Students, Faculty, and Alumni
Making an Impact from Antarctica to Mars

IN THIS ISSUE:
Captains of Industry Turn to CSUSM
Innovative Technology Implemented in the Classroom
Life Saving Research Underway
Dear Alumni and Friends,

I find myself continually inspired by the accomplishments of our students, alumni, faculty, and staff at Cal State San Marcos. The impact that this Institution is making in the arts, sciences, education, and business extends well beyond San Diego County. In this issue of Steps you will read about how we are leaving our mark from Antarctica to Mars.

We're also continuing to make an impact close to home. Our Tutor Connection Program was recognized at the National Conference of the Corporation for National and Community Service by former President and Mrs. Jimmy Carter. And we signed not one, but two historic Memoranda of Understanding - one with San Diego Health & Human Services and one with Riverside County - to help our greatly underserved population of foster youth achieve higher education. These are the first such agreements in the California State University system and, we believe, in the nation.

In the laboratory, our faculty are driving innovation and exploration. Dr. Bianca Mothé’s National Institute of Health grant is studying the immune system, paving the way for important life saving vaccines. In the classroom, we are implementing technology that facilitates active hands-on and collaborative learning experiences. These are just a few examples of how we are preparing the leaders of tomorrow.

If you haven’t been to campus recently, I invite you to come by and see the transformation taking place. Thanks to the support of generous donors, we were able to recently dedicate two new pieces of public art on campus: “Focus,” a colorful freeform sculpture, and “Tukwut,” a bronzed statue of CSUSM’s proud Cougar mascot. Both pieces of art were created by Luiseño artist, Robert Freeman.

This year promises to be yet another exciting year for Cal State San Marcos. I look forward to sharing our future successes as we strive to transform lives and communities. With your support, we will continue to make this great University even greater.

Sincerely,

Karen S. Haynes, Ph.D.
President
Features

7 Bound for Antarctica:
JUDIT HERSKO

8 Out of this World:
NICHOLAS RUOFF

10 From Boardroom to Classroom
WHY CAPTAINS OF INDUSTRY TURN TO CSUSM

Steps welcomes letters from our readers. Mail to:
Steps c/o University Advancement
California State University San Marcos
San Marcos, CA 92096-0001
This publication can be made available in alternate format to the print impaired upon request. The timely delivery of this material in alternate format will largely depend on the specific format requested and volume of other requests received. For further information, please contact Christine Haag at (760) 750-4010.

Alumni and Graduating Students
Please note that your name, address, phone number, school or college, and the year of graduation may be used by Cal State San Marcos for the development of university affiliated marketing programs. If you do not wish to have this information used, please notify the university by email or phone:
alumni@csusm.edu
(888) 278-7689

ON THE COVER: Mars Rover
New Program Guarantees Foster Youth College Admission

In an effort to increase the academic success rate of foster care children, CSUSM and Riverside County Department of Public Social Services Agency (DPSS) have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to prepare Riverside County foster youth for entrance into the university.

President Karen Haynes and DPSS Director Susan Loew signed an agreement – the first of its kind in Riverside County – which makes it possible for foster youth under the county's supervision to have a better chance for success.

The agreement states that Riverside County Department of Public Social Services and the Children’s Services Division will prepare the foster youth academically for the university and bring them to the campus for visits, and Cal State San Marcos will guarantee their admission when they meet CSU admissions standards. To prepare for their transition into university life, CSUSM has established a program specifically to help foster youth – the ACE Scholars Services. A similar agreement was also signed with San Diego County earlier this year. (For more information visit www.csusm.edu/ace.)

The statistics on the educational attainment rates for foster youth are startling. Approximately 3 percent of foster youth enter college after leaving foster care and only half complete their degrees. In Riverside County there are just over 5,200 children currently in foster care. With approximately 450 youth emancipating from the system each year, the university and DPSS are taking steps to change this statistic of an under-represented group.

“As an engaged university, I am delighted that we are, once again, making history with this agreement to increase the educational attainment rate of foster youth,” says Haynes. “We will be creating a path for more foster youth to succeed.”

New Art Brings Colorful “Focus” to Campus

An exciting new, rainbow-colored freeform sculpture greets visitors near the entrance to the Cal State San Marcos campus. It’s called “Focus,” but viewers are advised not to focus too hard.

Although speculation abounds as to what it represents, including a toucan, a rabbit, and even a pair of dancers, artist Robert Freeman maintains the work is not intended to represent anything in particular.

“Everything in mainstream culture calls for logic, meaning, purpose and precision. But this is beyond that,” he says. “There’s no message here. I’m not trying to say anything. I’d like everyone to interpret it in their own way.”

Born on the Rincon Reservation in San Diego County, Freeman’s roots include Luiseño and Sioux as well as English and French. He never attended art school, his artistic bent developing as a child growing up in poor neighborhood government housing in Vallejo, Calif.

“We didn’t have money to buy toys,” says Freeman, “so we built our own. I got used to creating things and I think that’s where it started.”

The project was sponsored by an anonymous donor after Freeman offered to create a sculpture to CSUSM President Karen Haynes.

“I came up with about 30 drawings,” he says. “The President and her committee narrowed it down to three and I made the final decision.”

Guaranteed Admission: Foster Youth are guaranteed admission to CSUSM thanks to an historic new agreement with Riverside County signed by CSUSM President Karen S. Haynes (second from left) and Riverside County’s Susan Loew. Also present were Temecula City Council member Chuck Washington (left) and Riverside County Supervisor Jeff Stone.

Artist Robert Freeman puts finishing touches on “Focus.”
President Jimmy Carter Honors CSUSM’s Tutor Connection Program

CSUSM’s Tutor Connection Program was honored with a $10,000 check by Jimmy & Rosalynn Carter June 3 at the National Conference of Corporation for National & Community Service in Atlanta, Georgia.

As one of three national finalists, the program was also designated a certified Carter Partnership “by virtue of having met the qualifying standards for excellence in academic campus-community collaboration.”

Tutor Connection is a first-of-a-kind program aimed at preparing future teachers to address the special needs of foster children. Since starting in 2002, 1,250 student teachers have increased reading scores significantly for 69 percent of 1,500 foster children and increased standard scores in at least one subject for over 80 percent. Student teachers visit the homes of foster children and assist them with their studies. The long term potential will be realized as a large number of teachers enter the profession with direct prior experience with the skills needed to help foster children succeed.

“When these student volunteers go out and become teachers in the communities, they will have had direct experience with vulnerable children with whom they will often come in contact,” said Rosalynn Carter, “so I’m very proud of this finalist.”

The funds will be used to establish an endowment for the purchase of gasoline cards. The gas cards will help reduce some of the transportation expenses CSUSM student tutors incur in driving to and from the homes of foster youth needing assistance.

“The students have been bearing the burden of gas costs for a long time,” said Darci Strother, director of the Community Service Learning Program of which Tutor Connection is a part, “and this will help defray some of those costs.”

CSUSM Students Score Big at CSU’s Annual Research Competition

Cal State San Marcos psychology students garnered three out of the eight awards in the Behavioral and Social Sciences category at the CSU’s 22nd Annual Statewide Student Research Competition held May 2 and 3 at CSU East Bay in Hayward. The awardees and their project titles are:

- Oriana Aragon-Clark (Cardiff), Normalization of Brain Wave Activity in Children with Autism Spectrum Disorders Following Neurofeedback Training
- Shane Allen (San Marcos), Behavioral Sensitization to the Prescription Opiates Oxycodone and Codeine: Comparisons to Morphine and Implications for Abuse
- Monique L. Smith (San Marcos), Different Effects of Oxycodone on Adult and Adolescent Rats

The students were judged on the clarity of the purpose, the value of the research, the appropriateness of their methodology, their interpretation of results, the organization of their presentation, and their ability to articulate and present the material and to answer questions.

CSUSM Opens New Center in Temecula

In August, Cal State San Marcos opened a 15,000 square-foot classroom center in Temecula. Program offerings include nursing, career and professional development as well as other personal enrichment courses. Paul Goldring Garrett, founder and chairman of The Garrett Group LLC and BetterWorld Together Foundation, provided a $250,000 grant in support of the facility.

“It has always been a dream of mine to see a four-year university come to this valley, and we are pleased that CSUSM is that university,” said Garrett. “CSUSM offers an excellent opportunity for this valley’s residents to begin their higher learning process, indeed their future careers, in this community.”

Temecula Mayor Mike Naggar, a member of the Council’s Higher Education Subcommittee, said, “We are excited to see CSUSM join our community. Providing higher education opportunities for our residents is important to the Temecula City Council and we recognize the many economic benefits it brings to our area.”

The center is located at 27455 Tierra Alta Way, Temecula.
Campus Wins RecycleMania
4th Year in a Row

It’s official! Cal State San Marcos has won the national RecycleMania contest for the fourth consecutive year, topping more than 400 other colleges and universities.

“We squeaked it out in the final week finishing with a recycling rate of 75.69 percent just ahead of Naropa University’s 75.52 percent and third place Rutgers University’s 63.47 percent. That earns CSUSM the 2008 Grand Champion designation,” reports Carl Hanson, who spearheads the campus’ recycling campaign.

CSUSM Research
Leading the Way for Life Saving Vaccines

The reason why some people get sick and others don’t has fascinated doctors and scientists for centuries. Today’s researchers, however, are honing in on some explanations. Among them is Bianca Mothé, professor of biology at Cal State San Marcos. Under a four-year, $444,000 grant from the National Institutes of Health, Dr. Mothé and CSUSM students are studying how sets of cells called “helper cells” provide a natural defense against some diseases. Mothé’s research is striving to discover how to activate or stimulate helper cells to increase the immune response in all subjects. It may lead to the design of vaccines that can combat such chronic infections as AIDS and Hepatitis C.

Dr. Mothé’s interest began while a post-graduate student conducting research on AIDS virus infected monkeys. That’s where she observed how some animals exhibited a natural protection against the disease. “Their immune system somehow was controlling the virus better. These animals inhibited viral replication and didn’t let it get out of control,” she explains. The animals that exhibited the natural defense all had in common a genetic marker that resulted in a more vigorous defense by naturally occurring “helper cells.”

“They were not destroyed by the virus, but we could find viral specific response,” says Dr. Mothé. “The cells were actively fighting the disease,” and they were doing it even better than monkeys that had been vaccinated.”

On joining CSUSM in 2003, Dr. Mothé wanted to continue research into helper cells and find out what makes them so important. A three-year grant received in 2004 presented her with the resources to do that using a mice model of infection in place of monkeys. The latest grant enables her to continue, while also providing practical experience for both graduate and undergraduate students at Cal State San Marcos.

“It is a bit uncommon to have undergrads involved in research that will be published,” she says. But that’s one of the reasons she came to Cal State San Marcos.

“I think we provide a good combination of research and teaching by bringing them into our lab and getting them ready for the real world.”

In memoriam...

CSUSM biology professor Tom Wahlund passed away September 11 after a brief illness. Tom joined the College of Arts & Sciences in fall 1997 after earning his doctorate in microbiology from Southern Illinois University in 1993 and conducting postdoctoral research at Ohio State University. Prior to that, he had spent a career teaching high school biology and microbiology.

Adored by his students, Tom taught a full range of courses – lower-division general education and prep-for-the-major courses, upper-division major and elective courses, and graduate seminars.

He and fellow CSUSM biologist, Betsy Read, collaborated successfully on several National Science Foundation-funded grants, both included undergraduate and graduate students in their research efforts.

In his memory, a scholarship fund has been established. Contributions may be made through CSUSM’s secure online giving website: http://www.csusm.edu/giving/ (designate the gift to support “Other” and write in “Tom Wahlund Scholarship Fund”).

In memoriam...
Designed for the working educational professional, the joint CSUSM/UCSD doctoral program is aimed at “putting your knowledge to work in a practical way,” says Jennifer Jeffries, former director of the program at CSUSM. “The workplace becomes your laboratory. The whole goal is to increase student achievement through skilled and committed leadership in the schools.”

Since being launched in 2005, the program has enrolled a total of 65 students.

Top Education Leaders Receive CSUSM’s First Doctoral Degrees

Seven top San Diego County school administrators were awarded Doctorate in Education degrees (Ed.D.) at CSUSM’s commencement exercise May 17. They are the first candidates to receive their degrees from the joint CSUSM/UCSD doctoral program. Recipients included:

Jeff Felix
Superintendent
Coronado Unified School District

Kevin Daniel Holt
Superintendent
San Marcos Unified School District

Luis Angel Ibarra
Associate Superintendent
Human Resources
Oceanside Unified School District

Michelle Lustig
Coordinator, San Diego County Office of Education

Karen Schultz Rizzi
Assistant Superintendent
Educational Services
Escondido Union High School District

Melavel Odviar Robertson
Assistant Superintendent
Poway Unified School

Andrés Peter Santamaría
Principal
Fallbrook Union Elementary School District

Unique Study Abroad Program Enables CSUSM Students to Earn as They Learn

Under a unique, new study abroad agreement with Daegu University (DU) of South Korea, students from California State University San Marcos will be able to study there tuition-free for up to a year, earning college credit while also earning $300-a-month to serve as a conversation partner with Korean students. Furthermore, DU will pay for roundtrip airfare and housing.

The new agreement was signed in August by CSUSM President Karen S. Haynes and DU President Yong Doo Lee. DU is a private university located in the Gyeongsang province of South Korea with 16,000 students.

This is the third in a series of agreements between DU and CSUSM aimed at bolstering the study abroad program.

Witnessing the signing were Dr. Sangho Kim, Dr. Dongchoon Lee, and Patrick Travers of DU, and Dr. Peter Zwick, director of CSUSM’s Office of Global Education.

Directed for the working educational professional, the joint CSUSM/UCSD doctoral program is aimed at “putting your knowledge to work in a practical way,” says Jennifer Jeffries, former director of the program at CSUSM. “The workplace becomes your laboratory. The whole goal is to increase student achievement through skilled and committed leadership in the schools.”

Since being launched in 2005, the program has enrolled a total of 65 students.

First Doctorates: (From the left:) Jeff Felix, Mel Robertson, Andrés Santamaría, Karen Rizzi, Luis Ibarra, Michelle Lustig, Kevin Holt
CSUSM Takes Kinesiology Degree Program to Camp Pendleton

Extended Learning at Cal State San Marcos has received approval from the Service Member Opportunity College, Marine Corps (SOCMAR) to offer its bachelor’s degree in kinesiology program at Camp Pendleton. The kinesiology degree is being offered for the first time on base during the current fall semester.

CSUSM is the first California State University campus to receive such approval. The SOCMAR degree network consists of colleges and universities that offer associate and bachelor degree programs on, or accessible to, Marine Corps installations worldwide.

These colleges have joined together to form a network in which each college accepts credits from all the others, guaranteeing that Marine Corps students and their adult family members can continue their progress toward degree completion even though the Marine Corps might transfer them several times before degree completion.

“The SOCMAR approval marks an important milestone for Cal State San Marcos in that it allows our campus to provide educational opportunities to service men and women at Camp Pendleton,” said Eric Bullard, senior director of academic programs for Extended Learning. “Our campus is committed to meeting the educational needs of our community, and we hope that this is the first of many programs that we will offer at Camp Pendleton and other bases in San Diego County.”

The full bachelor of science degree program takes 63 units to complete and can be finished in approximately three years. It prepares students for a wide variety of careers in the areas of rehabilitation, wellness, fitness and education.

Associated Students Opens Pride Center

It was a year in the making, but the university’s Pride Center for Lesbians, Gays, Bisexuals, Transgender, and Queer individuals (LGBTQ) officially opened its doors in Commons 201 in spring. The Center is operated through Associated Students, Inc.

It took that long to acquire the space, money, and student staff, according to center director Rodger D’Andreas.

“Most of the funding for the opening of the Pride Center comes from donations.”

While focused on “offering a safe, inclusive and affirming environment to lesbians, gays, bisexuals, transgender and queer individuals,” the center is really open to the entire campus community, according to D’Andreas.

“It gets a lot of use by LGBTQ allies as well.”

In addition to providing a “safe zone,” the center also will provide education, advocacy, and programs and events such as transgender day of remembrance each fall and the gay marriage ceremony presented in the spring.

Kids Learn Cartooning Secrets from Pink Panther Co-Creator

Twenty-two young artists fascinated with cartoon drawing had the opportunity to learn from the best this summer through Extended Learning’s Creative Youth Academy. “Funny Pictures: Cartooning for Kids” covered the secrets of cartoon drawing including faces, expression, movement, animals characters, super heroes and humor writing.

Eric Teitelbaum is the co-creator of the Pink Panther along with his brother, Bill. For the past decade Eric and Bill have also produced “Bottom Liners,” a nationally syndicated business comic strip. Eric Teitelbaum is also a regular contributor to The New Yorker, and his designs and illustrations have appeared in other major publications, including Forbes and Family Circle.

The Creative Youth Academy is an exciting certificate program for aspiring artists between the age of 10 and 16. Students may select from classes in topics such as computer illustration, video game design, fine arts and cartooning. Upon completion of six classes, students receive a Creative Youth Academy Certificate.
Most of us will never get to visit Antarctica, so Judit Hersko plans to bring Antarctica to us.

Sponsored by the National Science Foundation, Hersko, an assistant professor of visual arts at Cal State San Marcos, will embark in December on a month-long mission to Antarctica to capture the icy continent through her art.

As a contemporary artist, Hersko’s work will not be displayed in a simple gallery of pictures or paintings. Instead, expect a room-sized multi-media installation that attempts to recreate the phenomena one might encounter on the barren white landscape – wonders such as whiteouts and mirages (fata morgana), and even the experience of walking through an ice cave. Viewers will be surrounded with light and temperature conditions as well as sounds and air movements that mimic the Antarctic’s impact on the senses.

Titled Shifting Baselines Antarctica, Hersko’s project will also include artist books, digital and web projects, articles and presentations for both university and K-12 classrooms. It is part of a project she initiated several years ago in which she actively collaborates with science faculty at CSU San Marcos bringing art and science together in the classroom to increase scientific literacy.

One of Hersko’s primary themes is climate change. She has been working with Victoria Fabry, a CSUSM colleague and biological oceanographer whose research on oceanic ecosystems has received international attention. Hersko hopes that her art will help promote Fabry’s findings and raise awareness of climate change issues and their relationship to the earth’s poles.

An equally fascinating theme for Hersko is human perception. “As an artist whose work is based in visceral, phenomenological and perceptual effects, I would like to observe and document the landscape of Antarctica with its ice formations, light phenomena, and limitless vistas,” she says. “Since our senses developed in a very different terrain with objects such as trees to anchor our orientation, they are not well adapted to perceiving in a setting where contours are indiscernible.”

Human perception is further confused by phenomena like whiteouts and mirages. Whiteouts, caused by a combination of hurricane and blizzard, create a visual field without contours, making visual perception impossible. A mirage, caused by the temperature difference between cold ground and much warmer air above it, produces reflections that the human imagination misinterprets as architectural or natural forms.

Because these phenomena are created by the interaction of moving particles and light, they are in constant flux and therefore impossible to capture with the camera lens, explains Hersko. “Only a medium incorporating change, movement and physical space can mimic the Antarctic assault of the senses.”

Hersko’s upcoming adventure to the Antarctic enables her to expand a “lifelong interest in perceptual phenomena and the human relationship to nature.” Hersko says she tries “to weave many complex layers into one unified statement in installations that use ephemeral processes and projections.”

“I have worked with light as well as the transformation of matter (fire and steam) as metaphors for time, change and memory,” says the Hungarian-born experimentalist. “The driving force in my work is the invention and creation of visual phenomena as well as the discovery of powerful metaphors that emerge from layers of information and research. I believe that art can help us reconnect to matter, nature, and our own physical existence.”

Hersko’s work has been exhibited internationally, including museums in Hungary, Slovakia, Italy, Spain and Germany, as well as nationally in San Diego, Los Angeles, Baltimore, Chicago and New York. She has a master’s in fine arts from the School of the Art at the Institute of Chicago and a bachelor’s degree in psychology from the University of Michigan.
California State University San Marcos (CSUSM) alumnus Nicholas Ruoff (B.S., Computer Science – Class of 2007) never imagined his studies would lead him to a job on Mars. Yet today, as an employee at the Jet Propulsion Lab (JPL) in Pasadena, Nick is part of the team charged with image processing for the unmanned probes now hard at work exploring the red planet. Steps caught up with him recently and asked how it all came to be.
**STEPS: What is the nature of your position at JPL?**

NICK: I am a member of the Multimission Image Processing Laboratory (MIPL) team. I do image processing for the two Mars Rovers, Spirit and Opportunity, as well as the Mars Phoenix Lander. Imaging data are sent back to Earth from all three spacecraft and processed at JPL. Most data are automatically processed by MIPL software, while some products, like generating stereo mosaics and 3D terrain meshes, require manual intervention. My job is to ensure that all processing is completed on a tactical timeline and without issue. Some examples of products we generate are slope maps, reachability maps, and surface roughness maps. Our primary users of these types of products are the Rover Planners. From these maps, Rover Planners determine safe driving paths and where to place the robotic arms for performing science operations.

**STEPS: How did you get your position?**

NICK: I heard about an Early Career Hire (ECH) program at JPL where they provide recent graduates the opportunity for practical experience in their fields of study after college. They were also very interested in computer science majors who had an understanding and interest in how scientific instruments work, so this seemed like a perfect match. I submitted my resume to sections where I was interested in working and a short time later I was traveling to Pasadena for an interview. I spent a half-day interviewing with different people and touring the JPL campus. And now here I am, a JPL employee.

**STEPS: Was it part of your career plan?**

NICK: Yes and no. Throughout college I was never really sure what I wanted to do after I graduated. I knew I wanted a degree in computer science but had no idea in what direction to go. I ended up taking a physics course (Computer Interfacing and Control) where we got to work with microcontroller devices. For our final project, we designed and built a simple robot that used IR sensors to guide itself down a hallway. As soon as we started on that final project, I knew that was the type of work I wanted to do.

**STEPS: How did CSUSM help you prepare for the position?**

NICK: CSUSM had a very rigorous computer science and physics curriculum. Most professors required the student to really focus on and understand the underlying principles of the subject at hand. My professors also taught me to be very thorough with my work and how to interact effectively in a group environment, which is essential at a place like JPL.

**STEPS: Were there any professors that stand out in your experience?**

NICK: Yes definitely. Dr. Edward Price stands out in my CSUSM experience. In fact, the entire physics department stands out. They not only do an excellent job of instruction, but they also do an excellent job of helping students and encouraging them to explore new ideas. They were always willing to make themselves available, whether it was for help with homework, career advice, or just to discuss some random topic. They actually made me feel more like a peer than a student.

**STEPS: What does it feel like to be part of such a grand project?**

NICK: You see NASA Missions covered on the news or TV and you are watching history unfold in front of your eyes. You see people furthering human understanding of life, Earth, and our Universe. Now I am actually working on these missions and helping to advance human knowledge in all of those areas. It feels truly amazing!
After spending decades in the private sector, building corporations and becoming hugely successful in the process, many executives are leaving the boardroom for the classroom. At Cal State San Marcos, several captains of industry have recently joined the faculty. Unlike many traditional academics, whose career path begins with teaching, these executives-turned-professors are uniquely able to bring experiences from their own successful corporate careers into the classroom.

“Experience is a terrible thing to waste,” says Al Kern, who helped develop Roundup, the most widely used weed killer in the world. After leaving The Monsanto Company, Kern went on to build several biotech companies. Kern is now the recently appointed director of biotechnology programs at CSUSM. Now, he says it’s “payback time.” For executives like Kern, teaching is an opportunity to give back and share personal insights with students—a valuable reward in and of itself. “I’ve been lucky and successful, and I think it’s time to give back something if I can,” Kern says. “I sincerely believe I am where I am today because of one teacher (a high school biology teacher). If I can have that kind of impact on just one student, the effort would be worth it.”

He’s not alone. Jim Hamerly, the founder of DigitalStyle Corporation—a company that created Internet software—echoed Kern’s sentiment, saying he’d like “to provide opportunities to others.”

“To me, education was always a key to understanding, fulfillment and, ultimately, to success in life,” says Hamerly, director of business community relations for the College of Business Administration (CoBA). “Second only to the influence of others, it can be the most significant enabler in life.”

For Bruce Nichols, an adjunct professor for CoBA, the decisive moment to turn educator arrived while in his forties. “The date was March 31, 1998,” he recalls. “It was one of the biggest days of my life—on that day I signed the documents transferring the shares of my company (Formulabs, Inc.) to the Kimberly-Clark Corporation. The following morning I peered into the bathroom mirror and asked myself a profound question: ‘So, now what?’ What I did not want to do, and fortunately did not have to do, was go right back into a high stress, 60-hour-a-week job. Why should I?”

For Nichols, the decision to leave corporate America was lifesaving. Still fresh in his memory is how his 47-year-old partner died of a massive heart attack several years earlier. With time on his side, Nichols proceeded to write up a list of all the things he wanted to do, a list that included things like learning to play golf, taking classes, getting back into shape, spending more time with the family, and traveling. In less than six months, though, he had run through the list and realized there was something missing.”

Fortunately, Nichols had done some “well received lecturing” for CoBA, and that turned into an opportunity to join the faculty as an adjunct professor. “I am now one of the lucky executives that have been able to make the transition from intense corporate life to one of joy and balance,” says Nichols. Nowadays, the Annapolis graduate and former naval officer devotes his time to teaching, business consulting and leisure time with family and friends.

For Al Kern, shifting gears from corporate life to university life was practically second nature. He, like many others in the biotech field, spent considerable time at the university level earning advanced degrees. (Kern himself has a Ph.D. from Michigan State University with emphasis in plant physiology and biochemistry.)

“Most of us have attended universities nine or ten years,” he says. “And most of us like it. It’s not foreign to us. There’s a certain comfort level.” Like Nichols, he no longer relishes the idea of long work weeks and constant travel required by corporate life. “I wasn’t going to climb back on that saddle,” he says.

Although he still serves on a number of boards, Kern now prefers to spend most of his time at home with the family, including two grand kids. “I don’t like being more than 20 minutes from home or my golf course,” he says.

Ditto for Jim Hamerly, whose company was eventually acquired by Netscape, which was subsequently purchased by AOL Time-Warner. “Startups typically require 80-100 hour weeks for the first 3-5 years and often a lot of travel as well,” he says. “I routinely did 100
Captains of Industry turn to Cal State San Marcos
feature
flights per year, but I am not poised to do that right now with all the other projects I have going.”

Hamerly, who has degrees in electrical engineering and computer science, including a Ph.D. from Carnegie Mellon University, continues to be involved in start-up companies, but only in an advisory role, he says. “I sit on several boards and assist wherever I can with student started businesses.”

Teaching, however, has always been an avocation, says Hamerly. He especially enjoys working with students at Cal State San Marcos.

“CSUSM has a much higher percentage of first generation college students than most colleges, and a high percentage of our students also need to work while going through school,” says Hamerly. “The better students must have significant perseverance to excel academically while working. As a first generation college student myself, I empathize with those students.”

David Bennett:
“It is not about the money…”

“For me, it is not the money, obviously, but the satisfaction I get by sharing my experiences and knowledge with students,” says David Bennett, another successful corporate executive who’s made the switch from business to business education. An adjunct professor of management and leadership since 2000 and Director of Outreach for the College of Business (CoBA) at Cal State San Marcos, Bennett brings more than 25 years experience in the private sector that includes senior level positions with PepsiCo, Marriott and Mail Boxes, Etc.

Bennett says his interest in teaching was sparked while lecturing at major U.S. universities early in his career with PepsiCo. “I liked the experience so much that I knew when I retired, I would teach. If I can touch just a few minds and blend the reality of the corporate world with some academic practices and theories, I will consider myself successful.”

His years of experience are worth volumes in the classroom. “I have a very sincere passion to teach what I have learned and in so doing, know that in 10 years or so, I may read about one of my students in Business Week or Fortune and feel that I have, in some small way, helped him [or] her get to where they are. “What a rush!”

Bennett did his graduate work at the Harvard School of Business and has been an honorary faculty member at both Michigan State and Washington State universities. He is the founding member of CSUSM’s Center for Leadership Innovation and Mentorship Building (CLIMB) and co-founder of CoBA’s popular “In the Executive Chair” class.
Ed Price, assistant professor of physics, is examining the impact of new technology in the classroom. Thanks to a Technology for Higher Education grant from Hewlett Packard, the Physics Department was able to purchase 21 TabletPCs as well as software and peripheral equipment for a study on how these state-of-the-art tools could positively influence students’ active learning.

According to Price, TabletPCs are being used in an active-learning physics class where students work in groups, presenting answers to the class, and participating in instructor-led whole class discussions. Previously, students used erasable white boards for presentations in front of the class. But whiteboards that were easy to handle were too small for the entire class to see. Another drawback to the whiteboards was that work was lost to students and instructors unless it was copied down. But with the new technology students have the ability to “ink” or markup directly on instructor prepared slides which are then displayed and presented in class on a screen. Now students and instructors are able to review work after class because of the capability to archive on the Internet.

These studies not only will impact the way physics students at CSUSM learn but have implications to affect other students in other universities. Price’s project team will be presenting results at national meetings including the American Association of Physics Teachers, the American Physical Society, and the Physics Education Research Conference. The project team will also share project results and training opportunities for other interested faculty.

Collaborations with HP and Microsoft Bring Innovation to the Classroom


Greetings Alumni and Friends,

It has been an amazing and exhilarating year, not only for me but for the entire University - a great year of gifts, galas, groundbreakings, and more. And here we are already half-way through fall semester and moving quickly into 2009 and our 20th Anniversary in 2010. The next year will bring even more positive transformation to campus with groundbreakings for the new Social and Behavioral Sciences Building and parking structure, and the opening of McMahan House.

Here at Cal State San Marcos, we transform lives and communities through education. Like our founding members who dreamed big nearly twenty years ago, we are still dreaming big. We dream of a campus where no deserving student will be denied access due to a lack of financial resources; where our student athletes play their home games at home; where endowed chairs and endowed professorships help us attract and retain the best faculty; where our School of Nursing graduates sufficient qualified nurses to meet the demands of the region; and where we have a student center where students gather and enjoy a vibrant campus environment.

I think one of the most rewarding aspects of giving, however, is knowing that the gift produces something long lasting and important. Cal State San Marcos students, both present and past, can attest to how philanthropic support has made their academic dreams possible. The programs and services that are funded through private support dramatically strengthen Cal State San Marcos’ ability to educate the next generation of purpose-driven leaders.

On behalf of Cal State San Marcos, my thanks to all of you who have supported this University through your gifts. To those of you who may be considering becoming involved with the University, I urge you to learn more about the opportunities for engagement that Cal State San Marcos provides. The University’s ability to thrive as an institution of distinction in San Diego County and beyond is made possible with your support, your friendship, and your leadership.

I invite you to check out our newly redesigned University website, www.csusm.edu. Online, you’ll find continuously updated information on upcoming arts and lecture presentations, news regarding student and faculty accomplishments, opportunities for giving, and more.

Sincerely,
Neal Hoss
Vice President, University Advancement
CSUSM Receives Science Equipment from Princeton

Cal State San Marcos is the beneficiary of science equipment from Princeton University’s Plasma Physics Laboratory (PPPL).

According to Michael Burin, assistant professor in the physics department, the new equipment will allow students to develop additional skills that will prepare them for technical jobs or graduate school.

Plasma physics is an area that many physics programs do not emphasize until the graduate level and yet it is critically important in everything from semiconductor processing to astrophysics, according to Burin.

A former employee of Princeton, Burin applied for the equipment as soon as he joined the CSUSM faculty in 2007.

“This early plasma exposure is sure to give Cal State San Marcos students an edge,” said Burin.

Kaiser Permanente Awards Nursing Scholarships

Twenty-one students in CSUSM’s School of Nursing have been awarded $20,000 each in financial assistance from Kaiser Permanente as part of its newly established Scholarship and Loan Forgiveness Program with the university.

The students will receive $5,000 per semester for four semesters to help pay for fees, books and other expenses. In exchange, the students agree to work in an acute care Kaiser Permanente hospital facility for a minimum of two years following graduation. Four additional scholarships remain to be awarded.

“We are very grateful that Kaiser Permanente has selected our university as the first in the CSU to benefit from this unique program,” said Judith Papenhausen, director of the School of Nursing. “It will ease the financial burden of some of our students and help address the critical shortage of nurses throughout San Diego, Riverside and Los Angeles counties.”

As one of the largest employers of nurses in California, Kaiser Permanente’s support to build California’s nursing workforce exceeds $4 million annually for Nursing Pathways, career ladder programs, nursing scholarships, grants to colleges, and forgivable loans.

Million Dollar Gift Will Endow Scholarships to Help Transfer Students at CSUSM

Cal State San Marcos will be the beneficiary of $1 million in scholarship endowment funds as the result of a generous gift to the California State University (CSU) system by the Bernard Osher Foundation.

The endowment will be used by CSUSM to support scholarships for students who transfer from a California community college. More than 88 percent of students transferring to Cal State San Marcos are from state community colleges. Scholarships can be used for fees and books and will be available in 2009.

The Osher Foundation has pledged $70 million overall to support the state’s community college system, including $16 million for the CSU. Fifteen of the 23 CSU campuses have been earmarked for the endowments.

The Assistance League presented CSUSM’s School of Nursing with a $20,000 check to fund scholarships for financially needy students. Assistance League President Suzy Soppet (second from left) made the presentation to School of Nursing director Judy Papenhausen (center). Also participating were Assistance League officers Karen Warburton and Gloria Tecca (far right). At far left is CSUSM Advancement VP Neal Hoss. The “patient” in the foreground, nick-named Fred, is a high fidelity human simulator used in training.
For 27 years, Dennis Pugh patrolled the dugout at Mission Bay High School. His record speaks for itself: 18 league championships, 8 CIF championships, and a state championship. He coached numerous players who were drafted by the Major Leagues, all of which played at Mission Bay’s Dennis A. Pugh Field.

Kelly Warren was one of the best players in the storied history of UCLA softball. A two-time All-American, Warren moved into coaching following her playing career, first as an assistant for UCLA, and eventually as the Associate Head Softball Coach at San Diego State.

Pugh came to Cal State San Marcos in 2006 to helm the newly-created baseball program. Warren joined a one-year old Cougar softball program as Head Coach in 2007. Given their past achievements, it’s no wonder that both coaches’ young programs are flourishing.

CSUSM competes in difficult Region II of the NAIA, and its status as an independent creates scheduling and qualification difficulties. Additionally, both teams lack true home fields, playing their home games at local high schools. Plans are currently in place to build on-campus fields, but the project requires private funding – funding that is yet to be secured.

“Getting a field is everything,” notes Coach Pugh.

Yet despite all this, Cougar baseball and softball have already made a name for themselves.

In Pugh’s first season, Cougar baseball posted a respectable 18-23 record. But the squad struggled against tough competition, and received little if any consideration for the playoffs.

That changed in 2008. Not only did the team improve its record to 22-16-1, but the players showed a genuine commitment to hard work and winning that should carry over to future years. With leadership coming from San Diego State transfer Jared Suwyn, as well as senior sluggers Austin Way, Terry Moritz, and Tristan Gale, Coach Pugh’s team finished its schedule by winning 12 of its final 14 games, barely missing the playoffs.

“It was a great year, I’m very happy with how it went,” commented Coach Pugh. “The seniors really did a great job, and will be hard to replace.”

While baseball was shut out of the playoffs by mere percentage points, Cougar softball managed to overcome the odds and earn a spot in the Regional playoffs. It was a spectacular improvement over the team’s first season.

In 2006, Jennifer Milo was tabbed to build and lead the new CSUSM softball program. The former University of San Diego star and SDSU assistant coach recruited a very talented, very young roster. Predictably, the team showed promise while making plenty of mistakes en route to a 10-31 record.

Milo worked with Kelly Warren on the SDSU coaching staff, and when Milo became the Associate Athletic Director at CSUSM, Warren topped the list of potential successors. For Warren, it was a perfect fit.

“I was at a point in my career where I knew I wanted to be a head coach,” commented Warren.

Warren entered the 2008 season hoping the team’s record would improve “even if by one game.” As it turned out, the team would win 17 more games. Gifted returning athletes like pitcher Melissa Lerno and second baseman Erica Coelho developed into All-Region players, while new additions like pitcher Brenna Sandberg helped fill out the lineup and staff. The squad finished 27-17, beating #1 Cal Baptist in the process, and finishing the year nationally ranked.

And although CSUSM was eliminated in the first round of the playoffs, it was still a huge step for the program. Given that the squad featured just one senior – outfielder Leilani Madrigal – its potential for next season is off the charts.

“It’s hard not to put too much pressure on the team and have real expectations of success,” said Warren. “We just want to create the same atmosphere that worked this year.”

To help maintain the atmosphere, Warren is adding Madrigal to the coaching staff as an assistant. Pugh is making a similar move with Jared Suwyn. Both coaches are clearly happy with their programs’ direction, and are looking to keep the momentum going. We hope that you’ll get behind Cougar baseball and softball this upcoming spring!
Cougars Rise to Competitive New Heights

For Steve Scott’s track & field program and Fred Hanover’s golf program, the 2008 season was an unexpected breakthrough. Both coaches have been with the University since Athletics started at Cal State San Marcos nearly a decade ago, and both have built their programs from the ground up into perennial contenders in the National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics (NAIA). But in 2008, despite their long resumes of success, both coaches took their programs to new heights.

Prior to last spring, Steve Scott had coached one national champion – Cara Rumble, who won the marathon in 2002. Thanks to his team’s performance last year, Coach Scott now has two more. Competing at the 2008 NAIA Track & Field National Championships in St. Louis, senior Juan Mejia ended his CSUSM career in style, winning the men’s marathon to earn the title of national champion. Shortly after, Dallon Williams, a junior in her first year at CSUSM, won the women’s 3,000-meter steeplechase.

Mejia and Williams weren’t the only two Cougars to turn in outstanding performances. Other highlights included Ashleigh Davis finishing second in the 100-meter hurdles, and Sergio Gonzalez finished 3rd in the 10,000-meter run and 4th in the 5,000-meter run. In total, a school-record twelve Cougar athletes earned All-American status at the event.

Meanwhile, another Cougar triumph was happening much closer to home. At the 2008 NAIA Women’s Golf National Championships, hosted by CSUSM at Lake San Marcos Country Club, Coach Fred Hanover led his women’s golf team to a school-record third place finish. CSUSM led the tournament after round one, slipped to fourth after the second day, then climbed to third after round three and maintained that spot despite heavy rain on the tournament’s final day. Senior Carly Ludwig earned First Team All-American status by tying for sixth.

Looking Ahead to Spring

So expect more great things out of Cougar golf and track & field this upcoming spring, as well as big years from the rest of the University’s sports. The men’s golf team, a very young group in 2008, should come back strong in 2009. And baseball and softball, both coming off of breakthrough seasons of their own despite being just second-year programs in 2008, should continue to make their mark in the NAIA. Cougar fans are welcome to come out in-person to cheer on their teams, or follow all the action online through www.csusm.edu/athletics. You’ve got a lot to be excited for!
It’s not like he intended to make a career out of mushrooms. In fact, Roberto Ramirez (BA, Liberal Studies, Class of 2000) hadn’t even tasted a mushroom until the age of 21. Yet today, at the age of 30, Roberto is co-owner of one of the largest growers and distributors of fresh mushrooms in San Diego County. Mountain Meadow Mushroom Farm produces more than 100,000 pounds of mushrooms every week and generates approximately $7.5 million in annual sales.

Roberto was born in Guadalajara, Mexico. He never knew his father and at the age of five his mother left him with his grandmother to find work in the United States. Roberto first began learning English at the age of 13. When he rejoined his mother in the United States, Roberto, as the oldest of four children, assumed responsibility as head of the household.

Roberto attributes his success to his desire to create a better life for himself. “I just wanted the opposite of what I was born with,” he says. “I was only nine years old when I remember telling my grandma that I wanted to get married one day and raise a family.”

Flash forward 21 years and grandma would be pleased to find Roberto has achieved just about everything he had dreamed of, including a wife, Olga, who he met while attending class at CSUSM, and a family with “three wonderful kids.”

Bob Crouch, owner of Mountain Meadow Farm, played a particularly significant role in Roberto’s success. After meeting Roberto at the Rotary Club of Escondido, Crouch offered him a summer job on the farm.

Roberto worked out so well that following graduation, he became assistant to the general manager, working his way up to general manager just three years later.

His rapid rise came as a result of hard work and an entrepreneurial spirit. Many of Roberto’s innovations have resulted in improved production and profitability.

Roberto’s story of success and change is a true reflection of a CSU alumnus working for California. Little wonder he’s been named this year as one of “eight remarkable CSU alumni who are making a difference.” Others named include motion picture producer Steven Spielberg, novelist Amy Tan, and Jack O’Connell, state superintendent of public instruction.

Although they represent a variety of backgrounds and businesses, all attribute one important thing to their success: getting an education at the California State University. For Roberto, education has been especially important, and he hopes others in his family will follow his example. He has already set up college savings accounts for his children and a nephew.

“Roberto isn’t finished learning, either. “My goal is to get an MBA and, hopefully, a Ph.D. I would like to pave the path as far as I can go for whoever in my family would like to travel it. I can only hope that my own kids go beyond what I have accomplished.”
1993  Chris Vornheder (History) is going to Sendai City, Miyagi Prefecture, Japan to work as a coordinator of international relations for the Miyagi Prefectural Government.

1995  Mary Szterpakiewicz Bettinson (Economics) works as SEO Analyst for Interactive Design Firm in Long Beach, CA: The Designory, Inc.

Judith A. Downie (Liberal Studies) has been awarded tenure with promotion to associate librarian at CSUSM. She is the first alumna to earn tenure at the university.

1996  Cliff Mitchell (credential) was named principal of Mesa Verde Middle School in Poway.

Karen O’Hagan (Liberal Studies & MA Education) is a realtor for Century 21 Bonnie Blue and has been recognized by Cambridge Who’s Who for dedication, leadership and excellence in all aspects of real estate.

Thom Tombs (Computer Science) opened a strength training studio, SuperSlow Zone, in Carlsbad. The SuperSlow workout was recently featured in Men’s Health magazine and is recognized as the most effective strength-training technique to get in shape.

1997  Rosie G. Stephenson-Goodknight (MBA) was married on July 3, 2008 and lives in Nevada City, CA

2000  Renee Parker (Business Administration - High Technology Management) recently passed the California Bar exam. She is also a licensed attorney in Washington State.

Jacob Rush (Liberal Studies) was promoted to the position of station manager for KOCT-Oceanside Community Television. He is also a 2008 graduate of Leadership North County and on the steering committee for the LNC class of 2009.

2001  Gloria O’Shea (Business Administration) took over her son’s yoga studio, Four Season Yoga, in La Jolla, following a fatal accident. Gloria also is founder and president of the Sean O’Shea Foundation, a 501c3 non profit organization bringing health, yoga and nutrition to the young students of San Diego County. Since graduating, Gloria has also served on the CSUSM Alumni Association as director of events, college representative (CoBA) and alumni representative to the CSUSM Associated Student Body.

2002  Laura (Wetherill) Waterman (MBA) married her longtime friend, Todd, and now has two beautiful children. Daughter, Brooklyn, will be five years old in December, and son, Zack just turned three.

2003  Anna DuBois (Liberal Studies) is the president of the Kiwanis Club of San Marcos.

Shannon Deadmon (Business Administration - High Technology Management) and her husband, Dean, started a real estate and mortgage broker business in San Marcos, Red Sun Realty/Red Sun Mortgage. Shannon also runs her own marketing consulting business.

Victor Carvajal (Computer Science) is a software engineer at Sony Electronics in Rancho Bernardo. He and his wife, Patricia, are expecting their first child in December or early January. They live in San Marcos.

Susan Eschler (Special Studies, Visual Art and Contemporary Art History) works at the Sonoma County Museum, Santa Rosa, as the visitor services coordinator. Her advisor, Andrea Liss, helped her achieve her goals and she is proud to be an alumna of CSUSM. The guidance and education she received has allowed her to pursue her dreams of working in an environment of art and history.

Teresa Juarez (Social Sciences) was chosen by the Sweetwater Union High School District as one of five teachers-of-the-year to represent the entire district at the San Diego County Teacher of the Year Competition.

2005  Tasha Iglesias (Women’s Studies and Liberal Studies) was married to Dennis Shea in June 2008. She works as a worksite organizer/student intern coordinator for the Service Employees’ International Union (SEIU) Local 221. Tasha is also studying for her a master’s degree in Sociology at SDSU and plans to earn a Ph.D. and teach at the university level.
James Nguyen (Economics & Political Science) spent two and half years working for CFED, a community and economic development nonprofit in Washington, DC. This fall, he returned to school to pursue a graduate degree at the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University.

Chuol Puoch Tut (Social Science) graduated with a master’s of arts in management in May from the University of Redlands. In the fall of 2008, he began his second master’s program in Economics at San Diego State University. He currently works for the County of San Diego Department of Health and Human Services.

Russell Ferguson (Visual and Performing Arts) won an Emmy Award for two episodes of the KOCT television series Climate TV.

Monica Morel (Psychology) works at Heritage Clinic in Escondido, a non-profit agency that provides mental health services for older adults. She plans to earn a master’s in some aspect of clinical psychology.

Olusola A Oluwa (Psychology) is the membership director at the Mission Valley YMCA and is currently attending Walden University of Psychology Graduate School. His second child, Mekhi Adeyinka, was born on August 20, 2008. He also has a two-year-old daughter named Emma.

2007 Sherry Brideau (Sociology) is a mental health worker at San Pasqual Academy, the first-in-the-nation residential education campus designed specifically for foster teens.

Erika Callahan (Psychology) has been accepted into the fall 2008 Psychological Research Masters of Arts program at California State University, Fullerton. During her year leave, she tested for and was offered an invitation to join the local chapter of American Mensa, Ltd. She feels she owes both of these accomplishments to her professors at CSUSM. Without their support, she doubts she would have had the courage to attempt either challenge.

Thomas Colby (Political Science and Psychology) spent six weeks in Europe this summer before leaving for law school at Notre Dame. He is very excited to get back into a classroom.

Aimee Gralla (Human Development) has been promoted to a full-time position as an administrative secretary in the nursing department at Mira Costa College.

Corrine Overend (Business Administration) has moved to Los Angeles where she took the position of executive assistant to the senior vp of creative services in marketing at Universal Pictures. She started in the beginning of the 2007 Academy season where her department was responsible for creating marketing campaigns for academy nominated films.

Sally Serrin (Sociology) was engaged five years before marrying Leo Melena June 21, 2008. They reside in Escondido. Sally will start her candidacy for the master’s in Sociological Practices at CSUSM in the fall.

Mary Ann Thomas (Liberal Studies) is engaged to be married to her college sweetheart, Andrew Prutsman, July 11, 2009. She also recently completed the Secondary Education Credential program at Cal State Fullerton and has been hired to teach math at Santa Fe High School in Whittier Union High School District.

2008 Monette Lewis (Communication) is proud to finally be an alumna of CSUSM, and after four years of dating, she is getting married to the love of her life, a fellow CSUSM student, Ruslan Karaoglanov.

Stephanie Powers (Literature and Writing) was married in San Diego on July 12, 2008 to Ryan Kopchak (’04), who is an alumni of Thomas Jefferson School of Law.

SUBMIT YOUR CLASS NOTE! Alumni are encouraged to send news about themselves for class notes. Have you achieved any personal or professional goals recently? Reached any milestones? Newly married or have a new baby? We would love to publish your news in Steps: A Magazine for Alumni and Friends. Class Notes may be edited for clarity and brevity. Attribution—full name, class year and daytime phone number—is requested with each submission. All pictured individuals must be clearly identified by first and last names and class year. Photographs may be submitted via email and should be in high resolution format (300dpi) suitable for reproduction. Prints and or negatives are also acceptable. To be included in “Class Notes” upcoming STEPS issue, email to alumni@csusm.edu.
Thank you!

Thank you for electing us, the new CSUSM Alumni Association board of directors and President, to serve you for the next two years. We are honored, proud, eager and ready to serve.

We expect this period to be an especially exciting time as we help prepare the university to celebrate its 20th anniversary in 2010. This is the perfect opportunity to celebrate the 22,000 alumni who have passed through the halls of Cal State San Marcos to earn degrees and assume responsible and rewarding positions in the regional community.

On the eve of this notable milestone, what better time than now to reconnect with your “old” alma mater, your “old” professors and “old” classmates? I believe it’s important to take the time to look back to where you’ve been in order to better understand where you are today and where you are headed tomorrow.

We hope you enjoyed Alumni Month this October. These events drew hundreds of alumni, friends and families. If you missed it, don’t worry. There are many more activities scheduled for the coming months, including special events planned by the MBA, Communication and Human Development chapters of the Alumni Association. (Did you know they even existed?)

We think it’s important that you stay in touch with CSUSM, not only to re-engage with former classmates and faculty, but also to network with fellow alumni you may never have met. Many events are free and all of them are designed to be fun and informative.

We’ll notify you of these events via snail mail as well as email. Of course, there’s always the CSUSM Alumni webpage, www.csusmalumni.org, where the latest information is continuously updated.

So, come on back! See how we’ve grown. See where we’re growing. I think you’ll be amazed!

Ken Green
President
CSUSM Alumni Association

Matsumoto Earns 2008 Alumni Achievement Award

“I think professors like Catherine Matsumoto help students feel like they are unique individuals and not just a number,” says a former student of the adjunct professor in communications. “Her selfless caring attitude along with her willingness to offer individual support to students past and present is a true inspiration to higher education... Professors like her truly separate CSUSM from other schools in the most positive manner.”

With praise like this, it’s no wonder Catherine was one of two to receive this year’s Alumni Achievement Award (the other was Robert Ramirez – see page 16).

After raising a family, Catherine returned to school and completed her bachelor’s degree from CSUSM in 2000. She has since earned a master’s degree in communication from SDSU and is well on her way towards a Ph.D. in education from Capella University.

“My son and I are racing to see who can finish first,” she says.

In addition to teaching and studying, Catherine does volunteer work related to the service learning course she teaches.

“As an alum, she actively models our university values of intellectual engagement, community, integrity, innovation and inclusiveness via her volunteer activities,” says CSUSM faculty member Dreama Moon. “In those roles, Catherine has volunteered over 400 hours of service.”
John Pettitt is not one to shirk civic duty. In fact, he has committed his life to serving his country and his region through public and military service.

John was born in Boise, Idaho, and was commissioned in the U.S. Navy through the Aviation Officer Candidate School in February of 1970. Following flight training and his designation as a naval aviator, he flew single-seat light attack and strike fighter aircraft off numerous aircraft carriers, accruing over 5,500 flight hours and 675 carrier landings. After 25 years of service, he retired from the U.S. Navy in 1994 as a Captain.

Now the Corporate Lead Executive (CLE) for the Northrop Grumman Corporation in San Diego, John is responsible for providing a focal point for relationships between the corporation, local Department of Defense commands, and the San Diego community.

Despite his many activities - John serves on boards for the San Diego Fleet Week Foundation, Wings Over America Foundation, San Diego Military Advisory Council, San Diego Regional Economic Development Corporation, and the San Diego Futures Foundation among others - he signed on this year as the chair of CSUSM’s College of Arts and Science (CoAS) first ever Advisory Council.

“John Pettitt is a graduate of the University of Oregon with a B.S. degree in Biology, and holds a master’s degree in International Relations from Salve Regina University. He also attended the Naval War College and earned a master’s degree in National Security and Strategic Studies. Mr. Pettitt is married to Marilyn Weeks of Kingsville, Texas. The couple has one married son, John Jr., daughter-in-law Allison, one grandson, and one daughter, Courtney.

The CoAS Advisory Council is a group of community leaders, knowledgeable in their respective areas of arts, humanities and sciences, which guide and advise the college regarding strategic plans for growth into the 21st Century. Council members serve in an advisory capacity, assisting in prioritizing fundraising activities, and promoting community and business partnerships.

According to John, among the council’s many priorities, increasing the membership of Dean’s Associates and soliciting science equipment from businesses are at the top. “We are also looking for large donors for naming a building on campus,” he stated.

Through his leadership role on the council, Pettitt has learned the true value of a CSUSM graduate. “Unlike UCSD and some of the other universities in San Diego, most [Cal State San Marcos] students are local and they are going to remain in the area [after graduation]. There is a lot of competition in trying to recruit students with degrees in the hard sciences.” He explained that investing in CSUSM means that local industry and business will benefit from a viable and educated workforce.

“Looking forward, my hope and goal [for CSUSM] would be to see more graduate programs in computer science, physics, and math to complement the current graduate program in biological sciences. I’m glad to be a part of this council. Cal State San Marcos has a very bright future ahead of it.”

Mr. Pettitt is a graduate of the University of Oregon with a B.S. degree in Biology, and

The Dean’s Associates Program is a group of individuals and businesses dedicated to investing in our community’s future. Through their membership in the CoAS Dean’s Associates, they support research and programs that have a direct impact on our region.

Invest in your community by investing in CoAS. With your help, we can sustain our commitment to excellence in teaching, in research and creative activities, and in service to our local, state, national, and global communities. For more information, contact University Advancement at 760-750-4400.
Tukwut Finds a Home

A 150-pound bronze sculpture of a mountain lion, named “Tukwut” after the Luiseño word for the cat indigenous to the hills around CSUSM, was installed and unveiled in September in Cougar Courtyard, outside third floor of Craven Hall. The sculpture was commissioned by CSUSM’s Native American Council and created by Robert Freeman (far right), an acclaimed artist who was born on the Rincon Reservation. Freeman’s work encompasses realism, abstractionism, cubism, impressionism, portraiture, cartoons and murals. He works with pencil or pen, acrylic, mixed media and oils and creates wood and bronze sculptures which he casts himself. Embossed paper, zinc and copper etchings, stone lithographs and woodcuts are among his prolific works.