Some of Los Angeles’ top business and cultural leaders will spearhead Cal State Northridge’s campaign to build the Valley Performing Arts Center. The proposed $100 million, 1,600-seat center on the CSUN campus will be the largest venue of its kind in the Valley and will serve as a cultural hub for the region. The Valley Performing Arts Center Executive Committee will be chaired by biotech pioneer Al Mann, chairman/CEO of Mannkind, and its vice chair will be Latham & Watkins law firm counsel David Fleming.

Three of the nation’s most high-powered executives met with Cal State Northridge students this semester to share their insights from the worlds of business and government. CSUN’s new Executive Speakers Series brought to campus Dole Food Company, Inc. Chairman and CEO David Murdock, Hawaii Gov. (and CSUN alumna) Linda Lingle, and philanthropist/travel executive Edward “Ed” Hogan for “up close” exchanges with business and arts/media students.

Retired leisure studies professor Isabelle Walker has donated to the university 2.5 acres of land in Lancaster, worth more than $40,000, for the establishment of the Isabelle Walker Endowment for Nonprofit Organization Studies. The endowment will support the study of the nonprofit and philanthropic independent sector.

CSUN’s Jewish Studies Program, with a consortium of other Cal State campuses, will launch a new bachelor’s degree in Modern Jewish Studies in the coming year. The degree will be the first undergraduate major in Modern Jewish Studies offered in either the California State University or University of California systems. Each consortium campus will accept courses for credit toward the degree from other partner campuses.