for a five-year cycle through 2019 by the United States Department of Education (USDE) and Office of Migrant Education (OME).

This makes 30 years that the Fresno State program has been funded. In that time it has earned accolades as one of the nation's premier programs known for its "best practices," ranking in the top three programs nationally by the Office of Migrant Education based on annual performance reports.

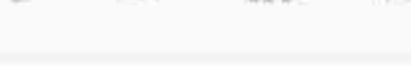
Gamez said the success of the program is measured by the total number of freshman students served who complete 24 credits and are in good academic standing at the end of their first year.

### Related Links:

- [College Assistance Migrant Program](#)
- [National High School Equivalency Program \(HEP\)/CAMP Association](#)

By Tom Uribes | July 13th, 2015 | Categories: [PRESS RELEASES](#) | Tags: [CAMP](#), [faculty/staff](#) | 0 Comments

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## A national olive oil brand sprouts from Valley soil

by Jodi Raley

From Madera County orchards to store shelves in New York, Vincent Ricchiuti has delivered the product of Italian heritage and California soil to consumers nationwide.

With 98 percent of olive oil consumed in the United States imported from other nations, Ricchiuti recognized an opportunity and created Enzo Olive Oil — named after his great grandfather, Vincenzo. The locally grown, organic, extra virgin olive oil is available in every Williams-Sonoma store in the U.S., regionally in Whole Foods and other retailers, and at Enzo's Table, the family's farm market in Clovis.

As a board member on the Olive Oil Commission of California and the California Olive Oil Council, Ricchiuti has been at the forefront of establishing standards and regulations for extra virgin olive oil certification.

*"It's one of the biggest problems with imported oils," Ricchiuti says. "They will say they are extra virgin when, in truth, the oil is blended rancid or not to the quality it's advertising to be."*

California olive oil producers have mandated that any extra virgin product must go through a series of chemical and sensory evaluations to certify the quality. Ricchiuti says the next step will be to pursue these standards nationwide.

Ricchiuti Family Farms started more than 100 years ago when Vincenzo Ricchiuti planted the seeds for a family business that has spanned four generations in the Central Valley.

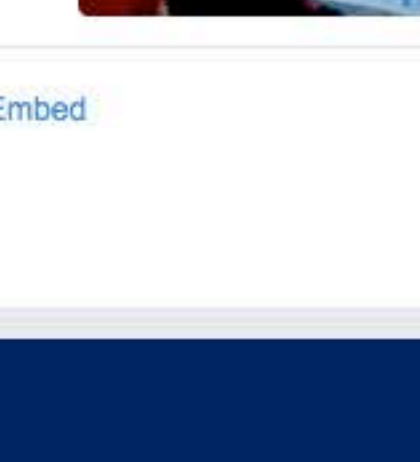
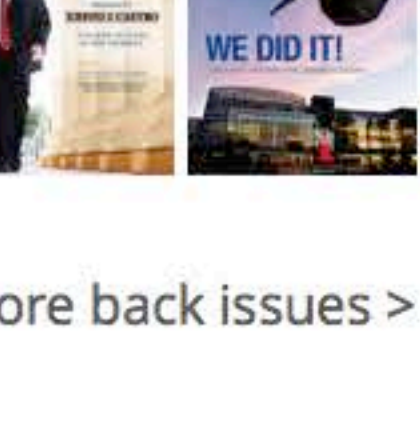
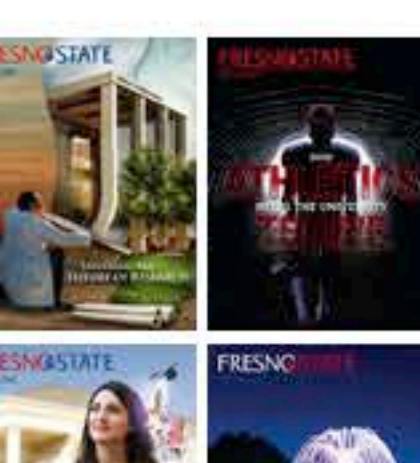
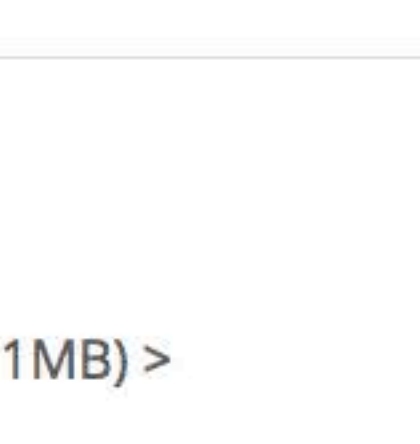
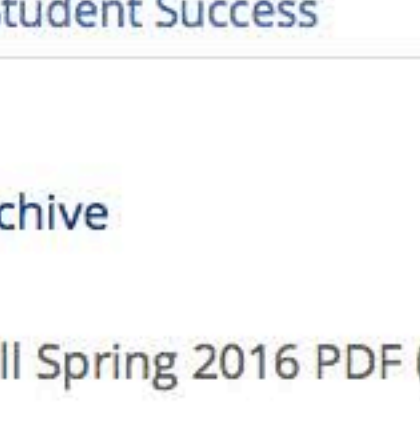
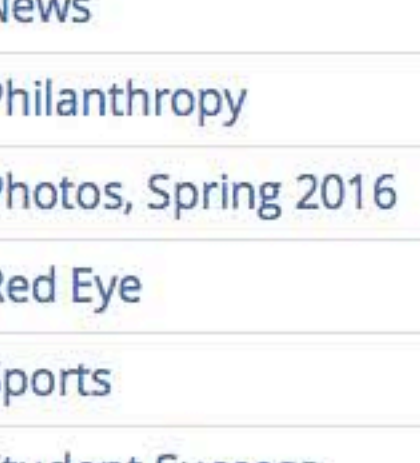
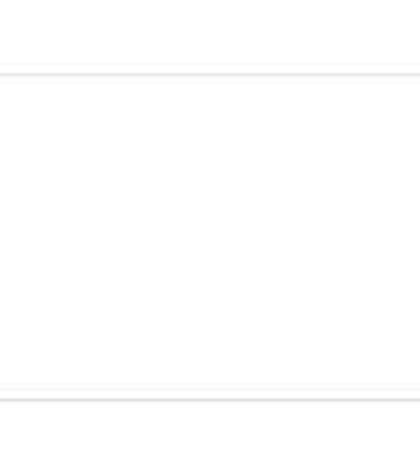
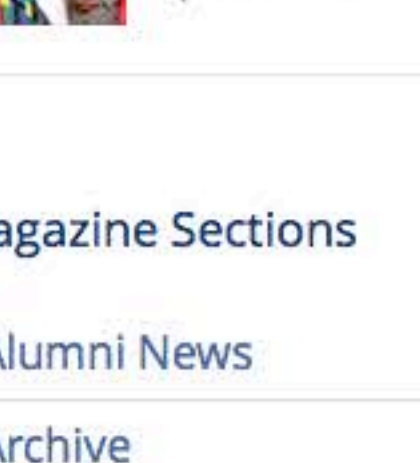
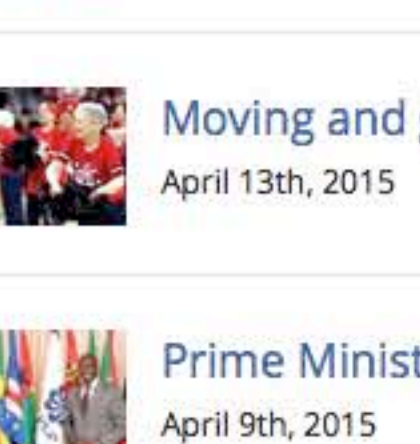
Vincenzo's first harvested crop included grapes and figs before decades later expanding to stone fruit, almonds and eventually olives.

The family has a long tradition of supporting Fresno State. Vincent's parents, Patrick V. (class of 1970) and Vinci Ricchiuti (1981), earned the Arthur Safstrom Service Award in 1992 for outstanding service to the University. In 2001, Patrick V. earned the Outstanding Alumni Award from the Fresno State Alumni Association. And in 2005, the on-campus Ricchiuti Academic Center opened with 6,000 square feet of study tables, computer labs and offices to support student-athletes.

Vincent's role in the family business expanded after he graduated from Fresno State in 2005, after years of working the night shift at the almond hulling facility.

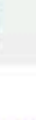
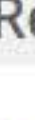
The Ricchiuti family transitioned out of the stone fruit business in 2008 to pursue almond growing. At the same time, Vincent planted high density olive trees with inspiration from his father, Pat Ricchiuti, who was involved in studies conducted on high-density trees at Fresno State.

To date, Enzo Olive Oil has won 39 awards, including Best in Class at the New York International Olive Oil competition. Enzo Olive Oil and Ricchiuti Family Farms were also featured in prestigious food writer Florence Fabricant's article "Dock to Dish, a Cookbook That Celebrates the Greenmarket and More," published in The New York Times in 2014.



—Jodi Raley is a student news assistant in University Communications at Fresno State.

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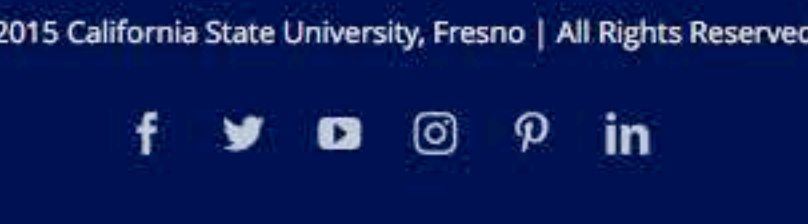
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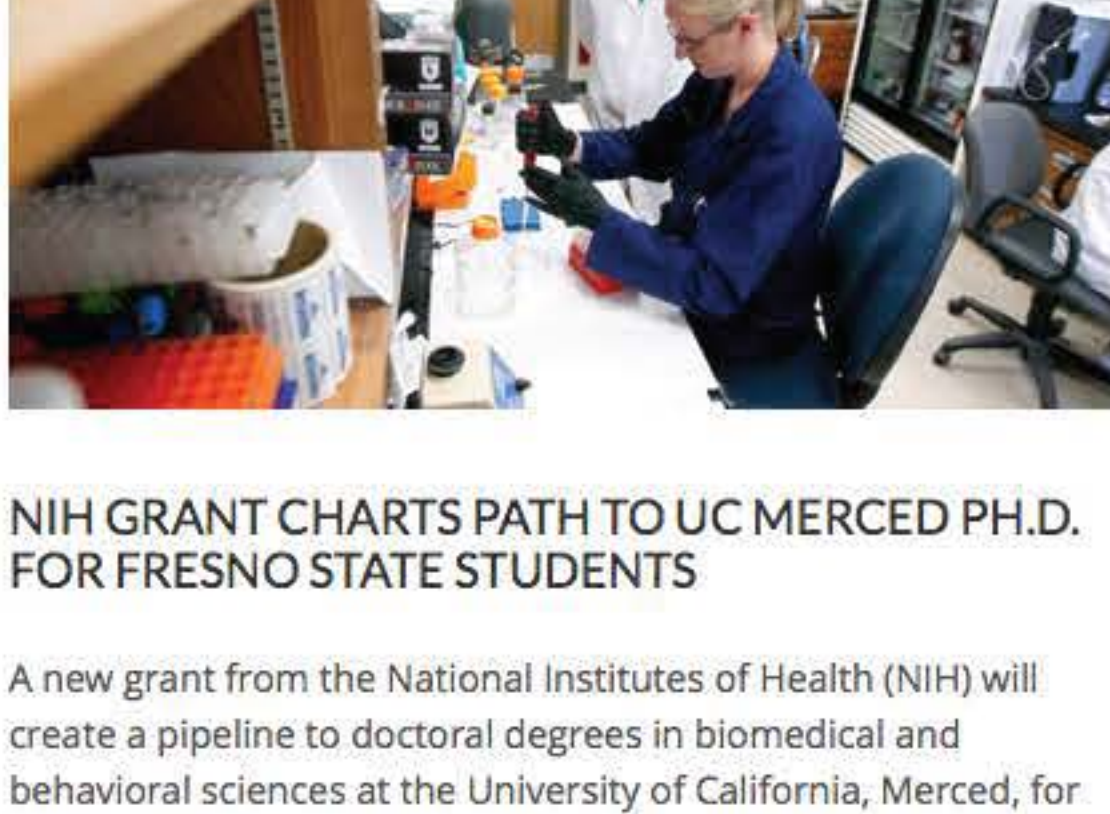
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## NIH GRANT CHARTS PATH TO UC MERCED PH.D. FOR FRESNO STATE STUDENTS

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## NIH GRANT CHARTS PATH TO UC MERCED PH.D. FOR FRESNO STATE STUDENTS

A new grant from the National Institutes of Health (NIH) will create a pipeline to doctoral degrees in biomedical and behavioral sciences at the University of California, Merced, for underrepresented minority students from California State University, Fresno.

UC Merced Professor [Andy LiWang](#) and Fresno State Professor Krish Krishnan were recently awarded a nearly \$1.4 million [Bridges to the Doctorate](#) grant from the National Institute of General Medical Sciences (NIGMS). The program will recruit four to eight Fresno State students each year who demonstrate the commitment and potential to complete a Ph.D. program at UC Merced. The grant, which is the first of its kind at UC Merced, will support and train 36 students over a total of five years.

*“The NIH Bridges grant adds to the growing list of competitive research and training grants UC Merced faculty members have received in recent years,” Vice Provost and Graduate Dean Marjorie Zatz said. “This demonstrates the caliber of our faculty in the eyes of the research community, as well as our strong commitment to expanding the pool of STEM scholars through explicit outreach to highly qualified members of underrepresented groups.”*

Beginning this fall, students selected for the Bridges program will complete their master’s degree training with Krishnan and affiliated faculty members at Fresno State, including Professors Jason Bush, Alam Hasson, Lorin Lachs, Alejandro Calderon-Urrea and Joy Goto.

There, the students will receive financial support and academic guidance as they develop their scientific and research skills while furthering their training with summer internships at UC Merced. After completing their master’s degree, Bridges scholars will transition to more intensive research and study in a Ph.D. program at UC Merced.

*“This is a great opportunity for students from the Fresno/Merced area to pursue both master’s and Ph.D. programs in biomedical or behavioral sciences right here in the Central Valley,” Krishnan said. “The Bridges program will strengthen the research collaborations and catalyze future interactions between students and faculty at Fresno State and UC Merced.”*

The Bridges grant comes on the heels of the announcement of a \$5 million grant from [NASA](#) to UC Merced to establish the new Merced Nanomaterials Center for Energy and Sensing, which also seeks to make an impact on underrepresented students. “This has been a record-breaking year in terms of new research awards, with UC Merced passing the \$20 million mark for the first time,” said Juan Meza, dean of the School of Natural Sciences.

LiWang, a faculty member with the [School of Natural Sciences](#) and the [Health Sciences Research Institute](#), supports undergraduate, graduate and postdoctoral researchers in his lab — leading to their publication in [prestigious journals](#) such as [Science](#). He is also involved with a number of programs that seek to actively recruit students at all levels to scientific research.

Since 2009, LiWang has participated in the American Chemical Society’s [Summer Experience for the Economically Disadvantaged](#) (SEED) Project, a nationwide program to get high school students from poor families into university labs for hands-on research experience. He also participates in the Merced County Office of Education’s annual Dinner with a Scientist program, which seeks to excite middle school students about scientific research.

*“I feel strongly about UC Merced’s mission to have a transformative effect on the San Joaquin Valley,” LiWang said. “In addition to helping students secure a well-paying job and career, advanced degrees in science boost our nation’s lead in creativity and innovation, producing knowledge and products that are in global demand.”*

For more information contact James Leonard, UC Merced at 209.228.4408 (office) 209.681.1061 (cell) or [jleonard3@ucmerced.edu](mailto:jleonard3@ucmerced.edu).

By Kathleen Schock | July 16th, 2015 | Categories: PRESS RELEASES | Tags: grants, uc merced | 0 Comments

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## 2nd Annual Winemaker's Dinner

**Date:** Sat, Nov 7, 2015  
**Time:** 5:30 PM to 10:00 PM  
**Venue:** The Narrow Gauge Inn  
**Contact:** Kevin Smith  
**Phone:** 559-278-4867  
**Email:** kesmith@csufresno.edu

Join us for the 2nd Annual Winemaker's Dinner at The Narrow Gauge Inn in Fish Camp, CA. just minutes away from the beautiful Yosemite Valley.

This is your chance to meet and mingle with out new winemaker, Matt Brain. We are very happy to have him on the winery team!

Enjoy an evening in the woods eating a delectible 5 course meal, paired with Fresno State's finest wines.

**November 7th, 2015**

**Social: 5:30 PM**

**Dinner: 6:30 PM**




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