

## Departments & Programs

- ♦ Asian American Studies
  - ♦ Chicana/o Studies
  - ♦ English
  - ♦ Gender & Women's Studies
  - ♦ Liberal Studies & Humanities Interdisciplinary Program
  - ♦ Linguistics/TESL
  - ♦ Modern & Classical Languages & Literatures
  - ♦ Philosophy
  - ♦ Religious Studies
  - ♦ Interdisciplinary Studies:
- American Indian Studies  
 Central American Studies  
 Jewish Studies  
 Middle Eastern and Islamic Studies  
 Queer Studies  
 Sustainability Studies

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College of Humanities  
Newsletter

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# The College of Humanities Newsletter

*From the desk of Humanities Dean Elizabeth A. Say*



Elizabeth A. Say, Ph.D.  
CSUN Alum 1981

The spring semester is a busy time on a university campus and CSUN is certainly no exception, having graduated over 10,000 students in the class of 2015. In this issue you can read about one of our many extraordinary graduates—the College of Humanities 2014-15 Dean's Scholar, Alan Malfavon. I know you'll share my admiration for the accomplishments of this impressive young man. This past spring was particularly momentous due to several changes—some anticipated and some unexpected. Perhaps the most significant of these is the decision by our provost, Dr. Harold Hellenbrand, to step down from his position and return to the faculty. While we are all saddened to lose his leadership in Academic Affairs, we in the College of Humanities are thrilled that he will be joining the faculty of the English department! The university has recently announced its new provost, Dr. Yi Li, who is coming to us from Wright State University in Ohio. You can read about Dr. Li on the CSUN website. I look forward to working under his

leadership. Speaking of campus-wide change, you may have noticed that this edition of our newsletter has a slightly different look; CSUN is rolling out a new branding campaign that will retain the hallmarks of our heritage while refreshing our look. Meanwhile, I have taken on additional responsibilities with the Council of Colleges of Arts and Sciences that promise to keep me very busy for the next couple of years! Finally, as always, our spring/summer newsletter includes the popular annual feature on our new faculty members. You can rest assured that the future of the college is very bright with these talented teachers and scholars having joined our ranks.

## It's All in the Family

*Courtesy of Kenneth Eade '77*

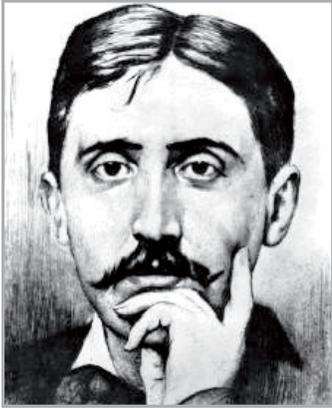
College of Humanities alum Kenneth Eade '77 (liberal studies) has the rare distinction of having attended and graduated CSUN right alongside his mother. Joyce Eade, who became a mother at an early age, decided to go back to school and pursue a career as her sons Kenneth and John approached adulthood. Joyce and Kenneth both majored in liberal studies and even took some of the same classes together. "It was a lot of fun and kept us very close," Kenneth says. "Needless to say, we had no generation gap at all. We even graduated together on the same day."

After CSUN, Kenneth continued to Southwestern Law School and practiced law before becoming a writer of legal and political thrillers. He and his wife, fine-art photographer Valentina Eade, now live in the South of France and advocate for environmental concerns. Meanwhile, Joyce went on to coordinate the Community Services program at Pierce College—and married Tim Loftin, who graduated CSUN in 1978. Way to keep it in the Matador family!



*Photo courtesy of Joyce (Eade) Loftin '77*

## Not quite the *PROUST QUESTIONNAIRE*...with



In fall 2014 the College of Humanities welcomed six new faculty members in Central American Studies, English, and Linguistics/TESL. As their first year at CSUN drew to a close, we asked them to respond to a brief, modified Proust questionnaire, so named for Marcel Proust, who answered a similarly probing set of personal questions twice during his lifetime.

Many thanks to our faculty members, who so willingly shared with us their time, thought, wit, and honesty. Each answered only the questions to which they wished to respond.

**Linda Alvarez**  
Assistant  
Professor,  
Central  
American  
Studies  
Program



Photo courtesy of Linda Alvarez

Dr. Alvarez earned her Ph.D. in political science at Claremont Graduate University. Her latest research focuses on political knowledge and transnational political engagement among underrepresented groups in Central America and the U.S.

### **What is your idea of perfect happiness?**

I believe happiness is a state of mind. (I know that is such a textbook answer, but it's true!) Once I realized that there was no real perfect anything, it became much easier to find happiness in everything.

### **What is your greatest fear?**

My greatest fear is limiting myself because of fear.

### **Which living person do you most admire?**

I admire my parents. They have overcome so many things and are still happy, awesome people who love to live and laugh.

*Alvarez continued*

### **What is the trait you most deplore in yourself?**

Fine, I confess, I am a functional procrastinator.

### **What is the trait you most deplore in others?**

Arrogance

### **What is your greatest extravagance?**

I spent \$12 on toothpaste once...but in my defense, it was vegan, organic, fair trade, chocolate flavored toothpaste.

### **What do you consider your greatest achievement?**

Getting a Ph.D. was pretty great for me. My high school counselor was sure I was going to end up a statistic, but, alas, I conquered!

### **If you were to die and come back as a person or thing, what do you think it would be?**

Well, if I died, I would come back as myself just to give a good, hearty scare to all my friends and family. Of course, the overarching goal of my return would be to inform everyone of what it's like on the "other side." I would walk around everyday wearing a shirt that said "Spoiler Alert" on it.

### **What is your most treasured possession?**

Animals are not a possession, per se, but as their guardians we are considered their "owners," so, in that sense, I would have to say my animal companions. I treasure them immensely.

### **What do you regard as the lowest depth of misery?**

My lowest depth of misery was studying for the qualifying exams. What a horrible thing to do to students....

### **What is it that you most dislike?**

I really dislike when people come over to my house unannounced. We all know those people who say, "Oh I was just in the neighborhood, so I thought I'd drop by and say hello!" No. Don't do that. Call me first. I might be really engulfed in an episode of *The Walking Dead* and then people "drop by" and everything is altered, forever.

### **Which talent would you most like to have?**

I would most like to be able to sing like Etta James and play the guitar like Jimi Hendrix. (I know that technically that is two talents, but they kind of go hand in hand, so I think we can let this one slide.)

### **What is your motto?**

Make It Happen.

## apologies to *Vanity Fair* and Marcel Proust



Photo courtesy of Santosh Khadka

**Santosh Khadka**  
Assistant  
Professor,  
English  
Department

Dr. Khadka earned his Ph.D. in composition and cultural rhetoric at Syracuse University. His research interests include global and digital rheto-

rics, new media and multi-literacies, composition pedagogies and world Englishes, intercultural communication and professional writing, and literacy practices.

**What is your idea of perfect happiness?**

When I make everyone around me happy

**What is your greatest fear?**

Losing affection of family and friends

**Which living person do you most admire?**

Stephen Hawking

**What is the trait you most deplore in others?**

Arrogance

**What is your greatest extravagance?**

Being able to travel back home

**If you were to die and come back as a person or thing, what do you think it would be?**

Rose flower

**Which talent would you most like to have?**

Moviemaking

**What is your motto?**

To be a good person

**Stephanie H. Kim**  
Assistant  
Professor,  
Linguistics/TESL  
Department

Dr. Kim earned her Ph.D. in applied linguistics at University of California, Los Angeles. Her research interests include conversation and discourse analysis, interactional linguistics, pragmatics, and TESL/TEFL pedagogy.

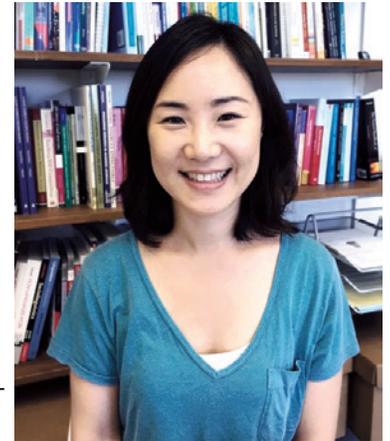


Photo courtesy of Stephanie Kim

**What is your idea of perfect happiness?**

There are many! Exploring a new city/town, working in a coffee shop with a good cup of coffee and music, a getaway trip to the mountains, hot yoga at the end of a busy day...

**What is the trait you most deplore in yourself?**

Laziness

**What is the trait you most deplore in others?**

Narcissism

**When and where were you happiest?**

I think it was sometime back in college when I met my husband and lifelong friends and had many, many dreams.

**What do you consider your greatest achievement?**

Getting a Ph.D.

**If you were to die and come back as a person or thing, what do you think it would be?**

A song

**Which talent would you most like to have?**

I really admire scriptwriters. I wish I had the ability to write a script or a novel!



Photo courtesy of Gisela Lanzas

## Gisela Lanzas Assistant Professor, Central American Studies Program

Dr. Lanzas earned her Ph.D. in sociocultural anthropology at University of California, Santa Barbara. Her research interests include the social, cultural, and economic impact of development programs and watershed management in tropical regions of Mexico and Panama.

### **Which living person do you most admire?**

Dr. Angela Davis

### **When and where were you happiest?**

Doing road trips with my husband

### **What is your most treasured possession?**

My books

### **What do you regard as the lowest depth of misery?**

When we lose our human connection to each other

### **What is it that you most dislike?**

Poverty and social oppression

### **What is your motto?**

Be happy no matter what!



## J.C. Lee Assistant Professor, English

Dr. Lee earned her Ph.D. in English at the University of Rhode Island, Kingston. Her research interests include new media rhetorics, the rhetoric of science, developmental writing, autonomous learning, and public writing.

*Lee continued*

### **What is your idea of perfect happiness?**

Being surrounded by nature, preferably amid an abundance of animals, with a full cup of coffee

### **What is your greatest fear?**

Running out of coffee

### **Which living person do you most admire?**

Pope Francis

### **What is the trait you most deplore in yourself?**

Pettiness

### **What is the trait you most deplore in others?**

Pettiness

### **What is your greatest extravagance?**

A substantial coffee budget

### **When and where were you happiest?**

Probably somewhere surrounded by nature and full of caffeine

### **What do you consider your greatest achievement?**

My caffeine tolerance

### **If you were to die and come back as a person or thing, what do you think it would be?**

A wildebeest

### **What is your most treasured possession?**

My coffee maker

### **What do you regard as the lowest depth of misery?**

Caffeine deprivation

### **What is it that you most dislike?**

Caffeine deprivation

### **Which talent would you most like to have?**

The ability to brew a perfect cup of coffee

### **What is your motto?**

Is there any coffee left?



Photo courtesy of Joseph Wiltberger

## Joseph Wiltberger Assistant Professor, Central American Studies Program

Dr. Wiltberger earned his Ph.D. in anthropology at the University of North

Carolina at Chapel Hill. His research explores the political, economic, and social practices of transnational communities, the meanings they produce, and their relationship to the cultural politics of development and migrant rights activism.

### **What is your greatest fear?**

Two big things: heights and large reptiles. I'm always trying to conquer my fear of heights. I've gotten as far as petting large (domesticated) snakes, but not alligators or crocodiles.

### **What is your greatest extravagance?**

Spending a day surfing

### **What do you consider your greatest achievement?**

Becoming "Dr. Joe" was a pretty big deal.

### **If you were to die and come back as a person or thing, what do you think it would be?**

A fish. I grew up on a beautiful lake in New York State and when I was a kid I spent so much time in the water that my family started calling me "Joe Fish." I've sailed my whole life, and today I race in regattas when possible. When I was in El Salvador doing my dissertation fieldwork I was an assistant coach for the national youth sailing team, which consisted of kids from a humble fishing village on a spectacular crater lake. I'm an ocean lover, and I experience withdrawal symptoms if I haven't been surfing in a while.

### **Which talent would you most like to have?**

I wish I could play the guitar. And sing at the same time.

## Alan Malfavon College of Humanities Dean's Scholar

The College of Humanities is delighted to announce Alan Malfavon as its 2014-15 Dean's Scholar. Alan graduated this spring with a double major in modern languages and culture (concentration in Spanish) and history.



Photo courtesy of Judith Spiegel

Alan is a Ronald E. McNair Scholar and a Sally Casanova Pre-Doctoral Scholar. Both highly selective scholarships are focused on increasing the presence of students from historically underrepresented backgrounds in graduate programs at elite institutions. The Casanova scholarship is a CSU program that targets and mentors extraordinary CSU students who have the potential to earn a Ph.D. and return to the CSU system to teach.

Alan says that his lifelong dream has been to become an academic historian, and his career is already off to a brilliant start. His CSUN instructors report that he routinely helps peers struggling with class material. In fall 2014 he was invited to be a guest lecturer in the Survey in Latin American History course, where he presented a talk and held a discussion on the social consequences of the Mexican Revolution.

Alan is a member of the elite honor societies Phi Alpha Theta and Phi Beta Delta and has won more than a few undergraduate awards and scholarships. While earning these accolades, he maintained a 3.95 GPA, appearing on the Dean's list in both Humanities and Social and Behavioral Sciences every semester he has been at CSUN. All the while he held down two campus jobs and served as president of CSUN's Spanish Club—and in his spare time he plays guitar in a *jarocho* band!

Alan received full scholarship offers from Ph.D. programs at the University of Texas at Austin and University of California, Riverside. He accepted UCR's offer and will begin his doctoral study in the fall. His fondest wish is to one day be a professor at CSUN. He says that he regards this institution not just as his university, but as his home. We could not ask for a finer campus representative to demonstrate what's possible when a student with relentless drive mines CSUN's boundless resources.

Submitted by Teresa K. Morrison

## Central American Migration, Culture, and Memory Symposium at CSUN

*Submitted by Douglas Carranza*



*Photo courtesy of the Central American Studies Program*

CSUN's Central American Studies Program, housed by the College of Humanities, celebrated its annual symposium "Migration, Culture, and Memory" March 24 through 27. The four-day event provided scholars, artists, activists, and students the opportunity to engage in interdisciplinary discussions about the transnational dimensions of Central American culture, the diversity of worldviews entangled in the experience of immigration and in the migrant's daily life, and innovative critical approaches to migration, identity formation, memory, and the future.

The symposium presented academic research on the concepts of human movement and subjectivity, border porosity and fluidity, community and transnationality. It provided spaces of exchange among participants and the local Central American community on current events such as youth migration and border crises, deportation, integration, children in courts, and migrant shelters. The discussions also addressed indigenous migration and the culture of exclusion, politics of migration, and the impact of neoliberal developmental programs in indigenous communities from Honduras, Panama, and Mexico. The symposium included an array of international scholars, artists, and community activists from El Salvador, Honduras, Panama, Mexico, Nigeria, and the United States.

This event was organized by Central American Studies, and it was cosponsored by the Office of the Provost, the College of Humanities Academic Programming Fund, the Central American Research and Policy Institute, the Central American United Student Association, a variety of departments and programs at CSUN, the CSUN Art Galleries, and the California Institute of the Arts.

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## Matador. Dean. President.

*Submitted by Teresa K. Morrison*

The Council of Colleges of Arts and Sciences has elected CSUN College of Humanities dean Elizabeth A. Say as president of the organization. Dean Say will formally assume the presidency at CCAS's 50th-anniversary annual meeting in Washington, D.C., in October. As the largest association of Arts and Science deans in the United States, CCAS maintains an essential role in advocating for the Liberal Arts at a national level. At the local level, member deans keep abreast of developments in constituent fields and maintain best leadership practices through collaboration with colleagues dedicated to similar goals and priorities.

Dean Say wholeheartedly embraces CCAS's legacy goal of erasing the notion that degrees in the liberal arts and humanities are less practical than vocational and professional degrees. In fact, the member deans see studies in the humanities as essential to professional effectiveness and success, especially where leadership is needed. "In recent years, national conversations about the value of the Liberal Arts and Sciences and the role of higher education in creating an informed citizenry have often been trumped by a focus on job preparation and professionalism," Dean Say observes. "Yet, employers tell us that what they really need and want to meet the demands of the 21st century are critical thinking skills, cultural fluency, oral and written communication skills, and the ability to read and analyze complex texts. These are all skills that are developed in the Humanities, and the role of CCAS in advocating for the Liberal Arts helps me to make a case for our college at the local level."

An alumna of CSUN—graduating with a double major in English and religious studies—Say went on to earn her Ph.D. in religious social ethics at USC. Since then she has dedicated her entire professional career to CSUN, starting as a faculty member in the Department of Religious Studies, then becoming a professor and founding chair of the Department of Women's Studies (now Gender and Women's Studies). She was named associate dean of Humanities in 2001, and has served as dean from 2005 to the present.

Dean Say joined CCAS upon assuming the deanship, and she has served on the organization's Board of Directors since 2010. She is an active member of the council's committee on gender issues, and she previously served on its committee of cultural diversity and as chair of the CCAS governance working group.

## Did you know?

Here are some interesting facts about CSUN and news bytes from around the College of Humanities.

CSUN has a new Provost! Dr. Yi Li, formerly of Wright State University, has been appointed as provost and vice president of Academic Affairs effective July 20, 2015.

CSUN has conferred approximately 10,000 degrees annually since 2013 and has graduated over 300,000 Matadors since its founding in 1958.

Congratulations to the Class of 2015 and the Class of 3 million! This year the combined 23-campus California State University system graduated its 3 millionth alumni. According to the CSUN Alumni Association, one out of every 20 Americans with college degrees earned theirs on a CSU campus!

The College of Humanities consists of eight departments and seven interdisciplinary programs, and it houses most of the diversity and ethnic studies departments and programs on campus.

The College has the only Central American Studies degree program in the country.

The College is home to one of the nation's oldest and largest Chicana/o Studies departments.

The College is the new academic home for the China Institute and is expanding its Chinese language and culture program by creating a minor in China Studies and hiring a full-time faculty member to teach Chinese and Japanese.

This fall alum Cody Dietz M.A. '15 (creative writing) will be entering the University of North Dakota's English Ph.D. program with full funding. In 2012, an excerpt from Dietz's poem "Fall" was featured on Dean Say's holiday card.

This year the College has awarded close to \$90,000 in scholarships and endowment funding to students in the following departments and programs: Asian American Studies, Central American Studies, Chicana/o Studies, English, Gender and Women's Studies, Jewish Studies, Modern and Classical Languages and Literatures, Philosophy, and Religious Studies.

Religious Studies professor Rosamond Rodman received CSUN's Polished Apple Award for excellence in teaching.

Creative writing professor Stephanie Satie received the Creative Accomplishment Award at this year's Honored Faculty Reception.

In early June, 13 current and former staff members from the College were recognized at the 49th Annual Staff Service Awards. These awards honor the valuable support our staff provides to the College and campus—congratulations and thank you!





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*The Mission of the College of Humanities is to create a community of learners who...*

**Explore and value the diversities of cultures, thought, perspectives, literatures and languages of humanity;**

**Critically reflect on and analyze multiple dimensions of human identity and experience;**

**Contribute to scholarship and creative production and innovation, and**

**Act as responsible global citizens committed to principles of freedom, equality, justice and participatory democracy.**

Visit us on the web at: <http://www.csun.edu/humanities/>