FROM THE DESK OF THE CHAIR
Dr. Brown sheds light on how the current pandemic is affecting us as a community

WELCOME BACK DR. JOHNSON
After serving as the Dean, we are glad to welcome Dr. Johnson back to the Department

INTERN SPOTLIGHT
Pamela Gomez discusses her hopes and aspirations as a Communication major

REPRESENTING CSUSM AT WSCA
Eight students present their research at WSCA in Denver, CO

FACULTY ACCOMPLISHMENTS
The department congratulates faculty members on their publications

PANDEMIC CHAT
Dr. Roy discusses the impact of the quarantine on students and faculty alike

GETTING CREATIVE
Students highlight what they have been up to during the quarantine period
Greetings Communique Readers,

I hope in the midst of daily challenges at this extraordinary time, reading this issue of Communique may offer a space to reflect on a few highlights and joys of the Spring 2020 semester. Here, we focus on the accomplishments of our students and faculty. Thanks to Special Guest Editor Dr. Deya Roy, who along with Intern Pamela Gomez and our Department AC Nancy Santiago (and those who are featured in these pages), have coordinated through many forms and channels of Communication to keep communication going and to keep the flame of the Communique Newsletter alive.

As I write this, routines, expectations and lives have been upended. Uncertainty, stress, sadness, loss (and fears about these on many fronts) are among our daily companions. COVID-19 embedded itself as a fixture within and across so many communication processes and contexts whether interpersonal, small group, organizational or international. I’m amazed at how quickly “flatten the curve”, “PPE”, and “social distancing” came into now seemingly ubiquitous use.

I’m thinking to FOMO and JOMO, we can now add ROMO (Redefining missing out, i.e. missing out on what and for whom, defined by what assumptions?) as we contemplate the new “not normal” and the inequities and vulnerabilities revealed by this public health crisis.

I’m glad to live in California and to be part of the CSU system. I was impressed by how quickly we all made the pivot and also gratified to see how quickly many members of our community recognized and acted on the need to be part of an effort to protect public health and to be creative, strong, wise, patient and compassionate as we made changes necessary, as Governor Gavin Newsome asked to “meet the moment”.

Members of our large community move in many social worlds. We connect in and through many networks, with family, friends and colleagues around the country and the world and we love and worry in many languages. Some of are all suddenly together and some are necessarily far away for the ones we love. Some have loved ones who are ill or who have been lost to this pandemic. Many have loved ones who are (or are themselves) on the frontlines providing essential services and in addition to managing concerns about health and well being, employment, and housing, many basic activities of short- and long-term planning have been put on hold.

In this midst of this, I know many are also feeling the absence of important opportunities for community and campus celebrations that typically illuminate the end of our academic year bringing us together in recognition and appreciation. We look forward to opportunities to say to students: “congratulations, go make us proud(er), make your dreams into goals and go after them, and farewell for now”. With this on pause, I still I want you to imagine us cheering you on, whether or not it is in the impromptu graduation parade. Please know that we are here, and we are proud of you. We recognize, celebrate and thank you for being our students, and for your intelligence, kindness, flexibility, bravery, resilience and for the strength and resolve you have shown at this time. I know you are as eager as I am to recognize accomplishments and take moments to celebrate reaching goals wherever we find them.

Readers, thank you for all that you have done and will continue to do to keep teaching, learning and scholarship, resources, support and communication flowing. Let’s all moving forward, with hope, in whatever ways are possible as we care for ourselves and each other.

As we look to an entirely online summer session, and then further out on the horizon to whatever the weeks and months ahead will bring to our lives, I offer this virtual toast: To better days—past and future! I wish you all health, and safe travels.

Best Regards,
Dr. Katherine Brown
Professor and Chair
This semester, the Department of Communication, welcomed Dr. Julia Johnson as a full-time professor after a long and fruitful tenure as a Dean of College of Humanities, Arts, Behavioral and Social Sciences (CHABSS). Dr. Johnson graduated with a B.A. from California State University, Long Beach with a major in Speech Communication. Then, she attended California State University, Northridge for her M.A. degree in Speech Communication. Afterwards, she decided to continue her education and do her Ph.D. at University of Massachusetts at Amherst in Communication Studies. Dr. Johnson is particularly familiar with the CSU system and can relate to the students at CSUSM as her journey in higher ed started at CSU Long Beach. She began the position as Dean at CSUSM in July of 2017. She has held many administrative positions in her career such as department chair, school director, and dean.

Dr. Johnson’s research and teaching are in critical intercultural communication. Specifically, she focuses on Performance Studies, Queer of Color Studies, Trans* of Color Studies, Critical Gender Studies, and Critical Race Theory to build her arguments. Dr. Johnson’s first teaching job was at CSULA in the department of Communication where she served as a Basic Course Director and Director of Teaching Assistants.

Message from Dr. Johnson: “Our CSUSM students are talented, smart, creative, and engaged. I came to CSUSM because of all of you—because of who you are and what you bring to an institution of higher education. Many of you may not have generations of experience with higher education or getting rich. Your smarts and experiences make you ready to change this world to make it more humane and inclusive. Believe in your ability to change the world and start making change by being as humane, kind, and smart as possible”.

Dr. Julia Johnson
INTERN SPOTLIGHT
Pamela Gomez is a Junior majoring in Communication and minoring in Spanish. She started at CSUSM as a freshman in Fall 2017. She is passionate about traveling and learning about different cultures. The reason she chose to major in Communication is to one day work as a translator. Pamela has previously worked with the Cougar Chronicles, and now she is interning for the Department of Communication, where she is building relationships with her faculty and fellow students. She anticipates graduating Spring 2021 and continuing her education in Spain.

REPRESENTING CSUSM AT WSCA
By: Pamela Gomez

Eight undergraduate students majoring in Mass media and Communication had the opportunity to attend the Western States Communication Association (WSCA) annual conference in Denver, CO from February 22-24, 2020. The WSCA conference gave the students the opportunity to showcase their research conducted in various undergraduate classes to other Communication scholars. Congratulations to all the presenters. CSUSM is so proud of you!
Cynthia Balderas: Ideological Feminist Criticism and Queer Politics in Juana Inés Netflix Series.

Dr. Cecilia (Lia) Uy-Tioco: Published a book titled "Mobile Media and Social Intimacies in Asia Reconfiguring Local Ties and Enacting Global Relationships: Reconfiguring Local Ties and Enacting Global Relationships"

Dr. Antonio De La Garza: Published an article titled "A Eulogy for Roxsana Hernández: Tracing the Relationship between Border Rhetoric and Queer Debility" in QED: Journal in GLBTQ Worldmaking

Dr. Andrew Spieldenner: Published an article titled "Considering the Queer Disabled/Debilitated Body: An Introduction of Queer Crippling" in QED: Journal in GLBTQ Worldmaking

Interested in an internship for summer or fall 2020?
Come to a COMM/MDIA 495 Information Session
Time: May 18, 2020 09:00 to 10:00 AM Pacific Time (US and Canada)

Join Zoom Meeting
https://csusm.zoom.us/j/95152159328?pwd=MFRPUjAvR2pnQzRYOWliRzVCTENsuz09
Meeting ID: 951 5215 9328
Password: 205964

While the CSU Chancellor’s Office has placed some restrictions on internships for the summer and fall, this info session will provide an opportunity to discuss creative alternatives to traditional onsite internships.

Liliana Hernandez: Precious Knowledge: Recentering Injustices in Latin@ Education.

Nicole Haining: Red Dead Redemption 2: The New Age of the Western.

Arianna Lejbman: 7 Rings: A critical dissection of proposed female empowerment

Kevin Mavers: Ideographic Analysis of Net Neutrality Discourse.

Arianna Kitts: Teaching in an Era of White Fragility and Conservative Nationalism: A Roundtable Discussion

Andrea Lujan: This is America

Angelica Peña: Protectionist to Collectivist Familia Structures: Reimagining Chicano Barrio Masculinity in La Mission.

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On a fateful March evening, our University community was informed that we were transitioning to online instruction and remote work due to the COVID-19 pandemic. As I walked the deserted halls of SBSB the next morning, I was greeted by an eerie idea—I will have to prematurely bid adieu to my students. I walked into a classroom of students full of questions, uncertainty, and hope. “When do you think will this end?” asked one of my students. As an educator you are supposed to have all the answers but this time I was stumped. “Maybe a few weeks, maybe even months” I responded. In retrospect, I was so naïve. Two months since I spoke those words, we still don’t have a clear answer about when life will go back to normal, if at all.

First few weeks were the toughest—learning about the most effective ways of instructions, how to grocery shop while being 6 feet or more apart from others, having virtual social hours with friends and even conducting faculty meetings on Microsoft Teams. Tougher was the implementation of social isolation and not seeing my students on a regular basis. Dare I say, the abnormal is slowly becoming normal as I find my new routine.

That being said, during this time I am reminded of many missed or delayed celebrations. Birthdays, anniversaries, and graduation celebrations are put on hold. Traditionally, students bookend their tenure at CSUSM by gathering their loved ones, wearing the graduation cap and gown, waiting breathlessly for their name to be called and walking across the stage beaming with pride. While this ceremony may be put on hold for the graduating seniors, celebrations shall continue. Our freshly minted graduates should celebrate themselves and their accomplishments by proudly acknowledging that they did it. On the weekend of May 15, pamper yourself, spoil yourself, treat yourself because YOU EARNED IT!

During these uncertain times, our students can be certain of one thing—the connection and bonds that you have forged over the years are not going to fade easily. Faculty, staff and friends are always here for you. To our graduating seniors: we are very proud of you. Although remotely, we are cheering you on as you embark on a new journey.
GETTING CREATIVE DURING THE QUARANTINE

I bought roller skates a couple weeks ago and have been skating around my apartment complex.
-Ozioma (Ozi) Enunwa

During this shelter-at-home order, I have been able to find a little more time for my art! I haven’t used water color and pens, and colored pencils in literally YEARS.
-Aimee Hermongino

I have been doing during this time is going on trial walks/hikes. This has helped me to enjoy our nature, and distract myself from the time we are living in.
-Emiliza Vasquez

I got a new puppy, so that’s been a huge investment of time and energy.
-Jennifer Morales

I have been painting and drawing nearly every day. I also dyed my hair pink, I think next is blue.
-Rachel Gordon
I have found that I am spending a little more time with my family. We have been playing games, doing puzzles together, and every Sunday picking a movie to watch together.

-Alexander Cisco

I have been running every day with my dog and mastering my tie-dyeing skills! They have kits on Amazon and they’re pretty affordable, but super fun and a cool project to do!

-Delaney McKeon

Since I am unable to go to the gym, I decided to buy some weights... not much yet but it is better than nothing.

-Brian Carrillo

during this lockdown, it’s gotten a bit tiresome just watching shows so I decided to learn how to play the ukulele! Hopefully, in time, I’ll be able to play Can’t Help Falling in Love by Elvis Presley.

-Paula Gordillo