CSUSM

A National Leader in Social Mobility

BREAKING BARRIERS AND BUILDING BRIDGES





CSUSM Empowers Next-Generation Changemakers to Transform Communities

California State University
SAN MARCOS

CSUSM IS POISED TO RESHAPE HIGHER EDUCATION THROUGH SOCIAL MOBILITY LEADERSHIP: TRANSFORMING LIVES, FAMILIES AND COMMUNITIES.

#1
in the U.S.
2022 Social Mobility Index

"Social mobility is at the heart of Cal State San Marcos' mission, strengthening the communities where we live and work, and driving economic inclusion across San Diego."

Mark Cafferty, President and Chief Executive Officer,
San Diego Regional Economic Development Corporation

Julia Glorioso, '23

When Julia Glorioso was in third grade, she took a field trip with her classmates to visit California State University San Marcos (CSUSM). A decade later, she made her way back to campus as a university student.

"Cal State San Marcos has provided me more than I could have ever thought possible," said Julia, who served the CSUSM student body as the Associated Students, Inc. (ASI) president. "All the opportunities that I've been able to be a part of, I don't think it would have been the same if I went to another university."

Julia was a student representative at the Panetta Institute for Public Policy where she met state legislators, politicians and members of Congress. When not fulfilling her duties as ASI president, she reviewed restitution cases and reached out to victims at the North San Diego County district attorney's office.



"My grandparents were both Italian immigrants, and I think their values really influenced me," said Julia, an aspiring attorney who credits her tenacity to her family. "They always put a large emphasis on education. [My grandparents] were not able to get an education. They stopped at third or fourth grade. So, it will be really exciting to be the first to pursue a law degree in my family."

"All the opportunities that I've been able to be a part of, I don't think it would have been the same if I went to another university."

SOCIAL MOBILITY

A CSUSM Success Story

Lack of financial resources or support networks are just a couple of the unique challenges faced by first-generation and low-income students pursuing higher education. CSUSM is committed to addressing these challenges and providing the support that our students need to succeed, serving our region by addressing educational opportunity gaps and preparing graduates to launch careers in high-demand fields.

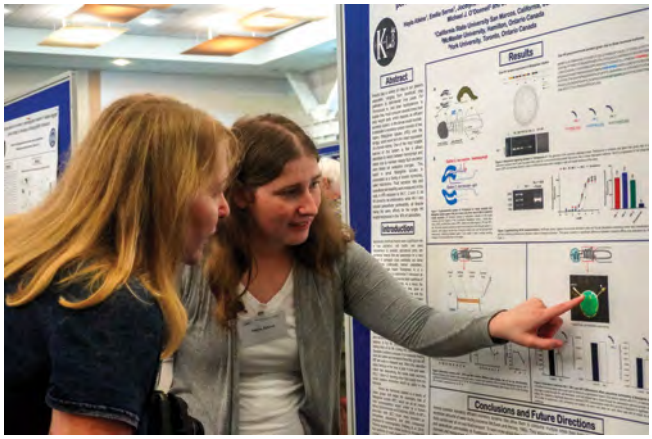
> **Social mobility ensures that people can do what they want to do.**
>
> Liliane Lendvai ’16, MBA ’17

Social mobility is traditionally defined as the movement of individuals from one socioeconomic status to another; but for CSUSM it means so much more. We recognize that the education we provide helps our students transcend barriers faced by earlier generations, unlocking their potential for lifelong success. This is key for individuals, families, organizations, industries and society as a whole thanks to a broadened talent pipeline, enhanced innovation and greater social equity, civic participation, leadership and economic mobility across communities.

The inclusive economic growth seeded by CSUSM benefits all members of San Diego County and beyond, regardless of their background or socioeconomic status. It creates opportunities for next-generation changemakers to succeed in the modern workforce, expand their professional networks, and participate in the increasingly globalized and interconnected economy while also having the means to give back and empower others who follow in their footsteps. Inclusive economic growth reduces inequality and promotes social mobility by ensuring that the benefits of growth are shared broadly and that no group is left behind.

WE ARE ENGINES OF SOCIAL MOBILITY.





Meeting the criteria as an Hispanic Serving Institution and Asian American and Native American Pacific Islander Serving Institution, CSUSM is uniquely positioned to impact social mobility and create opportunities for inclusive economic growth.

More than 52%
First-generation college students

70%
Students of color

12%
Military-connected

42%
Pell Grant recipients

38%
23 years or older

8 out of 10
CSUSM students stay in the region.

HOW IS SOCIAL MOBILITY CALCULATED AND WHY DOES IT MATTER?

CSUSM ranks first nationally out of more than 1,400 schools in the ninth annual Social Mobility Index (SMI) by the online publication CollegeNET, which measures and highlights colleges and universities that are making progress in promoting social mobility for students. The SMI rates four-year U.S. colleges and universities "according to how they hold the line on tuition, enroll students from low-income backgrounds, graduate those students into good jobs, and apply their promotional messaging to solve our nation's social mobility problem."

This ranking is important because it is a measure of the university's commitment to promoting social mobility and increasing broad access to higher education. A high ranking in the report indicates that the university is a good investment for donors seeking to support institutions that promote social mobility; it represents evidence of results, reputation and transparency and projects future impact.

> **"Social mobility is something that every parent wants for their child. Every parent wants their child to do better. Every parent wants to afford their child greater opportunities."**
>
> Maria Shterew, '20



California State University
SAN MARCOS

A DRIVING FORCE

We are number one! While we cherish this recognition, we remain focused on advancing and evolving our resources to support students of all backgrounds, coming together to create spaces, programs and opportunities that will help our students find their true interests, passions and callings. With our institutional reputation as a national leader for social mobility on the rise, CSUSM is poised to shape higher education in our region and across the nation: transforming lives, families and communities.

The pursuit of social mobility is the heart of our new strategic plan—The Power of **CSUSM**/The Power of **US**—a road map for turning our ideas and aspirations into reality. The plan calls on our community to attract and empower tomorrow's leaders, taking advantage of our strengths and location to foster an environment where ideas can transform our region and our world.

Developing new strategies to fuel social mobility and inclusive growth is an economic and social imperative that will transform our communities. Individually and collectively, we will leverage integrative learning, prioritize student success and eliminate barriers to support our students and communities.

#1
in the U.S.
2022 Social Mobility Index

Top 3%
in the U.S.
National Economic Mobility Index

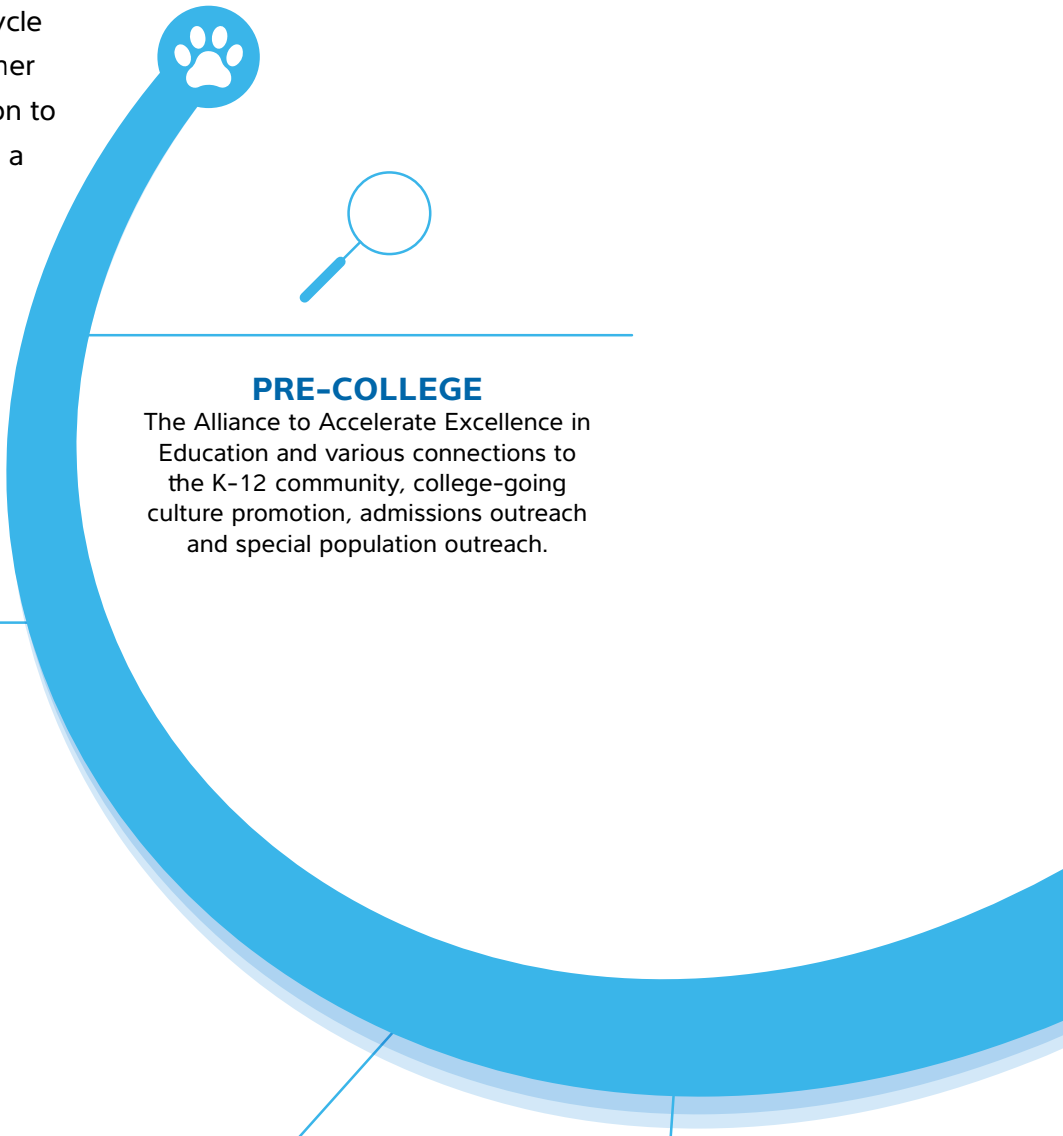
Top 10
in the West
U.S. News & World Report's Top Performers on Social Mobility report

Top 25
most transformative college
Money Magazine

THE PATH TO GRADUATION

The Cougar Success Life Cycle

CSUSM's Cougar Success Life Cycle helps all students succeed in higher education by making the transition to college smoother, which leads to a more rewarding and meaningful college experience that provides access to additional resources and programming.



PRE-COLLEGE

The Alliance to Accelerate Excellence in Education and various connections to the K-12 community, college-going culture promotion, admissions outreach and special population outreach.

TRANSITION TO CAMPUS

Summer bridge and special population programs, early start and coaching connections.

FIRST YEAR

(First-time freshmen and transfer/ graduate students new to CSUSM)
Coaching, co-curricular engagement, service learning, advising and supported instruction.

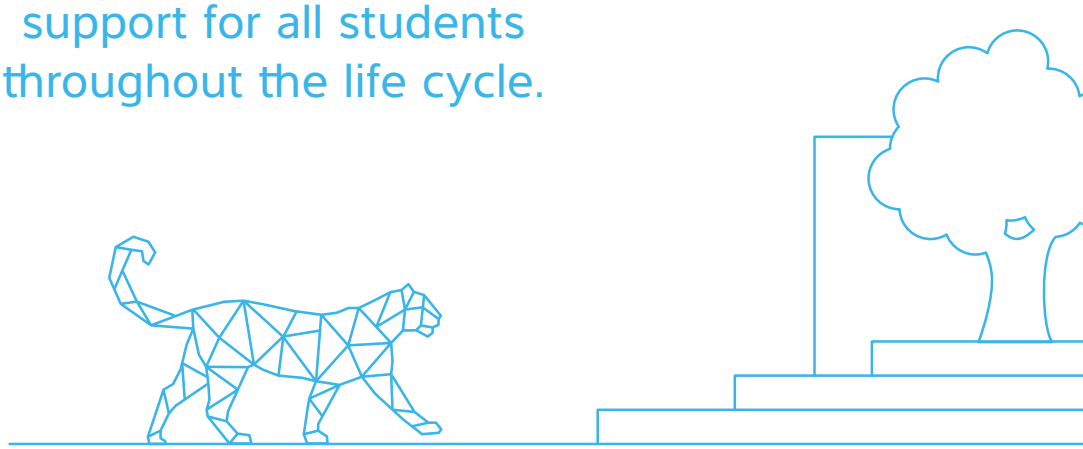
DEEPENED ENGAGEMENT

Student life centers and student organizations, general education courses and major selection.

California State University SAN MARCOS

GOAL

Seamless, equitable and effective support for all students throughout the life cycle.



ENGAGED COMMUNITY PARTICIPANT

Workforce development, alumni engagement and service in the community.

CAREER AND POST-GRAD TRANSITION

Internship opportunities, career and graduate school preparation and industry partnerships.

ENGAGED LEARNING IN THE MAJOR

Mentoring, coaching, research and community-engaged learning.

PRE-COLLEGE OUTREACH

"Yes! You can go to college—and we want you at CSUSM!" That's the message CSUSM is sending to K-12 students across its region through initiatives such as **The Alliance to Accelerate Excellence in Education** (The Alliance), an innovative, guaranteed admission program that serves San Diego, Orange and Riverside counties' at-promise youth, transforming individuals, families, local industries and the economy.

With eight out of 10 CSUSM students coming from and staying to work in the region, The Alliance is central to our success. Member students from 15 regional K-12 school districts receive support through counselor forums, campus tours, middle- and high-school visits and ambassador mentoring. The Alliance's programming and resources provide a broadened talent pipeline, enhanced innovation and greater social equity, civic participation, leadership and economic mobility across communities.

Founded in 2013 with catalytic support from Price Philanthropies and other regional philanthropic partners, The Alliance annually enrolls 300-400 first-year students. To date, over 1,000 program alumni have earned their bachelor's degrees and over 1,400 current enrollees are progressing toward their degrees. With nearly 15% higher retention and graduation rates among Alliance student participants compared to other CSUSM students, The Alliance is a model for supporting increased retention and graduation rates for all students.

IMMEDIATE IMPACT

$500,000

Supports a significant expansion of Alliance peer mentors and ambassadors, as well as annual programming such as Summer Alliance LINK Academy, Family Empowerment Network and faculty learning and development.





Jesus Perez, ´19

Jesus Perez, an applied physics major at California State University San Marcos, was the first in his family to pursue higher education. He began working at age 13 to help contribute financially to his family, at times working early in the morning, before class in middle school, eventually working a full-time job while finishing high school and into his years at CSUSM.

Jesus has a fierce work ethic and appetite for knowledge and experience. While a student at CSUSM, he completed a prestigious internship with the U.S. Department of Energy´s Princeton Plasma Physics Laboratory and was one of five MARC U*STAR (Maximizing Access to Research Careers Undergraduate Student Training for Academic Research) scholars. Jesus mentored high school students and, through a Society of Physics Students grant, arranged educational field trips to Palomar College´s planetarium for middle school students.

Jesus is pursuing a Ph.D. at UCLA and plans to become a professor, inspiring math and physics students who are struggling to dream big and work toward those dreams.



`I want to show them that college is a ridiculously great opportunity," he said. `If it wasn´t for Cal State San Marcos, I would´ve never gone to Princeton and been able to do what I´ve done. I wouldn´t be where I´m at if it wasn´t for college."

> **I want to show them that college is a ridiculously great opportunity.**

COHORT OPPORTUNITIES

Cohort opportunities such as CSUSM's Educational Opportunity Program (EOP) and College Assistance Migrant Program (CAMP), in which students are grouped together and receive support and resources throughout their time in higher education, have been shown to be an effective way to support access to higher education. By providing students with a supportive community and also targeted resources, cohorts increase retention and graduation rates compared to non-participating students. Students who are part of a cohort experience a greater sense of belonging and engagement on campus and have higher satisfaction with their college experience.

Top 25

most transformative college

Money Magazine



Louis Adamsel, ’18

Louis Adamsel was born in South Los Angeles, the youngest of six children. His mother died when he was 5 years old, and he and his siblings moved in with his aunt, who then relocated to Moreno Valley. Louis credits his childhood with teaching him independence. “It was cool to think about college, but I didn’t know for certain if I was going to go,” he said.

Louis was initially accepted to CSUSM, but after meeting a National Guard recruiter in high school he realized that the discipline of the military would help him prepare for college and beyond. He put his university plans on hold for a year and enlisted; he was dispatched to Fort Benning, Georgia, for boot camp, followed by ordinance school in Fort Lee, Virginia, which was recently renamed Fort Gregg-Adams, where he trained as a mechanic.

After applying to CSUSM again, Louis moved to San Diego to begin connecting with resource offices and support services on campus while continuing to serve as a National Guard reservist. It wasn’t easy. He took a three-hour bus ride to get to CSUSM over the summer to complete math requirements and to get to know his campus advisers in **Veteran Services** and the **Educational Opportunity Program.**



> **“I was able to find mentors in so many different people and use that as I navigated my way through college. Now I feel like the sky’s the limit.”**

Louis then moved into campus housing, making friends and campus connections everywhere he went and opening his eyes to the opportunity for leadership and involvement. His impressive college résumé included volunteer work, academics, fraternity life, National Guard reserves, on-campus employment and leadership in student government leading to a high-demand career in crisis management.

“I was able to find mentors in so many different people and use that as I navigated my way through college,” he recalls. “Now I feel like the sky’s the limit.”

MISSION-DRIVEN STUDENT SUCCESS

A variety of factors inform and affect a student's ability to stay the course and become comfortable as a newly admitted student, find a sense of belonging and successfully navigate a complex institution.

Top 3%

National Economic Mobility Index

Motivation and belief are what get students through the challenges they face and enable them to persist when things get rough. Students need to believe they deserve to be in college and that they will succeed—and that's where programs like CSUSM **Success Coaching** come in. CSUSM's Success Coaching program, which won a national Excellence & Innovation Award from the American Association of State Colleges and Universities, pairs first-year students with success coach fellows to identify and develop success and persistence strategies. During the 2020-2021 academic year, success coaching students were retained from first to second year at a rate of 14% higher than non-coached students and earned a CSUSM cumulative GPA of 0.18 higher than non-coached students.

> **"Social mobility helps students to think critically and speak intelligently about how to overcome challenges."**
>
> Floyd Lai, Director, Cross-Cultural Center





Equally as important is providing support and resources to highly motivated low-income and academically disadvantaged students to help them succeed in higher education. The goal of programs like **ACE Scholars Services** for former foster youth, **College Assistance Migrant Program (CAMP)** for children of migrant and seasonal farmworkers, **Project Rebound** for the formerly incarcerated, the **DREAMer Resource Office** for undocumented students and **Educational Opportunity Program (EOP)** is to increase the retention, graduation and transfer rates of students who face economic and educational challenges. Additionally, with approximately 12% of the student body being connected with the military (veteran, dependent or active duty), CSUSM is committed to being a military-friendly institution and supporting the success of our military-connected students.

By providing students with the support and resources they need to succeed in higher education, these programs help to increase access and promote social mobility, allowing students to build a supportive community and develop a sense of belonging.

All of these programs—and more—are designed to help students overcome obstacles and achieve their educational goals, with services including:

- Financial scholarship assistance
- Priority registration
- Counseling and advising
- Tutoring and academic support
- Transfer assistance and career counseling
- Support for personal and emotional well-being
- Cultural activities and events

IMMEDIATE IMPACT

Named endowments begin at $25,000

Annual support in any amount provides these areas with increased programming and supports direct services to students. Named endowments begin at $25,000, providing long-term, sustainable support for generations to come. An endowed fund of $1 million provides sustained support at roughly $37,000 a year.

Joshua Foronda, ´18

While Joshua Foronda failed multiple classes during his first year at CSUSM, landing on academic probation with a 0.6 grade-point average during the spring of his freshman

> **"... I tell students that every setback leads to a bigger comeback."**

year and contemplating dropping out of school, his GPA climbed to 3.3 by the time he graduated with degrees in criminology and justice studies and sociology. Today, Foronda uses his undergraduate experience to help a new generation of CSUSM first-year students in his role as a student success coach for the burgeoning **Office of Success Coaching**.

"Students feel like it´s the end of the world when their grades are not on point," said Joshua. "But I tell students that every setback leads to a bigger comeback."

Top 10

in the West

U.S. News & World Report´s Top Performers on Social Mobility report



The Office of Success Coaching has transformed the way CSUSM serves first-year students, providing personalized support services to ensure that newly admitted students thrive.

It´s not difficult for Joshua to relate to the students he mentors. Sure, he´s only a few years removed from receiving his bachelor´s, but he too was navigating school, work and family during the pandemic like so many of them. In May 2021, he received his master´s in counseling from San Diego State University.

"One thing I´ve learned," he said. "It takes a village to raise a child, but it takes a university to graduate a student."

Christopher Do, ’21

Christopher Do saw the trajectory of his career transformed when he switched his major to computer science and joined a program that links STEM students to industry mentors.

Now a computer scientist at Marine Corps Tactical Systems Support Activity (MCTSSA), a Camp Pendleton–based organization that provides technical support for command, control, computer, communications, cyber and intelligence systems for the Marines, Christopher secured his position thanks to two internships he did with the agency in the summers of 2019 and 2020—but he probably wouldn’t have been exposed to those opportunities without his involvement in a CSUSM program called Fab Friday.

> **“Fab Friday provided me not only experience, but it helped open new doors for me.”**

Fab Friday was one facet of a $1 million grant awarded to CSUSM by the National Science Foundation in 2017 to fund scholarships, workshops, mentors and networking opportunities for computer science majors from low-income families. Each Friday during the school year, students gathed at an on-campus makerspace to work on real-world projects while receiving mentorship from industry partners.



Christopher, for example, was a member of a team sponsored by Viasat that wrote software to be embedded in Slack, the company’s messaging tool, to improve the communication of its engineers.

“Fab Friday provided me not only experience, but it helped open new doors for me,” Do said. “Through programming, working with a team, collaborating and the camaraderie I developed during my time there, it really prepared me for my internship. Without Fab Friday, I would have been lost during the summer. It really propelled me to success.”

INTEGRATIVE & HANDS-ON LEARNING

First-generation college students face unique challenges that can make it difficult to bring their college journey to fruition. Persistence resources provided by CSUSM help these students stay motivated, overcome obstacles and develop academic and personal skills such as time management and adaptability that will benefit them throughout their lives.

Providing undergraduate scholars with firsthand experience in faculty science research labs, CSUSM's **Summer Scholars Program** prepares its diverse students for STEM careers in high-demand fields and exposes students to a culture of research, paving the way for future economic opportunities and social mobility. To save students from having to choose between getting a job or participating in this transformative learning experience, participants receive a stipend to help cover their living expenses.

IMMEDIATE IMPACT

Nearly $1 million in annual philanthropic support is needed for student stipends, faculty support and a modest discretionary account for lab supplies and travel to conferences to double the opportunities for undergraduate and graduate students to participate in research directly with faculty members and industry partners.

> **"Social mobility is about providing students with the skills and tools to be change leaders in the community, teaching them to navigate ups and downs, turns and pauses."**
>
> Leo Melena, Director of Student Success







The **Innovation Hub** provides both the CSUSM community and San Diego region with enriching opportunities to network, engage and leverage invaluable partnerships. With a student-centered approach, the Innovation Hub is the nexus for the innovation ecosystem. The space is outfitted with a designated prototyping space with elaborate 3D printing technology and hosts expansive programs and initiatives. The Hub provides a community-accessible space for ideation, collaboration, small-scale prototyping, training and events. It serves as the home for programs including the **Innovation Faculty Fellows** program, **Tikkun Olam Makers** (a student-led space to examine social issues and create meaningful solutions) and the **Quick Pitch** competitions, a contest based on the reality TV show "Shark Tank" during which students from all academic disciplines are invited to pitch business ideas.

The **Career Center** at CSUSM serves as the gateway for student employment, internships, mentorships and career readiness, helping to launch new graduates into successful careers. Résumé-building workshops, free headshots, mock interviews and the **Cougar Career Closet** are just some of the services offered to help equip students to land their dream job.

IMMEDIATE IMPACT

$5,000

Supports a quick pitch competition and seed funding for budding entrepreneurs.

$10,000

Supports the full expense for one student to participate in the Summer Scholars Program; the goal is to grow the program to 100 students annually through a combination of annual and endowed support, allowing CSUSM to double the opportunities for undergraduate and graduate students to participate in research directly with faculty members and industry partners.

Sophia Lombardi, ’23

As Sophia Lombardi began sewing in the early stages of the pandemic, she started searching for inspiration and came across a unique technique that she incorporated into her work—playing with the leftover scraps she had saved and molding them together to create her first swimsuit without using any new material.

Sophia wanted to share the impact of Amalfi Swiim’s business model, but she was not familiar with the process of making a pitch deck. She worked with members of the **CSUSM Entrepreneurship Society** to develop her pitch for the Innovation Hub Quick Pitch contest.

“I looked at everyone in the group as mentors because they’re all older than me and have a lot of experience,” she said. “And it’s really built my confidence to be able to speak in a professional environment and just push my boundaries and put myself out there.”

With the help of her peers, Sophia’s sustainable business model pitch won a $500 microgrant for her work on Amalfi Swiim. She is determined to scale her socially conscious company, spending up to 20 hours a week marketing, sewing and using social media to promote Amalfi Swiim while attending class.



“I have all my sights set on growing this business after college,” Lombardi said. “It has been quite a ride, and it’s definitely stressful to have so many obligations. But at the end of the day, I’m choosing this for myself. I really am passionate about starting a business in college so that I can support myself financially by the time I graduate.”

> **“... it’s really built my confidence to be able to speak in a professional environment and just push my boundaries and put myself out there.”**

AN ENGINE FOR CHANGE

Social mobility helps to solve the inequity or inequality in our society by helping people who may not normally have access to a college education to get there and to succeed.

Steve Wagner, co-founder of Stone Brewing and chair of the CSUSM Foundation Board

In May 2022, CSUSM received a $1 million gift from longtime donors Steve Wagner, co-founder of Stone Brewing and chair of the CSUSM Foundation Board, and his wife, Laura, helping to seed a fund devoted to social mobility. The Stone Brewing Fund for Social Mobility is an endowment and discretionary fund that provides foundational funding to improve college access and success for students via avenues such as student initiatives, faculty mentorship programs and community outreach. The fund has enhanced financial stability for existing student programs, expanded initiatives to serve more students, developed a comprehensive data management and analysis process to track outcomes and student progress and created success programs for underrepresented student populations. It also supported the fifth annual National Social Mobility Symposium, co-hosted by CSUSM and Old Dominion University and co-sponsored by College Futures Foundation, C&W Services and the San Diego Regional EDC.





The Stone Brewing Fund for Social Mobility represents an important prelude to funding a Center for Social Mobility and other critical efforts, such as summer bridge programming.

IMPACTFUL LEADERSHIP





At CSUSM, we believe that social mobility is an essential part of our mission. President Ellen J. Neufeldt—who, before joining the university, cofounded a National Center for Social Mobility at Old Dominion University in Virginia—plays a crucial role. Her transformative leadership in social mobility and commitment to providing access to higher education is making a significant impact on the lives of our students and the broader community.

> **Together, we are breaking the mold of higher education and igniting a chain reaction of inspiration, opportunity, and progress that ripples through families, communities, and the world, reshaping the trajectory of future generations.**
>
> President Ellen J. Neufeldt

President Neufeldt has set her sights on establishing CSUSM's reputation as a national leader in social mobility. Her vision is to establish a fund for supporting students equitably, removing barriers to student success and forming a national social mobility center to serve the campus and beyond through the research and dissemination of evidence-based practices that promote social mobility.

President Neufeldt's advocacy work with social mobility is unmatched. She has inspired a national dialogue on social mobility and is uniquely positioned to advance change by establishing a Center for Social Mobility at CSUSM.

IMMEDIATE IMPACT

$3 million

Supports the launch of a new, national Center for Social Mobility at CSUSM.

THE PATH AHEAD

At CSUSM, we believe that higher education is the key to unlocking economic opportunity and improving the lives of our students. Our simple yet profound mission of student success serves as a distinguished example of how students can not only transcend generational barriers but also unlock their full potential. Building upon our reputation as an escalator of student social mobility, we are uniting our diverse and talented population in pursuit of impact: equipping our students with the creative, strategic and critical skills needed to collaborate and solve problems in their communities.

CSUSM will continue to ensure that all students feel supported in achieving their dreams and, in doing so, we will support the social mobility of not only our students but also their families, communities, state and nation.

Your philanthropic support is vital to expanding our efforts to ensure that all students can succeed and attain their full potential through social mobility initiatives, which have a direct and tangible impact on their academic success and overall well-being. Investing in social mobility initiatives at CSUSM provides access to a more educated and skilled workforce, prepared to lead a stronger and more equitable society.

To learn more about CSUSM's social mobility initiatives, please contact:

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