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, newly named chair-elect of 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.

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? What is the university’s graduation rate? How long do students take to complete a degree? What are the average starting salaries for graduates? What is the average debt load taken on by graduates?

The VSA also will provide the results of an institution.

In the middle of the night, during daylight hours or whenever she got “that” phone call, Baer accompanied women and children—victims in the eyes of the law and survivors in her eyes—to medical exams, police interviews, even to criminal court. She also arranged counseling.

Baer began as a volunteer in 2005 and, like many volunteers, she has stayed. Today, she is executive director of the nonprofit Valley Trauma Center, affiliated with CSUN.

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.

“Once 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 counseling.

CSUN Part of National ‘Test Run’ for Accountability System

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

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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 hotline dedicated to the San Fernando and Santa Clarita Valleys, operated on a 24/7 basis—including holidays—by the Valley Trauma Center.

There are two Valley Trauma Centers, one in Northridge and another in Valencia, which are run by Rita Baer and her small paid staff—largely made up of CSUN graduates—and orphans in the San Diego area, the residential academy lost 12 of its individual, family-style homes in the fires. CSUN’s Lambda Chi Alpha is stepping up to the plate.

Here we are in the middle of the holiday season again, and Cal State Northridge student clubs and organizations are involved in their annual holiday giving projects. Because of the recent wildfires that ravaged much of Southern California, some of the much-needed giving is focused outside our immediate community this year.

H OME To 135 foster teens and orphans in the San Diego area, the residential academy lost 12 of its individual, family-style homes in the fires. CSUN’s Lambda Chi Alpha is stepping up to the plate.

Community Connection

By Judy Nutter, Director of Government & Community Relations
Hispanic Student Success at CSUN Attracts National Spotlight

Students Outperforming National Benchmarks in Academics, Retention and Graduation Rates

Hispanic students are more likely to succeed academically at Cal State Northridge than at most state-supported schools throughout the U.S., according to a report released recently by the American Association of State Colleges and Universities.

The CSU Northridge students also outperform national benchmarks in retention, and in closing the gap between white and Hispanic graduation rates, according to the “Hispanic Student Success Study.” The October 2007 report—which uses the U.S. Census Bureau catchall term “Hispanic” for anyone with ancestry in a Spanish-speaking country—focused on 11 campuses, including Northridge, that were invited to participate in the study because they “retain and graduate Hispanic students at much better rates than their peers.”

At Northridge, where the demographic is more commonly referred to as “Latino,” the graduation rate for Hispanic students continues to rise, as does their percentage of all graduates. More than 54 percent of Hispanic students who graduated within six years from CSUN, while barely 20 percent do so nationally within the same time frame.

The report attributed a 10 percent jump over five years in the Hispanic graduation rate to the leadership of CSU Northridge President Jolene Koester. She has emphasized improving the completion rate for all students since her first university address in 2000, motivating faculty and staff to take independent steps that are resulting in higher graduation rates across the board.

Based on data provided by the U.S. Department of Education’s National Center for Education Statistics, the magazine also ranked CSU Northridge second in the nation in awarding degrees to Hispanics in Hispanic studies, third in psychology and in the visual and performing arts, sixth in area studies, seventh in English literature and ninth in business and marketing.

More Hispanic students who attend Northridge are also succeeding in the sciences, subject areas that traditionally attract fewer Hispanics in higher education’s “world class.” Each guest was seated on the floor. A smaller group, or class, was fed rice and beans. Guests in that class ate with utensils and were allowed to sit on chairs. The last group, the upper class, was fed a full meal and sat at a table. An enlightening discussion on world hunger followed the event. At a time of the year when not everyone has a share in the season’s abundance, it is good to see that the spirit of giving and caring is alive and well in this generation of students.

It hardly seems possible that the semester’s end has come so soon, but Cal State Northridge will be closed from Monday, Dec. 24, through Tuesday, Jan. 1. Winter break will continue for the students until Wednesday, Jan. 16. While it will be a quiet campus during that time, there will be events you might want to attend.

Charles Dickens’ beloved “A Christmas Carol,” a seasonal favorite here at CSU, will be performed at the Plaza del Sol Performance Hall on Saturday and Sunday, Dec. 15 and 16. Tickets can be purchased by calling the ticket office at (818) 677-2489 or by visiting www.artsnorthridge.csun.com.

Parking is $5.

Student artists from 54 San Fernando Valley high schools have been invited to participate in the 11th Annual High School Art Invitational. Art selected by the art teachers at each school will be exhibited in the Main Gallery on North University Drive (Plummer Street) through Saturday, Jan. 12. Gallery hours are noon until 4 p.m. Mondays through Saturdays and noon until 8 p.m. on Thursdays. The gallery is closed on Sundays and will be closed for the holidays from December 24 through January 1.

The next Community @CSUN will be delivered to you in February, so I will take this opportunity to wish you a very happy holiday season. Until next time...
Forecast for Skies Above: Crowded With a Chance of Delays

Partnering on Air Traffic Research, CSUN Seeks to Head Off Gridlock Up There

Flight delayed” is right up there with “SigAlert” and “Big rig down” on the scale of major modern anxieties for freeway travelers. But as our congested skies grow more congested, delays for air travelers may soon tip the scale.

“It is projected that passenger air traffic will double by 2025,” said Cal State Northridge assistant mechanical engineering professor N hut Ho. “The system will go into gridlock if we don’t do anything about it.”

To help prevent that scenario, the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) has awarded $5 million to a consortium of universities, including Northridge, and the Boeing Co. The job of the consortium is to figure out how to accommodate the increase in air traffic without building more airports.

Funded through the Federal Aviation Agency’s (FAA) Next Generation Air Transportation System initiative, CSUN has received a grant of $277,500 over four years through 2010.

At CSUN, project lead Ho and part-time psychology professor Barry Berson are working with engineers and human factors students on a project intended to expand the capacity of airports like Los Angeles International Airport, by using technology to manage more aircraft in the same airspace, and to more efficiently move traffic in and out of airports, allowing planes to land and take off more quickly and closer together—all without sacrificing safety.

Ho and Berson are working on research designed to allow pilots to manage their own tactical separation from other aircraft—instead of relying on air traffic controllers—by using airborne and ground-based automated decision aid tools to detect and resolve conflicts created when planes share the same air space and runways.

“Automation is going to predict where all these airplanes are going to be in the airspace, and convey the information to the controller and pilot,” said Berson, who also works on cockpit design for Lockheed Martin. “It may give you insight inside the cockpit that shows you the relationship between yourself, the pilot, and all the airplanes in the environment, the weather and other things that can affect flight management.”

While pursuing the overall research goal of modernizing the air travel system to enlarge capacity in the sky and on the ground, Ho and Berson share another mission: providing students with real-world experiences.

“We want to use this experience to train students,” said Ho, helping them mature as researchers, and putting them to work on real problems.

Valley Trauma Center…

continued from page 1.

volunteers. The center trains students, most of whom are earning 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 training before first day.

“We never have enough students. We never have enough volunteers. We never have enough money,” Baer said, describing $2.3 million in funding from the county and state, plus about $75,000 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 Hanson, a licensed clinical psychologist.

In 1985, Hanson got the university to pass a law requiring all freshmen to have sex education—providing at least 15 hours of training.

“One out of four women is sexually assaulted before the age of 25.”

—Rita Baer, executive director, Valley Trauma Center

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 hotlines concern youngsters under 18, and half of those calls, usually from the police, are about children younger than 12.

“We don’t receive any funding to support counseling services for children who have been sexually abused,” Hanson said, yet no child is turned away—nor anyone else in need.

The Valley Trauma Counseling Center sexual assault hotline dedicated to the San Fernando Valley is (818) 886-0453. The Piru Valley hotline is (661) 253-0258. Visit the Web site at www.valleytraumatracenter.org.
**Main Art Gallery**

**Gallery talk:** Mon., Jan. 28, 10 a.m.

Exhibit runs from Jan. 22 through Feb. 23.

**High School Art Invitational**

San Fernando Valley high schools exhibit paintings, sculptures and more.

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

(Closed Dec. 24-Jan. 1)

Main Art Gallery

**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) 677-2285.

**The Life and Times of Elizabeth I**

The Sun that Lights the Rainbow: The Life and Times of Elizabeth I. Runs through Dec. 20.

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

**Joanne Julian:**

Counterpoints

Very large ink and acrylic Zen circles on paper, by internationally known artist Joanne Julian. Works exude energy and beauty through simplicity of execution. Exhibit runs from Jan. 22 through Feb. 23.

Opening reception: Fri., Jan. 25, 7-9 p.m.

Gallery talk: Mon., Jan. 28, 10 a.m.

Main Art Gallery

**Athletics (home games):**

**Men's Basketball**

12/20 Vanguard 7:05 p.m.
1/10 UC Davis 7:05 p.m.
1/12 Pacific 7:05 p.m.
1/26 Long Beach State 4 p.m.
1/31 UC Irvine 7:05 p.m.
2/2 CSU Fullerton 7:05 p.m.
2/16 UC Riverside 7:05 p.m.

**Women's Basketball**

12/19 CSU Bakersfield 7 p.m.
12/30 Fresno State 4 p.m.
1/3 Cal Poly 7 p.m.
1/5 UCSD 4 p.m.
1/16 UC Riverside 7 p.m.
2/7 Pacific 7 p.m.
2/9 UC Davis 7 p.m.

**Men's Swimming**

1/26 Washington 11 a.m.

**Women's Swimming**

1/26 Washington noon

**Men's Volleyball**

1/24 Stanford 7 p.m.
1/25 Pacific 7 p.m.

**Women's Swimming**

1/24 Pepperdine noon
1/26 Washington 11 a.m.

**Men's Track and Field**

1/5 All Comers 8:30 a.m.
1/12 All Comers 8:30 a.m.
1/19 All Comers 8:30 a.m.
1/26 All Comers 8:30 a.m.
2/5 All Comers 8:30 a.m.

**Women's Track and Field**

1/5 All Comers 8:30 a.m.
1/12 All Comers 8:30 a.m.
1/19 All Comers 8:30 a.m.
1/26 All Comers 8:30 a.m.
2/5 All Comers 8:30 a.m.

**Women's Basketball**

2/13 UC San Diego 2 p.m.
2/16 Cal Poly noon

**Women's Tennis**

2/13 UC San Diego 2 p.m.
2/16 Cal Poly noon

**Women's Water Polo**

2/16 UCLA noon

**Music**

Admission to all music events (unless otherwise specified): $10 general, $7 faculty, staff and seniors, $5 students.

The Borromeo String Quartet

Haydn, Shostakovich, Beethoven. Wed., Jan. 16, 8 p.m.

Plaza del Sol Performance Hall $5–$35

Chamber Opera

Fri., Feb. 8, 8 p.m.
Sat., Feb. 9, 8 p.m.
Sun., Feb. 10, 8 p.m.

Dance Studio

Fri., Feb. 8, 8 p.m.
Sat., Feb. 9, 8 p.m.
Sun., Feb. 10, 8 p.m.

**The Fats Waller Musical Show.**
An American premiere from one of Japan’s leading young playwrights, Miyazawa Akio. Place, memory, time, action—seeking the breaks in seamless connections.

Edited and translated by John D. Swain.

Fri., Feb. 8, 8 p.m.
Sat., Feb. 9 and 8 p.m.
Sun., Feb. 10, 8 p.m.
Tue., Feb. 12, 7:30 p.m.
Wed., Feb. 13, 7:30 p.m.
Thu., Feb. 14, 7:30 p.m.
Fri., Feb. 15, 8 p.m.
Sat., Feb. 16, 2 and 8 p.m.
Sun., Feb. 17, 3 p.m.

Studio Theatre Lab

$8–$16

**Hinemi**

An American premiere from one of Japan’s leading young playwrights, Miyazawa Akio. Place, memory, time, action—seeking the breaks in seamless connections.

Edited and translated by John D. Swain.

Fri., Feb. 8, 8 p.m.
Sat., Feb. 9 and 8 p.m.
Sun., Feb. 10, 8 p.m.
Tue., Feb. 12, 7:30 p.m.
Wed., Feb. 13, 7:30 p.m.
Thu., Feb. 14, 7:30 p.m.
Fri., Feb. 15, 8 p.m.
Sat., Feb. 16, 2 and 8 p.m.
Sun., Feb. 17, 3 p.m.

Studio Theatre Lab

$8–$16

** Ain’t Misbehavin’**

The Fats Waller Musical Show. One of Broadway’s best “jukebox” musicals pays tribute to African American musicians of the Harlem Renaissance. More than two dozen of Waller’s compositions enliven the performance, among them “Ain’t Misbehavin’” and “The Joint is Jumpin’”.

Sat., Feb. 9, 8 p.m.

Plaza del Sol Performance Hall

$24–$48

**Theater/Performance**

**A Christmas Carol**

Glorious staging of Charles Dickens’ classic Christmas tale of Ebenezer Scrooge captures spirit and meaning of the season.

Sat., Dec. 15, 8 p.m.
Sun., Dec. 16, 2 p.m.

Plaza del Sol Performance Hall

$14–$26

**Happy Holidays**

The A.S. Ticket Office in the University Student Union (USU) sells tickets to many events on campus, except for some held by outside groups. The Ticket Office is open from 10 a.m.–4 p.m. Mon.–Fri. For prices not given, call (818) 677-2688. To park on campus for performances, athletic events, lectures and other activities, guests must purchase a $5 parking permit.