Voluntary System of Accountability Provides One-Stop Comparison Shopping as Students Search for Right College

Cal State Northridge is among a half-dozen colleges in the nation participating in a test-run of a new Voluntary System of Accountability (VSA) that will provide plenty of one-stop-shopping information students and parents can use for comparisons to other universities as they select a place to begin or continue an education.

Presented as a College Portrait, the VSA is an initiative of the American Association of State Colleges and Universities (AASCU) and the National Association of State Universities and Land-Grant Colleges (NASULGC), higher education advocacy organizations representing hundreds of colleges and universities.

President Jolene Koester, who serves on the AASCU board, leads the campus voluntary system of accountability effort.

The project, available for viewing via a link on CSUN’s home page—www.csun.edu—will chart the intellectual progress of students and produce the evidence sought by state and federal policy-makers who set the public budgets, including critics who question the accountability and the results of an institution.

What is the university’s graduation rate? What is the university’s retention rate? What is the student-to-faculty ratio? What kind of financial aid is available? What degrees are offered? What scholarships are available? What athletic teams do they have? What extracurricular activities are available? What is the average class size? These are some of the questions the VSA will answer.

The VSA also will answer common questions such as: How much does a college education really cost? Who attends the school? What student activities are available? What other services? How much debt, if any, comes with a diploma? How long does it take to complete a degree?

Voluntary Accountability System
Valley Trauma Center, CSUN—Helping in Times of Crisis

University Students, Grads, Faculty Get Involved as CSUN Walks the Walk with Dedicated Trauma Team

While Rita Baer was studying at Cal State Northridge to become a marriage and family therapist, she volunteered to answer the sexual assault hotlines dedicated to the San Fernando and Santa Clarita Valleys, operated on a 24/7 basis—including holidays—by the Valley Trauma Center.

Headquartered in a cramped warren of small offices and tiny counseling rooms in Northridge, the center also operates out of two sites in Van Nuys and another in Valencia.

“One out of four women is sexually assaulted before the age of 25,” Baer said. “I know people who have been sexually assaulted. I believe by being there for a survivor, you are giving them something that is priceless at a time when they are overwhelmed.

“We provide support, information, and referrals, and many people choose to come to us for subsequent psychotherapy,” she said.

Serving sexual assault survivors, abused children, children at risk and their families, the center provides a range of services annually to about 2,500 clients, including individual and group counseling for children, adolescents, adults, couples, mothers and daughters; parent education, child abuse prevention, intervention and treatment services; family preservation, and adoption services. The center is also a valuable resource for those who wish to promote foster children with support for their new parents. Another 10,000 people attend presentations aimed at stopping domestic violence, date rape and bullying.

To provide these services, Baer and her small paid staff—largely made up of CSUN graduates—depend on Valley Trauma Center continued on page 2
Learning How to Lead—and Succeed—in Business

Ernst & Young Grant Helps Accounting and Information Systems Students Develop Leadership, Business Skills

California State University, Northridge, along with thousands of graduates.

The consumer-oriented College Portrait also includes a cost calculator so students or parents can plug in personal information to determine the actual amount they would be expected to pay. For example, the projected cost of an academic year for an undergraduate at CSUN in 2007–08 is nearly $17,000, including out-of-pocket expenses. But out-of-pocket expenses are much lower for students who live at home and do not have to pay for housing, and for students who receive some form of financial assistance.

This feature is already available on CSUN’s pilot College Portrait. That template and the preliminary efforts of the other participating universities, among them Cal State Long Beach and Cal State San Marcos, will allow public comment and fine-tuning.

The final version of the College Portrait will also document the educational worth of students. President Koester is leading a task force focusing on how to measure that progress, exploring the value of a degree not in terms of a grade point average or potential earnings but as measured by improvements in a student’s ability to think critically, reason analytically and write well.

Participation in the national VSA for higher education represents a commitment to the value of post-secondary participation on the promises made across the board and to be held accountable by all, President Koester said.
Events

Tuesday, November 27
Middle Eastern Jewish Identity
Jewish Studies presents Levantine
Center director Jordan Elgrably,
discussing how Middle Eastern Jews
and their descendants feel about
their identity today, 4:20 p.m.,
Sierra Hall 268. fmpi-x3007.

Friday, November 30
Student Research and
Creative Works Symposium
Faculty, staff and students are welcome
at the annual CSUN Student Research
and Creative Works Symposium high-
lighting undergraduate and graduate
student achievement representing
research and creative activity across
all academic disciplines. Students
will present posters from noon to
1:30 p.m. in the USU, Grand Salon.
To view the oral presentation schedule:
www.csun.edu/graduatesudies.
fmpi-Graduate Studies Office, x2138.

Wednesday, December 5
Greenpeace Speaker
Graduate Studies, Research and
International Programs presents Rex
Weyler, co-founder of Greenpeace
International, as part of its Distin-
guished Speakers Series. His lecture,
“Ordinary Courage,” will explore how
to create a sustainable future, 2 p.m.,
Whittsett Room, Sierra Hall 451.
fmpi-betsy.carpenier@csun.edu.

Friday, December 7 and
Saturday, December 8
Art Holiday Sale
The GSU Department of Art holiday
sale, featuring ceramics and other
artwork by students and faculty, will
be held in the Art and Design Center’s
north courtyard on Fri., Dec. 7,
5–7 p.m. and Sat., Dec. 8, 9 a.m. to
noon. fmpi-Art Department, x2242.

Public Meetings

Educational Policies
Committee
Meets 2–4 p.m.
Wed., Nov. 28
University Hall 211

Personnel Planning and
Review Committee
Meets 2–5 p.m.
Wed., Nov. 28
University Hall 277

Faculty Senate
November 29 meeting cancelled.

For Your Information publishes announcements of events, public
meetings, notices, classes and
deadlines. Submission deadline is
noon on Monday, one week before the next issue.

The deadline for the December 10
issue is Monday, December 3.
We strive to include all items
submitted by deadline occurring
until the next issue. Submit future
items by e-mailing them to
pubinfo@csun.edu, sending them to
mail drop 8242 or faxing them to
(818) 677-6909. E-mail is the
preferred method of submitting.

Note: fmpi—means for more
information.

USU board of Directors
Meets 1 p.m.
Mon., Dec. 3
USU Grand Salon

Educational Resources
Committee
Meets 2–4 p.m.
Tue., Dec. 4
University Hall 211

North Campus-University Park
Development Corporation
Meets 9 a.m.
Fri., Dec. 7
University Hall 250

Academic Technology
Committee
Meets 11:30 a.m.
Fri., Dec. 7
University Hall 211

Educational Equity Committee
Meets 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.
Mon., Dec. 10
University Hall 277

A Penny for Your Thoughts? Seed Money Helps Ideas Grow

H e—or she—has become an
American icon, the brilliant
innovator out there in the
garage, toiling over the proverbial
grinder of an idea that morphs into
a billion dollar enterprise.
The National Collegiate Innovators
and Inventors Alliance (NCIA) is step-
ing in to help Cal State Northridge’s
potential world shakers, providing a
$25,500 seed money grant to student
entrepreneurs and faculty members
to develop prototypes of their ideas.
The NCIA grant to the Ernie
Schaeffer Center for Innovation and
Entrepreneurship also will help
institute a new course in product
development and entrepreneurship,
and fund basic materials, supplies
and travel expenses.
“The grant recognizes the potential
the center has and the importance of

for the work we are doing to inspire
our students, faculty and community
members to think outside the box
and pursue their innovative and
entrepreneurial ideas,” said Nhu T,
director of the Schaeffer Center and
an assistant professor of mechanical
engineering.

The Schaeffer Center was estab-
lished a year ago in the College of
Engineering and Computer Science
to promote the development of
innovation and entrepreneurship-
related knowledge and skills among
CSUN students, faculty, alumni and
the community at large. It was
created with a $2 million pledge by
pioneering inventor and entrepreneur
Ernie Schaeffer.

In addition to serving as a conduit
between students and real-world
inventors and entrepreneurs, the
center also strengthens faculty
professional development, holds seminars,
lectures and panel discussions and
conducts other activities consistent
with its mission and resources.
The NCIA is an initiative of The
Lemelson Foundation and provides
grant support to colleges around the
country for the creation of E-Teams—
“excellence and entrepreneurship”—
courses, projects, networking oppor-
tunities and resources for faculty and
student innovators.
Ernie Schaeffer

Valley Trauma Center…

continued from page 1
volunteers. The center trains students,
most of whom are pursuing master’s
degrees in marriage and family therapy
or social work. Currently, 55 graduate
students work as unpaid interns,
putting in 15 hours a week, much of
it supervised counseling. The 100
rape crisis advocates come from the
university, including some under-
graduates, and from the community.
These volunteers work a six-hour
shift every week, and must undergo
60 hours of state-certified training.

“Never have we had enough
volunteers. We never have enough
money,” Baer said, describing 2.3 million in
funding from the county and state, plus about
$73,000 in donations. CSUN also
supports the center, a chartered agency
for the Michael D. Eisner College of
Education under the auspices of the
Department of Educational Psychology
and Counseling.

“We actually train a small group
of undergraduate students who then go
out and speak in classrooms on
rape, sexual assault, date rape and
relationship violence,” said educational
psychology and counseling professor
Charles Hason, a licensed clinical
psychologist.

In 1985, Hanson got the university
involved in what began as a rape
crisis center. Since then, and as it has
expanded, he has provided training,
supervision of student therapists and
oversight of the center.

Most clients are children. More than
60 percent of the calls to the sexual
assault hotline concern youngsters
under 18, and half of those calls, usually
from the police, are about children younger than 12.

“Don’t receive any funding to
support counseling services for
women who have been sexually abused,”
Hanson said, yet no child is turned
away—or is anyone else in need.
The Valley Trauma Counseling
Center sexual assault hotline dedi-
cated to the San Fernando Valley is
(818) 896-0453, and the Santa Clarita
Valley hotline is (661) 253-0258. Visit the
In Brief

**Is That Apple on the Floor Really Safe to Eat?**
If you pick up an apple slice from the floor within five seconds, is it safe to eat? Do red M & Ms melt faster than green or orange ones?

Southland middle and high school students who conducted hundreds of interesting experiments can see their names in print and their work summarized in the "New Journal of Student Research Abstracts 2007," spearheaded by biology professor Steven Oppenheim, director of the university’s Center for Cancer and Developmental Biology.

Sponsored by the Van Nuns Airport, the journal singles out the two best aviation and aerospace abstracts for 2007, both submitted by middle school students. One determined which airplane wing shape creates the most lift, and at what angle, and the other winner determined what factors go into creating “the perfect paper plane.”

Other abstracts submitted by area science teachers included results of experiments dealing with gelatin, boiling water, sleep, tobacco, the endurance of discount vending machine name batteries, the effects of antibiotics on *E. coli* bacteria, lead levels in Los Angeles Harbor sediment...and the five-second food-on-the-floor test.

Motivating young investigators “to continue their involvement in research science” is a major purpose of the journal, said Oppenheim, journal creator and editor.

The abstracts, he said, demonstrate good science, clear introduction, description of a hypothesis to be tested, appropriate methods and data analysis, results and conclusion statements, appropriate control and experimental samples, and repetitions of experiments.

The deadline for submission of abstracts for the next issue is June 1, 2008. Contact Oppenheim at steven.oppenheimer@csun.edu for more information.

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**Calendar**

**Art and Exhibits**
For gallery info, call (818) 677-2156. Main gallery hours: Mon. through Sat. 12-4 p.m. and Thursdays noon-8 p.m. Admission is free unless specified. For library exhibits, call (818) 677-2286.

**High School Art Invitational**
San Fernando Valley high schools exhibit paintings, sculptures and more.

Opening reception: Fri., Dec. 7, 7-9 p.m.

Gallery talk: Mon., Dec. 10, 10 a.m.

Exhibit runs Dec. 7-Jan. 12.

(Closed Dec. 24-Jan. 1)

Main Art Gallery

**Comedy**

*Life and Times of Elizabeth I*


C.K. and Teresa Tseng Gallery, second floor, Westmg, Oviatt Library

**Theater/Performance**

**CSUN Symphony Orchestra**
John Rossigno, conductor.

Tue., Dec. 4, 8 p.m.

Plaza del Sol Performance Hall

**St. Petersburg String Quartet**

Replaces Bennett String Quartet.

Wed., Dec. 5, 8 p.m.

Plaza del Sol Performance Hall

**Jazz ‘A’ Band**

Matt Harris, director.

Fri., Dec. 7, 8 p.m.

Campus Theatre, Nordhoff Hall

**Northridge Singers**
Paul Smith, conductor.

Sat., Dec. 8, 8 p.m.

Sun., Dec. 9, 3 p.m.

Grand Salon, USU

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**Media Composition Showcase**

Studio Orchestra.
Elizabeth Sellers, director.

Mon., Dec. 3, 8 p.m.

Music Recital Hall

**CSUN Symphony Orchestra**

John Rossigno, conductor.

Tue., Dec. 4, 8 p.m.

Plaza del Sol Performance Hall

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**In Brief**

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