

# Engaging the Future of California State University, Northridge

Report of the Special Task Force on Engagement • June 2011



California State University  
**Northridge**

The work of the Special Task Force on Engagement was supported by a generous grant from the Joseph Drown Foundation and by individual members of the Task Force who contributed their time, insight and personal resources for travel and lodging. All Task Force meetings were hosted off-site by co-chair Earl Enzer '83. California State University, Northridge gratefully acknowledges and extends its deepest thanks for these gifts.

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To President Jolene Koester and the University Community:

When the Special Task Force on Engagement first met in November 2010, and we each introduced ourselves, we recognized how much California State University, Northridge had meant to us as a group. Each of us came to the meeting with the same feeling: the University provided us the basis for personal and professional success.

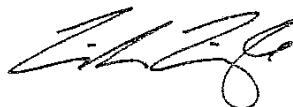
While the CSUN of today and the university we attended differ in many ways, today's students share the same hopes and aspirations that we did 20, 30 or more years ago. The University is a critical resource not only to each student who enrolls, but to all of the people of this region, the state of California and, indeed, the nation.

As we began our work, we also came to appreciate the importance of our assignment. The University is at a unique and critical juncture in its history. As Task Force members, we had been given a rare opportunity to give back in a meaningful and impactful way.

On behalf of the Special Task Force on Engagement, we wish to thank President Jolene Koester, the California State University, Northridge Foundation and the university community for seeking our advice and counsel. We are honored by this trust and are pleased to share the results of our work. We all look forward in the months and years ahead to our continuing engagement with the University now that our Task Force responsibilities have been completed.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Earl Enzer'.

Earl Enzer '83  
Co-chair

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Linda Lingle'.

Linda Lingle '75  
Co-chair

## **PREFACE**

In 2009, as California's current budget crisis unfolded, it became increasingly clear to the leadership of California State University, Northridge that the University needed to consider new strategies for sustaining its momentum into the future. For the first time in its history, the long-term financial well being of the University was threatened. The funding required to continue to excel could no longer be guaranteed by a state that had historically given great value to the role played by public higher education. In short, the time had come to consider how Cal State Northridge might take greater overall responsibility for fulfilling its mission of teaching, learning, scholarship and service in support of the region, the state and the nation.

University leaders determined that it was essential to draw upon the experience and advice of alumni and friends. From that motivation the Special Task Force on Engagement was conceived. A prospectus for the Task Force was prepared and submitted to the Board of Directors of the California State University, Northridge Foundation, which gave it a strong endorsement in November 2009 (Appendix A).

By the fall of 2010, Hawaii Governor Linda Lingle '75 and Foundation Board Chair Earl Enzer '83 had agreed to co-chair the Task Force. In the end, 18 highly distinguished alumni of the University, both degreed and honorary, were recruited as members, representing alumni in California and seven other states (Appendix B).

The Task Force has since met three times, in November 2010 and in January and April 2011, to focus on three critical tasks outlined in the prospectus:

- Establish an external relations blueprint that will help to ensure the sustained excellence of the University in years to come.
- Help to identify and hone key messages, communications vehicles and organizational strategies that will attract and retain a substantially larger cadre of successful and influential alumni and other key stakeholders to help guide and support the University.
- Begin the process of strengthening, expanding and integrating the University's volunteer leadership of the future.

The Task Force conducted research, prepared working papers, discussed options and developed findings and recommendations. President Jolene Koester, Provost Harold Hellenbrand, Vice President for University Advancement Vance Peterson and other staff participated in each of the meetings and have provided invaluable assistance in preparing this report.

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

California State University, Northridge is a flagship institution within one of the nation's premier public systems of higher education. The University, historically funded by the state of California, has embraced the economic and social challenges of the region for more than 50 years. Because the state's ability to strongly underwrite public higher education is no longer guaranteed, the University's mission of teaching and scholarly excellence, unparalleled student access and opportunity, and community service is threatened.

Fortunately, Cal State Northridge is well positioned to meet these historic challenges. Among its advantages are:

- A location in an area of great wealth and accomplishment.
- A solid and growing reputation for excellence and service to the region.
- Outstanding institutional leadership and dedicated faculty and staff.
- A broad and constantly evolving curriculum that is responsive to regional needs.
- A deep, but largely untapped, pool of successful and influential alumni.
- Large numbers of friends, including parents and business leaders, who have come to depend on the quality and availability of CSUN's programs and services.
- A remarkably diverse and talented student body, representing the future promise of Los Angeles, Southern California and the nation.

The overriding conclusion of the Task Force on Engagement is that the University must take action now to shape its destiny, but that its success will require all stakeholders—alumni, parents, friends and employers—to assume greater collective responsibility for the University's future progress and well-being.

Broader and more robust engagement of alumni and other key stakeholders is the necessary foundation for change. Increased stakeholder engagement will help to accelerate the growing reputation of the University, create a cadre of well-informed advocates, enhance access to private philanthropy and provide greater benefits to students and the community in general.

The Task Force recommends that the University undertake the following six strategies to increase and sustain stakeholder engagement:

1. Establish a clear, consistent and compelling brand and case for support.
2. Organize and energize the University's base of alumni, parents, and community and business leaders through a combination of approaches.
3. Expand involvement of the University's most successful and influential alumni and friends.
4. Build opportunities for increased synergy among volunteers at all levels.

5. Use the new Valley Performing Arts Center to attract and retain stakeholder interest.
6. Explore the feasibility of employing intercollegiate athletics as a major tool of engagement.

Each strategy is analyzed in the following report by providing an overview of the situation today, a vision for tomorrow and specific recommendations. The keys to successful implementation of these core strategies and recommendations will be a combination of increased volunteer leadership, teamwork, investment, initiative and perseverance.

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## I. THE CHALLENGE

Public higher education in California, including the 23-campus California State University, the 10-campus University of California system and the California Community Colleges system, represent 80% of university enrollment in California and three-fourths of all bachelor's degrees awarded annually in the state. Together these schools educate tomorrow's leaders and prepare a highly skilled workforce.

Virtually every study about the needs of the nation's future workforce documents an increasing demand for college-educated workers. Yet, trends suggest that this demand for talent so critical to the nation's competitive place in the world may not be satisfied. By 2025, according to one recent report, California will have *one million* fewer college graduates than it requires. Only 35% of working-age adults will have a college degree in an economy that needs 41% of workers to be college-educated.<sup>1</sup>

California State University, Northridge has embraced the region's and the nation's competitive challenge at every step by promoting a relevant curriculum, adopting new teaching methods and technologies, and maintaining a vibrant combination of faculty, staff and physical infrastructure. *Envision 2035*, the University's campus master plan adopted in 2005, provides for increasing total enrollment from 35,000 to 45,000 students.

The state's current capacity to underwrite these efforts, however, is at best uncertain. Between the 2007-08 fiscal year to the 2009-10 fiscal year, state general fund support for the University decreased from 46% to 34% of consolidated operations (Appendix C). This equates to nearly a 26% decline, and, for the second year in a row, student tuition and fees accounted for a larger share of total revenue than lottery and state appropriations combined. As a result, University administrators faced hard choices. Access to the University was rationed both by increasing tuition and reducing enrollment. Faculty and staff also were reduced, and other measures were taken that stressed the University's capacity to meet rising demand. In the state's current fiscal environment, there can be no doubt that the percentage of state support will decrease further.

These funding reductions have been made even more daunting by two additional factors. First, the amount and timing of budget cuts are unpredictable due to the asynchronous nature of the state's and the University's budget and business cycles. Second, the University's ability to respond nimbly to changing market forces, and to provide for new and evolving disciplines,

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<sup>1</sup> For a brief summary, see Public Policy Institute of California, "Closing the Gap: Meeting California's Need for College Graduates," April 2009, Hans Johnson and Ria Sengupta, <http://www.ppic.org>.

is constrained by aspects of the California Master Plan for Higher Education.<sup>2</sup>

It is clear that the University's mission of excellence, opportunity and service is threatened. It is equally clear that the state of California will not come to our rescue anytime soon, if ever. The overriding conclusion of the Special Task Force on Engagement is that it is time for the University's key stakeholders – alumni, parents, friends and employers – to take greater collective responsibility for the University's future. Awakening the University's enormous body of stakeholders is the central focus of this report.

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<sup>2</sup> A clear example of CSUN's reliance on special legislation occurred in 2010, when the University sought legislative authority to offer a doctorate of physical therapy, the new nationally required threshold degree for physical therapists to practice independently. Without passage of this reform legislation, CSUN's highly regarded master's program in physical therapy would have been terminated—even though 500 applicants annually compete for its 40 openings, its graduates achieve among the highest pass rates nationally on the national licensing examination and its graduates represent about 10% of the state's new physical therapists annually. Notwithstanding all of these factors and the substantial investment by the people of California in the program, enactment of this legislation was in question up until the last moment.

## II. THE OPPORTUNITY

California State University, Northridge has many important advantages for addressing the challenge of increased stakeholder engagement.

In both scope and quality, Cal State Northridge is one of California's and the nation's flagship public university campuses charged with addressing the regional and national imperative to extend the promise of California – and America itself – to succeeding generations.

- With 35,000 students, we are one of the 50 largest universities in the nation, graduating about 10,000 students each spring – students of remarkably diverse backgrounds and experiences representing the future promise of Southern California.
- Through nine colleges, we offer 69 bachelor's degrees and 55 master's degrees, as well as 27 teaching credential programs and applied doctorates in educational leadership and physical therapy.
- Our academic program is constantly evolving to meet our region's emerging needs, from hosting the fastest-growing engineering program in the country to developing new master's degrees in such diverse fields as nursing, taxation and social work, and undertaking two new doctorates.
- Despite our great size, we remain fundamentally focused on student learning, with small classes and a favorably low student-to-faculty ratio that produces outstanding results.
- The National Science Foundation ranks Cal State Northridge first, second and fifth in the nation among masters-level universities in preparing students who later earn research doctorate degrees in psychology, science and engineering, and biology, respectively.
- We rank 10<sup>th</sup> in the nation in bachelor's degrees conferred to minority students, fifth in the nation and first in California for bachelor's degrees awarded to Hispanic students and 10<sup>th</sup> nationally for master's degrees awarded to Hispanic students.
- Our College of Business and Economics is the seventh largest accredited undergraduate business program in the country and is profiled by "The Princeton Review" as among the nation's best.
- We educate and credential more teachers than the entire UC system combined.
- Comparable statistics can be drawn from many other disciplines taught at CSUN.

The University has enormous potential reach, with more than 200,000 degreed alumni, 85% of whom remain in California, plus large numbers of non-degreed alumni who secured knowledge and skills that are essential to their livelihoods.<sup>3</sup> CSUN students and alumni have parents and family, employers and colleagues, neighbors and friends who benefit from the contribution the University has made to their lives.

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<sup>3</sup> In addition, during the past 40 years, more than a half-million people, mostly midcareer professionals who live and work in this region, have continued their education through the Tseng College of Extended Learning.

At age 53, Cal State Northridge can draw upon a deep well of success and influence among its alumni. While the demographics of the University's student body have changed since it was born as Valley State College in 1958, there is a common bond of experience and aspiration among the earliest and the most recent students. All came, and still come, to CSUN hoping to become successful in their professions and to have meaningful, contributing lives as citizens.

As the only public university in the San Fernando Valley and adjoining communities, the University has the benefit of being part of a community that by itself would be the fifth largest city in the nation, the second largest and one of the wealthiest in California. It lies close to the heart of the entertainment and space exploration industries. Though based in the San Fernando Valley, CSUN has the further benefit of drawing students from throughout a highly successful region: 33% of its students come from the Valley, 52% from elsewhere in Southern California.

The University's reputation continues to rise as more and more people come to understand the quality of its programs and its impact on their lives. The recent opening of the world-class Valley Performing Arts Center has created a unique opportunity for the University – both in regard to its students and the public. No other university in Southern California has a comparable venue.

While the University began as a public benefit, supported almost exclusively by state general fund revenue, it appears to be inexorably evolving toward a different model that will involve a greater reliance on student tuition, partnerships with business and social enterprises, and private support. If carefully developed with a focus on access, quality and impact, the new model can expand the value received by the entire region.

This leads us to the last and possibly most important strength that we wish to highlight: the University has been well served by outstanding leadership in its senior administration; visionary and dedicated deans, department chairs, faculty and staff; and a talented and loyal core of volunteers. For this reason, CSUN is well positioned to surmount the challenges it faces.

### III. ENGAGEMENT AS THE FOUNDATION OF CHANGE

California's challenges today are daunting. But opportunity often stems from adversity. The forces that threaten the University also challenge it to seek help and support from those who care about both its students and the well-being of the region and state.

Broader and more robust engagement of alumni and other key stakeholders is the necessary foundation for change. Engagement must be *broader* not only in terms of the numbers of stakeholders, but also in the ways they are involved and energized. At the same time, engagement must be *more robust* in terms of empowering stakeholders to really know the CSUN of today, to recognize their personal stake in the University, to understand their ability to advance CSUN's future success and to act effectively when called upon.

The Task Force believes that greater stakeholder engagement will result in:

1. A constantly improving reputation for impact and excellence.

Pride and appreciation are critical to the University's long-term fulfillment of its full potential. Through engagement, CSUN will create:

- Substantially greater positive mention in the media and greater external, "third party" validation.
- Higher demand for a CSUN education, making it a more frequent first choice for applicants and their parents.
- Alumni who enthusiastically acknowledge their CSUN ties and act on them.
- Civic and business leaders who seek out opportunities to partner with the University.
- Legislative and administrative leaders at all governmental levels who understand and appreciate the role and accomplishments of the University.

2. Well-informed citizens willing to advocate for the University in the public arena.

As a public institution, Cal State Northridge depends upon the people of California for financial support as well as for the flexibility to carry out its mission effectively. To secure its fair share of state funding, and the freedom to succeed, the University must enlist and inform an army of passionate advocates who will carry the CSUN message into the halls of government.

### 3. Increased private philanthropy.

Engagement is a necessary foundation to secure increased private resources of all kinds.

The first step in fundraising success is engagement. As an initial goal, the University should aspire to be in the “top fundraising tier” of California State University campuses, raising a far greater percentage of its state general fund allocation than its current 10%. This would mean a dollar increase from \$15 million per year to at least \$25 million. Top-tier fundraising campuses within the CSU include Cal Poly San Luis Obispo, Fresno, Long Beach and San Diego.<sup>4</sup> The University’s long-term goals, however, should be higher. By getting into the CSU’s top fundraising tier, CSUN would still remain at less than 10% of UCLA’s annual fundraising achievement. (It is important to note that UCLA was in much the same fundraising position 30 years ago when it launched its first comprehensive capital campaign.)<sup>5</sup>

While total dollars raised is critical, it is also important to greatly expand the number of alumni and friends willing to show their loyalty to the University through a financial commitment of any size. For this reason, CSUN should pursue major increases in the numbers of individuals contributing to it through gifts, in addition to Alumni Association membership dues. An initial metric might be to increase the combined total of alumni donors and dues-paying members from about 15,000, or 7.5% of degreed alumni, to 30,000, or 15% of the total. Again, this should be viewed as an interim goal.

External support is not limited to private philanthropy. The University should continue to pursue significant increases in public and private funding for faculty and student-led research, revenue from University-developed intellectual property and expanded opportunities to partner with business and social enterprises that offer a financial return to the campus. Engagement is essential to opening doors and building the relationships that can lead to these opportunities as well.

### 4. Greater overall benefit to students and the community.

As more and more stakeholders become engaged with the University, its students and faculty, as well as the community at large, will benefit. Attendance at cultural, intellectual and athletic events will increase. Larger numbers of internships, service learning opportunities and job opportunities for current students and recent graduates will occur. Industry and the public sector will both draw more fully on CSUN’s expertise and help mold future academic offerings. The community and the University will develop a greater mutual appreciation of how their futures are inextricably intertwined. And, greater pride in the University within the region will enhance regional pride.

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<sup>4</sup> Within the CSU, fundraising productivity is measured by totaling new gifts, pledges, irrevocable planned gifts and documented expectancies. Universities categorized within the top tier generally have more than 10,000 individual donors, more than 20 full-time professional fundraisers and more than \$50 million in endowment market value. These more mature advancement programs have developed successful annual fund, major gift and planned giving operations, complemented by strong alumni and communications programs. These programs are expected to raise gift commitments that are greater than 15% of the state general fund allocation. In the past three reporting years, fundraising within this tier averaged between 23% and 30% of state general fund allocations.

<sup>5</sup> At both UCLA and Berkeley, state general fund allocations now rank fourth behind federal funding, student tuition and fees, and gifts, among all revenue sources.

## **IV. CORE STRATEGIES**

Based on a combination of the Task Force's personal knowledge of the University, information supplied to us by the campus for our deliberations and our own personal experiences in a broad range of enterprises and roles, we recommend that the University undertake six core strategies that we believe lie at the heart of its ability to increase and sustain engagement of its stakeholders.

1. Establish a clear, consistent and compelling brand and case for the University.
2. Organize and energize the University's base of alumni, parents, and community and business leaders through a combination of approaches.
3. Expand involvement of the University's most successful and influential alumni and friends.
4. Build opportunities for increased synergy among volunteers at all levels.
5. Use the new Valley Performing Arts Center to attract and retain stakeholder interest.
6. Explore the feasibility of employing intercollegiate athletics as a major tool for engagement.

With the assistance of staff, we have undertaken an analysis of the potential for each strategy and provided several specific recommendations. In so doing, it is not our intention to provide a detailed plan of action, but rather to suggest an overall approach to motivate increased engagement. The University must weigh each of our specific recommendations against its available resources and apply its own business judgment.

## V. ANALYSIS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This section summarizes the base data made available to the Task Force members that are most relevant to each strategy. An attempt has been made to spotlight the existing gap between what is and what might be, based on our discussions. We have also suggested a vision of where the University should go as soon as possible. Following this straightforward “gap analysis” are recommendations that can form the basis for specific key goals and metrics for measuring success.

### STRATEGY 1

#### **Establish a clear, consistent and compelling brand and case for the University.**

It is a core conviction of the Task Force that a stronger and more distinctive brand and case for California State University, Northridge is essential for driving future engagement. The brand meaning of the University needs to be determined and communicated effectively to all stakeholders across all channels of communication.

#### **The Situation Today**

The University’s brand is not clearly defined and does not fully reflect who or what it is, the role it plays and how its constituents feel about it. This is not unusual for the sector of younger comprehensive public universities of which Cal State Northridge is a part. Most institutions in the sector have strong teaching and regionally focused missions, and have concentrated more on applied rather than basic research. The research institutions, public and private, have been glorified in their work to “save the world,” whereas comprehensive institutions, with equally valid and essential missions, have been less highly regarded, even though their faculty and graduates have distinguished themselves in many diverse realms of academe and society. This must change, and CSUN can be a leader in increasing understanding of both its value and preeminence within the critical realm of its work and contributions.

Historically, Cal State Northridge has been known for the following:

- It is a university that offers an accessible and affordable education that is “close to home.”
- It has been labeled by some as a “second tier” public university compared to other, better-resourced universities with stronger brand identity, “research” versus “teaching” missions, a focus on doctoral-level education and “big-time” football.



- The University is positioned in the minds of many as serving less academically able students, even though its core clientele has always been students with A and high B grade averages upon entry.
- Its location in the San Fernando Valley is seen by some as a negative, even though the Valley has great strengths and the University has been highly responsive to its needs and has played a significant role in the success and health of the entire region.

These perceptions, however, stand in stark contrast to surveys and focus groups of alumni and friends who broadly celebrate the University for its distinctive strengths: quality of instruction, workforce preparation, many nationally ranked programs, research responding to regional needs, unparalleled access to faculty and highly accomplished alumni.

While pride, loyalty and gratitude exist in abundance among alumni, they are often a silent or quiet opinion, not shared or stated publicly. For some alumni, being a CSUN alumnus has been a “skeleton in the closet,” not openly celebrated. For others, their association with other institutions has offered more prestige.

The Task Force believes that the University’s reputation is growing across a wide range of disciplines. Along with a strengthened reputation comes growing “degree value,” the perceived value of one’s degree. The University’s reputation took a great leap forward with the opening of the Valley Performing Arts Center, which satisfies both a campus and community need, draws audiences from across Southern California and is receiving critical acclaim.

The University’s stakeholders receive or have access to a range of communications – including alumni materials, publications, email messages, departmental newsletters, invitations, website news and social media announcements – that are not currently sent through a common “brand filter.”

### The Vision for Tomorrow

Cal State Northridge will be known by a strong, positive brand identity, reflecting who we are and what we do. That brand will facilitate engagement, build closer identity for students and young alumni, enable a clearer and stronger case for supporting the University, and reawaken a sense of pride, gratitude and community among all alumni. By clearly defining the brand and expressing it in a consistent manner across all channels, we will have better success communicating the University’s excellence and its impact on the region and beyond.

### Specific Recommendations

- Cal State Northridge should develop language that will help alumni and friends articulate their pride and appreciation for the University. It must build upon perceived value and empower alumni and others to express more clearly what the University provided them.
- The University should refuse to define itself on other institutions’ playing fields. We do not have big-time football. We are not a “Research I” institution. We are not a UC. We should define ourselves by what makes us qualitatively unique and by the value that we actually bring: an outstanding, intellectually challenging education; the premier institution in Southern California tackling the region’s greatest needs; an institution that is listening and constantly adapting; a community of nimble learners that can be counted on to jump in and find the solution to difficult problems; a university that attracts students who want to “do things” in

their lives; and a bulwark for our region that could not enjoy its high level of success or affluence without us.

- We must build a shared understanding of the breadth and quality of the University's programs among all stakeholders, from alumni to community leaders to politicians and other public officials. People are often aware of only the aspects of the University with which they have contact, not the overall magnitude of its accomplishments.
- We should coordinate branding and engagement strategies across all institutional platforms.
- We should focus on using no more than a couple of ways of referring to ourselves and simplify our visual identity.<sup>6</sup> Everyone who hears a communication or sees a document from anywhere within the University should recognize immediately where it comes from.
- The brand adopted by the University must have both external and internal validity and support. It must be implemented through a common brand policy document. It must be rolled out strategically and adopted comprehensively.

## STRATEGY 2

### **Organize and energize the University's base of alumni, parents, and community and business leaders through a combination of approaches.**

California State University, Northridge has a large and complex constituency, including alumni, parents, business and civic leaders, and the community at large, as well as students, faculty and staff. To embrace the sheer scale of its stakeholder base, the University needs to create a hierarchy of engagement opportunities that is appropriate to each group and life stage, ranging from high-tech communications and social media to more personalized, small-group activities that permit close connections among students, alumni and other key constituencies.<sup>7</sup>

### **Alumni**

The University's largest stakeholder constituency is its alumni. Alumni have deep emotional ties to the University because of what they have gained from their time on campus. They also have the strongest incentives to take action to promote the value of their own educations (i.e., increase "perceived degree value"), to build relationships with other alumni and to give back.

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<sup>6</sup> California State University, Northridge is most frequently called CSUN and Cal State Northridge when its full formal name is not in use. Other names include Northridge, CSU Northridge, CS Northridge, CSN and even Ridge, among other less frequent variations. The University's visual identity may also need clarification. The lyrics of our alma mater extol the "spirit of the red and white," while elsewhere the school colors are listed as black and red, and the overall visual-design environment has been characterized by logos and other commonly used symbols that have changed frequently.

<sup>7</sup> A partial listing of current engagement activities is included in Appendix D.

## The Situation Today

CSUN has nearly 200,000 degreed alumni. The alumni count more than doubles when non-degreed alumni are included. And the number of alumni is constantly increasing.

There is no single measure of alumni engagement. The collegiate experience is a special, transformative time, and many alumni may feel engaged because of friendships that they carry with them from their college years or what they read or hear in the media, including publications that are periodically sent to them by the University.

The objective numbers associated with alumni engagement, however, are relatively small compared with the sheer scale of CSUN's alumni base:<sup>8</sup>

- About 24,000 alumni, students and others have participated in the Alumni Association through membership dues during the past decade, a number equivalent to 12% of the degreed alumni count. Formed in 1960, the Association currently has 12,500 active members or 6% of this total. While these numbers are actually among the best within the CSU, the Task Force believes they will can significantly with a comprehensive, sustained approach.<sup>9</sup>
- Around 29,000 alumni have donated to the California State University, Northridge Foundation at least once over the last 30 years since records have been maintained. In 2010, there were fewer than 4,000 alumni donors. These numbers represent about 15% and 2%, respectively, of degreed alumni.
- The Alumni Association and various colleges and departments sponsor a wide range of reunion activities both on and off campus:
  - In 1998 and 2008, for instance, the Association hosted very well-received 40th and 50th anniversary reunion celebrations. The 50th Reunion in 2009 was attended by more than 3,500 alumni.

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<sup>8</sup> CSUN's degreed alumni and membership numbers in the Alumni Association (including lifetime members and new members since 2001, when the membership program was resumed) break out as follows:

Age Range	Total Degreed Alumni	Members since 2001
20-29	26,887	8,335
30-39	41,460	4,190
40-49	45,953	2,339
50-59	42,185	2,088
60-69	30,919	1,426
70-79	7,025	368
80+	<u>2,511</u>	<u>158</u>
	196,940	18,904

<sup>9</sup> These numbers might be significantly higher had the campus not twice discontinued its membership dues program, first in the 1970s and again from 1987 to 2001.

- The Association hosts mini-reunions for clubs, teams, majors and other affinity groups throughout the year with its chapters, colleges, academic departments and other campus units.
- CSUN has an active online community with more than 32,000 Facebook participants (twice the size of any other CSU), 4,500 LinkedIn members and widespread use of Twitter.

Studies conducted by the University suggest alumni have a high opinion of their CSUN experience. One study, for instance, found that many alumni believe that the overall quality of a CSUN education, the caliber of its faculty and its success preparing students for the workforce equal or exceed UCLA and USC achievements in these areas. More than half of alumni express a high level of gratitude to the University.<sup>10</sup>

### The Vision for Tomorrow

California State University, Northridge will offer multiple robust pathways that encourage alumni to remain connected to the University throughout their lifetimes and to reengage when circumstances lead them to fall away. Measures of pride, gratitude and loyalty will be high and expressed openly. Alumni will stand ready to celebrate their University, to be engaged and to assist enthusiastically with their time, talent, resources, influence and personal stature.

While greater resources will be required, CSUN's programs for alumni engagement will include even more low-cost elements, that are "experiential" and capable of "going viral" so that they can be self-generating and self-supporting in an era of limited resources. Programs will continue to focus on themes of reunion, recognition and appreciation. Strong personal components will be nurtured, from opportunities for alumni of all ages to associate with each other, to a willingness to provide help when asked for. As one Task Force member suggested, alumni will be willing "to take the call" when another CSUN alumnus/a reaches out to them. Another proposed that we will see CSUN caps and shirts wherever we go.

### Recommendations specific to "alumni in residence" (i.e., current students)

- From the time students enter the University, the message should be instilled that they are "Matadors for Life." If students have a better understanding that they are beginning a lifetime relationship with CSUN and fully comprehend the personal and professional value of the relationship, they will have a stronger sense of ownership of the University and a deeper sense of obligation to support it.<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> See research conducted by Santa Monica-based Creative Qualitative in 2002 and 2007 and by Houston, Texas-based Performance Enhancement Group in 2009.

<sup>11</sup> Over the past decade the University has taken a number of actions to boost a sense of tradition, school spirit and pride at CSUN, including:

- Every day, the campus carillon performs the alma mater, "Hail to the Matador," composed by renowned conductor Richard Kaufman '77 while he was a student at CSUN during the 1960s. The alma mater is also performed at all commencement exercises, campus celebrations and athletic events.

- The University should enhance and expand current pathways that bring students and successful alumni of all ages together. For students, the prestige of a CSUN degree is inextricably linked with the success of its alumni. In this respect, one Task Force member noted, “Alumni can be the best posters for the University.”
- The University should continue to invest in activities that relate to the transition from student to alumni life.<sup>12</sup>

#### Recommendations specific to recent graduates and midcareer alumni

- The primary focus for recent graduates is professional success, so expanding opportunities for career networking and mentoring is essential.
- The University should build upon existing engagement opportunities according to professional affiliation, as well as academic discipline and former student club or fraternal ties. Promoting CSUN Young Presidents’ Association-type activities may also be effective.<sup>13</sup>
- Individually acknowledging the successes of alumni as their careers advance may also be effective. Maintaining personalized contact with alumni, whenever possible, is also important, including activities as simple as sending an email birthday greeting.

#### Recommendations specific to older and highly accomplished alumni

- The University should establish multiple ways to bring its highly accomplished alumni into direct contact with students. For this group of alumni, according to another Task Force Member, “students are the best posters for the University.” These should include substantially increased opportunities for alumni:
  - To speak in the classroom or team teach.
  - To judge competitions.
  - To meet off campus in small group sessions or host presentations at offices and other work-related locations.

While we acknowledge the efforts already underway to engage alumni in this way, members of the Task Force commented that they had been invited to speak more frequently at USC, UCLA and other universities than at their own alma mater.

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- In the next few months a 14-foot-high matador statue and pedestal will be placed on campus in a prominent location. This feature is expected to be a central place for campus activity as well as the site of many graduation photographs.
  - School colors and messages can now be found across campus in prominent locations.

<sup>12</sup> CSUN is currently engaged in building a “-2+3” program focused on successful upper division students and alumni in their first three years following graduation.

<sup>13</sup> Young Presidents’ Association (YPO) is a prestigious organization of business leaders. Members graduate from the organization at age 50 to the WPO, or World Presidents’ Association.

- The University should continue to grow programs that recognize and showcase the societal contributions of its most notable and accomplished alumni. Encouraging CSUN's most successful and influential alumni to celebrate their shared connection openly will empower others, who may be less confident, to follow their example.
- Where possible, the University should recognize the contributions of groups of alumni by year and/or profession for their impact on advancing societal needs (e.g., teachers, nurses, accountants, engineers, etc.).
- Getting alumni back to campus is also important. Returning alumni always remark upon the growth of the campus and the many new facilities.

## **Parents**

Parents and other caregivers represent one of the largest stakeholder groups with significant potential for engagement.

- They are close by. Based on the home addresses of incoming students, about 85% live within a two-hour drive of campus.
- They have an economic interest in the success of their enrolled children and in their children's careers following graduation. This includes lowering costs, access to financial aid, classroom success and, ultimately, employment;<sup>14</sup>
- They are potential consumers of CSUN information, advocates for the university, sources of internships or employment for current students and recent alumni, boosters of the University's reputation, consumers of the University's educational and entertainment venues, and donors.

### **The Situation Today**

- Parents and caregivers currently have modest involvement with the University.
  - Parents of students seeking to attend CSUN may participate in student-guided tours with their children and attend sessions on the application process, costs to attend and financial aid. Annually, these sessions have about 2,500 attendees, of whom roughly 900 are students.
  - There is an annual parent orientation program in the fall conducted by Student Affairs that is attended by up to 500 parents.
  - Parents are occasionally invited to attend performances and showcases featuring their students' work. Parents of athletes regularly attend athletic events.
  - Parents and other family members frequently attend and celebrate graduation.
- There is no central parent database and therefore no means to communicate with parents on a consistent basis, either while their students are in attendance or following graduation. Parent contact information is of limited distribution, for emergency use and only by Student Affairs.

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<sup>14</sup> As 35% of CSUN's students are the first in their family to attend college and 80% are eligible for financial aid, helping parents learn how to navigate the financial aid forms and to assist in their children's success as students could benefit their children, their family and themselves.

- There is no consistent way to link legacy families involving two or more generations.
- Currently there is no university-wide strategy or coordination for parent programming.
- Parents represent less than 3% of the University's current donors, and there is no formal parent program in the University's Annual Fund.
- Parents are not targeted to serve on campus volunteer boards.

### The Vision for Tomorrow

CSUN parents, of both current and past students, will be energetic and committed advocates, supporters and consumers of the University. There will be a well-developed, strategic and institutionally coordinated parent program that builds relations between parents and the University and among parents.

### Specific Recommendations

The University should undertake the following major actions:

- Consistently gather parent names and contact information.
- Develop a robust parent communications strategy using both print and electronic media.
- Develop a parent volunteer strategy by establishing a parent organization or organizations and by encouraging parents to participate in existing structures for which they are interested and qualified.
- Encourage parents to provide workplace opportunities for students and recent alumni.
- Continue communications and engagement opportunities for parents even after their students complete their education at CSUN.

## **Business and Civic Leadership**

The active engagement of business and civic leaders within the University at the highest levels is essential to forging a strong, sustainable public-private partnership.

Cal State Northridge is a dominant institution in the center of an enormous trade area, reaching across a breadth of communities inside the San Fernando Valley, Los Angeles County and beyond. The region is reliant upon CSUN for workforce development. The University supplies the private workforce needs across a broad array of disciplines—providing innovative professionals in healthcare, business, the arts, engineering and science. It is also the region's major training ground for teachers and other public servants at the undergraduate and master's level. To the extent that CSUN continues to thrive and excel, the entire region and the quality of life of its citizens will benefit.

### The Situation Today

The University has partnerships with many corporations and public entities.

Cal State Northridge has long drawn upon a portion of the civic talent of Los Angeles and the San Fernando Valley to serve in volunteer leadership positions. For example, of the 51

recipients thus far of the Fernando Award, the Valley's most prestigious volunteer recognition, more than 30% have served on the CSUN Foundation board or in some other high-level position on campus.

The University has a visible presence on many of the region's most influential civic organizations, including:

- The Los Angeles Chamber of Commerce (the president and current CSUN volunteers serve on its board).
- The Valley Economic Alliance (the president and current CSUN volunteers serve on its board).
- The Valley Industry and Commerce Association (the president, volunteers and staff participate).
- CSUN faculty regularly present at Valley Economic Alliance and Valley Industry and Commerce Association symposia.

The University's new Valley Performing Arts Center exemplifies a major public-private partnership, involving the University and business, civic and individual philanthropic leaders, as well as leaders within the California legislature and the Board of Supervisors of the County of Los Angeles.<sup>15</sup>

Yet the interaction between the campus and business and civic leadership is intermittent and often unfocused. There does not appear to be a core strategy surrounding this activity.

### The Vision for Tomorrow

Business, civic and governmental leaders will see Cal State Northridge as both a public and private responsibility. Leaders will understand the University's vital role and stand prepared to support it.

### Specific Recommendations

- Continue to integrate top business and civic leadership into the volunteer leadership of the University, focusing on specific industries with high concentrations of alumni.
- Establish strong new and enhance existing networks among key business and civic leaders to keep them well-informed about current issues relating to the University, its impact and needs.
- Prominently thank, recognize and celebrate the University's most important business and civic partners for their service to the University and the community.
- Increase opportunities for business and civic leaders to engage directly with students and young alumni, including:
  - Internships, fellowships and service learning opportunities.

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<sup>15</sup> The new Valley Performing Arts Center is the venue of the 2011 Valley of the Stars gala sponsored by the Valley Economic Alliance.



- Student volunteer opportunities.
- Participation in the classroom and advisory roles.
- Systematically and intentionally track and nurture the relationships between University leadership and the heads of key business and civic organizations.
- Continue to invite key civic and business leaders to tour the campus and engage with University leaders.
- Invite key organizations – and/or their committees – to meet on campus and to use campus venues.

### **STRATEGY 3**

#### **Expand involvement of the University's most successful and influential alumni and friends.**

For CSUN to master its destiny, it must challenge and invite those who have benefited most from the University to employ their influence, affluence and civic reach on its behalf.

#### **The Situation Today**

The University lacks effective strategies to cultivate, recruit and deploy the talents of its most successful and influential alumni and friends in the engagement process.

While the CSUN Foundation and various college-level boards have begun to address this need by increasing their memberships, these efforts are not of the scale or intensity required. Also, while board-building is an important engagement strategy, it is necessarily limited by optimal board sizes and extrinsic factors such as distance, career and other competing demands.

At present, there is no vehicle to engage on a sustained basis successful and influential alumni and friends who are too busy, unready or unable to participate in the University's formal volunteer structure. Nor are there strategies in place to retain the energy of key volunteers who are ending their service due to term limits or similar factors.

#### **The Vision for Tomorrow**

The University's most successful, affluent and influential alumni and friends will actively seek the opportunity to participate in advancing the University, and appropriate volunteer leadership roles will be available to them on both a formal and informal basis.

#### **Specific Recommendations**

- Recruitment of the University's most successful and influential alumni and friends into volunteer roles should become a major institutional priority.
- Both formal and informal volunteer opportunities beyond board membership should be created and staffed. The Task Force on Engagement provides one model for involving influential alumni and friends on a short-term basis to address a high-priority issue.

- The University must recruit these stakeholders into an active, high-impact networking relationship and find ways for each stakeholder to reach out to others, individually and in small group settings.
- Specific consideration should be given to the formation of a Board of Visitors, involving only one or two meetings per year. The Board of Visitors format has been used successfully by other universities as a means of preliminary involvement and as a gateway to more significant volunteer assignments.
- The University should develop strategies aimed at bringing together and retaining volunteers who are cycling off boards and key committees due to term limits or other constraints.

## **STRATEGY 4**

### **Build opportunities for increased synergy among volunteers at all levels.**

#### **The Situation Today**

As at most universities, Cal State Northridge has developed both university-wide and college- or departmental-level volunteer structures (Appendix D).

There are two major volunteer organizations that have a university-wide focus:

- The California State University, Northridge Foundation, led by a board of directors of 32 elected alumni and community members, is charged with “cultivating relationships, actively seeking gifts, philanthropic contributions and grants from alumni, friends, corporations and foundations, and providing ongoing donor stewardship.”
- The Cal State Northridge Alumni Association is led by a 13-member executive council and engages 150 association members into leadership roles at both the overall organization level and within its 23 chapters.

At the college or divisional level, five of nine colleges have formal boards or advisory committees with significant external relations functions. Several colleges without such boards wish to establish one. Intercollegiate athletics is in the process of launching a board for its leadership-giving group, the Athletics Director’s Circle.

The University’s volunteer organizations currently operate independently of each other, with individual goals. They do not share a communications platform or currently have the opportunity to convene. Volunteer boards and committees are comprised of members drawn primarily from the San Fernando Valley or greater Los Angeles (with only a few members drawn from neighboring regions or outside the state).

#### **The Vision for Tomorrow**

Volunteer leaders will feel that they are part of a mutually supportive “winning team” committed to enhancing the University and all its parts.

### Specific Recommendations

- The University should recognize, honor and strengthen CSUN's current volunteer leadership.
- The University should establish a clear charge relating to advocacy, outreach and fundraising for all boards and advisory committees with substantial external relations responsibilities. This charge should augment, not supplant, their individual mission statements or charters.
- The University should develop a communications plan that includes:
  - An annual presidential state-of-the-campus speech delivered to all board-level volunteers and high-level volunteer prospects from throughout the University. This speech should be broadly distributed on and off campus.
  - An annual volunteer summit (possibly to coincide with the state-of-the-campus speech) for volunteers to meet, share successes and learn best practices from each other. Leading prospects for engagement should also be invited to this event.
  - Print and online communications vehicles that provide common messages about CSUN as a whole and key accomplishments across the campus.

## **STRATEGY 5**

### **Use the Valley Performing Arts Center to attract and retain stakeholder interest.**

#### The Situation Today

The opening of the Valley Performing Arts Center in January 2011 was a great success for the University. Press coverage has been substantial and positive. Audience attendance is growing, with several sold-out shows in the first year. There is a “buzz” about the University throughout greater Los Angeles and beyond. The Valley Performing Arts Center is helping to establish a strong and visible sense of pride and commitment to the institution within the campus community, the alumni, the parent base and the community at large.

Great performing arts centers across the country are supported by great volunteer leadership organizations that help them refine and carry out their mission over time. While CSUN's world-class performing arts center is moving rapidly to establish audience and reputation, it has yet to build a volunteer structure. This is an enormous opportunity.

#### The Vision for Tomorrow

The Valley Performing Arts Center will serve as a major portal to the University, drawing to it a broad set of stakeholders who will relish their relationship with the institution and be willing to invest in its mission.

### Specific Recommendations concerning the Valley Performing Arts Center

- We recommend that the University create a robust and effective volunteer structure to support the Valley Performing Arts Center, drawing upon a diverse group of leaders in the region who have a stake in its success, including its most affluent and influential alumni and community members.
- The University should consider opportunities to use the Center to help build the University's intellectual signature in Southern California.
- The University should seek opportunities to convene regional, national and international figures of note to address key issues of concern to the general public, drawing media attention to the University and its role in Southern California.

## **STRATEGY 6**

### **Explore the feasibility of employing intercollegiate athletics as a major tool for engagement.**

The consensus of the Task Force is that it is possible that, like the Valley Performing Arts Center, intercollegiate athletics can also become a powerful force for engagement and deserves consideration as a key strategy.

Intercollegiate athletics has the potential to offer significant benefits, such as:

- It can create “institutional stickiness” with alumni, friends and future students.
- The media exposure provided through athletics can be a brand extender.
- Athletic success can support public perception of academic achievement.
- Athletics-as-entertainment has the potential for developing a major fan base within the San Fernando Valley and adjoining areas.
- Athletics can draw upon a significant base of goodwill that reaches across generations of CSUN students and alumni.
- Commitment to success in athletics could complement the University's major commitment to the performing arts. While success in the arts has added to the University's prestige, strengthening the athletics program and tradition could nurture emotional connections to the campus and generate greater loyalty to the University.

### The Situation Today

For three decades beginning in the 1960s, Cal State Northridge was a national power within NCAA Division II. During this period, the Matadors won 34 national titles and 53 conference championships. In 1990, the University moved its athletic program to the NCAA Division I level, raising the expenditures for the program and increasing demands on the facilities. CSUN still ranks third at the D-II level for the number of national championships 20 years after leaving that level of competition. In the two decades since joining Division I, CSUN has won 48 conference titles and has secured two national individual championships. However, it has achieved number one national team ranking only twice – both in men's volleyball – and has yet to win a national top spot in any team sport.

Matador athletics continues to be a substantial undertaking. Competing within the Big West Conference and the Mountain States Sports Federation,<sup>16</sup> the current program includes:

- 415 student-athletes.
- 117 full athletic scholarships of 149.2 permitted by NCAA rules. These scholarships, in turn, are divided into smaller awards to support many more students.
- 18 sports, including eight men's and 10 women's teams.<sup>17</sup>
- An overall budget of \$8 million, supported primarily by state funds and student fees (private support and commercial sponsorships represent less than 5% of the total budget).
- A total staff of 75, including 35 coaches and five academic support staff.

With few exceptions, today's competition venues are cramped, unfinished, outdated and/or inadequate for athletes and fans. Recent improvements of lighting to the soccer field, upgrades in the baseball and softball venues, and the planned installation of air conditioning and other cosmetic changes to the Matadome will improve the quality of athlete and spectator experiences. Continued improvements in facilities will help to make attending and enjoying games on campus possible, as well as strengthen athlete and coach recruitment.

Attendance at athletic events is inconsistent across venues, with the largest crowds reaching 2,000 when the teams are competing most effectively. The Alumni Association has formed a partnership with Matador Athletics, having sponsored Alumni Fan Days, Sell-Out Saturdays, team reunions, pregame receptions and fan trips. Former players are honored at annual Matador Hall of Fame events.

The department's communications plan provides feeds on the Web, Facebook and Twitter, outreach to local and national media, and an e-newsletter for which supporters can self-register. However, media coverage in this region generally focuses on sports news about the two other large universities in Los Angeles – USC and UCLA.

Financial support for athletics by alumni and the public is disproportionately low in comparison to other NCAA Division I programs at all types of institutions. At CSUN, for example, revenue from ticket sales, commercial sponsorships *and* philanthropic giving combined amounts to only half of what other Big West schools generate.<sup>18</sup>

### The Vision for Tomorrow

Athletics will serve as a major tool for engagement, capturing the imagination of both the campus community and a significant portion of the region's two million residents. It will be a

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<sup>16</sup> CSUN's Big West rivals include three other prominent CSUs (Cal Poly SLO, Fullerton and Long Beach), four UCs (Davis, Irvine, Riverside and Santa Barbara), the University of the Pacific and, beginning in 2011-12, the University of Hawaii.

<sup>17</sup> CSUN's men's sports include baseball, basketball, soccer, volleyball, indoor and outdoor track and field, cross country and golf. Women's sports are softball, basketball, soccer, volleyball, indoor and outdoor track and field, cross country, golf, tennis and water polo. Every sport receives support from parents and fans through the Team Behind the Team organization.

<sup>18</sup> Funding for CSUN athletics is generated from student fees (32%), institutional support (52%), and revenue/philanthropy (16%), as compared with the averages of 34%, 34% and 32%, respectively, for Big West conference schools.

strong and tangible source of pride and loyalty, building upon the prestige engendered by the Valley Performing Arts Center. This vision will be made possible by the emergence of a powerful and committed volunteer and donor base.

### Specific Recommendations

- As a first step, the University should conduct a feasibility study to examine the potential for a successful public-private partnership to support athletics' capital, operational and scholarship needs. Because of the expense of the strategy and the absence of any significant additional state funding, the engagement of a significant group of high-level, affluent alumni and community backers will be required to assist in upgrading facilities and providing scholarships and operational support through major philanthropic commitments. To be successful, this volunteer core should also be invested in, and involved with, the overall success of the University.
- For athletics to effectively support and strengthen the University's brand, it must maintain focus on the academic success of its athletes as well as their success in competition and must require high coaching standards.
- The University should consider concentrating its resources on a single highly visible sport in which both men and women participate to ensure the greatest potential for media and fan exposure.
- The University should evaluate the potential for fan or audience development and study alternate strategies for securing fan participation (similar to the planning approach taken for the Valley Performing Arts Center).
- This strategy will require a commitment for at least an initial seven- to ten-year period before any significant return is realized. Investment in operations, including coaching and scholarships, as well as facilities, will be necessary, but investment in operations can come first.

## VI. NEXT STEPS

Increased engagement of the University's stakeholders provides a vital opportunity to attract and embrace outside support. The achievement of broader and more robust engagement, as we envision it, will require years of concerted effort and a fundamental change in the University's culture.

In closing, we would highlight five considerations as key to implementing the strategies we have recommended:

- Leadership. An effort of this scale cannot exist without volunteer leadership. While CSUN has a dedicated core of talented volunteer leaders both centrally and in colleges and departments, more individuals must step forward to share in this responsibility. The University has a deep well of alumni and friends from all areas of society who have achieved success in their careers. It is critical that such individuals be invited and challenged to employ their influence, affluence and civic reach for their alma mater's benefit.
- Teamwork. We suggest that this report be used to spark dialogue at all levels within the University.
  - Among current volunteer leaders, we hope that our report will foster a greater sense of teamwork capable both of integrating increasing numbers of volunteers willing and able to serve the University effectively and of filling crucial gaps in the volunteer structure. The Valley Performing Arts Center, athletics and several key academic areas all require greater volunteer support.
  - It is equally essential that the University administration, faculty and staff recognize that engagement is not the province of any single part of the University. All of the University's divisions, including Academic Affairs, Student Affairs, Administration and Finance, University Advancement and others, each have a stake and a role in making engagement happen. Engagement of the University's outside stakeholders requires engagement of those inside the institution.
- Investment. Engagement will require an investment. In the end, the University should examine whether the public and private resources currently budgeted for engagement throughout the institution are sufficient to the task and appropriately organized to achieve maximum efficiency, synergy and effectiveness.

- Initiative. While a long-term commitment to change is important, we also encourage the University to seize on those opportunities that, among our recommendations, can be acted on immediately. Examples include:
  - Completing the discussion currently underway to clarify how we describe ourselves in all of our communications and implementing a new brand platform.
  - Submitting our recommendations to the same type of participatory learning and planning processes that have led to other successful changes in the University's culture.
  - Commencing an annual summit or conference of volunteer leaders drawn from college and divisional advisory boards, the CSUN Foundation and the Alumni Association, and key leadership prospects. Such an event should feature a keynote address on the state of the campus by the president of the University and focus on building teamwork among all volunteer leaders serving the University and its key parts.
  - Bringing its most successful and influential alumni and friends together with students and with one another as often as possible. Students and alumni can often be the best motivators of each other. Individual and small-group activities are most likely to effectively engage those who can bring the greatest benefit to the University.
  - Creating a communications plan to reach out to and engage parents and caregivers, one of the largest gaps in the University's current engagement program.
  - Strengthening programs related to the student-to-alumni transition.
- Perseverance. The recommendations contained in this report warrant a combination of short-term and more measured, long-term approaches. Every step taken, however, will require patience and the goodwill of participants working together. Many other universities have gone through the process that is now envisioned for California State University, Northridge. Each evolution has required an investment of time (measured in years), but each has proven to be well worth the investment.



**Special Task Force on Engagement  
Spring 2010**

**Purpose**

The purpose of the Special Task Force is to advise the University on a course of action that will engage successful alumni and friends in building overall brand equity and long-term financial strength in an era of rapidly dwindling state resources.

**Background**

In the half century since its founding, California State University, Northridge has emerged as one of the nation's leading comprehensive universities. In terms of size, mission, scope, diversity and quality, the University has few equals within its stratum of American higher education, and the list of national recognitions and distinctions continues to grow. For example, the University has been recognized by the National Science Foundation as among the top two master's level universities in the country for preparing students who go on to earn research doctorates in science. The cinema and music programs of the Mike Curb College of Arts, Media and Communications are ranked among the best in the country. The University's Michael D. Eisner College of Education prepares more teachers annually than any other California public institution, including the entire University of California system combined. The College of Business and Economics is the seventh largest undergraduate business program in the country, and approximately one-third of all accounting firms in Southern California are led by Cal State Northridge graduates. Finally, Northridge ranks first among the 23 California State University institutions represented by alumni members of the California Bar, the largest in the country, and ninth among *all* universities represented.

Within Southern California and the City of Los Angeles, Cal State Northridge is a major pillar of academic strength in discovering and disseminating knowledge, providing opportunities for personal advancement, and fulfilling the professional and creative workforce requirements of the region. The quality of life of Southern California, both economic and social, is inextricably tied to the quality and momentum of its universities. CSUN, UCLA and USC educate nearly 100,000 students and account for an exceptionally high percentage of the essential, knowledge-based productivity of the region, and together constitute core drivers of the region's vitality.

Since its inception, Cal State Northridge has served as an important point of access and as a conduit to the professions for upwardly mobile families at a reasonable cost. But its ability to continue to achieve distinction and educate California's knowledge-based workforce of the future is threatened by the continued erosion of support for the state's public universities. In

the current fiscal year alone, for example, tax-based funding has fallen to a new historic low, accounting for only 38% of consolidated operating revenues.

Neither CSUN nor California is unique in this respect. The past 30 years have witnessed a transformation in how public universities in America generate top-line revenue. Increased volunteer involvement and private support by alumni and other stakeholders at public institutions across the country have been particularly significant in ensuring sustained momentum and excellence at institutions such as Berkeley, UCLA, Washington, Virginia, and Texas, which have all transitioned from fully state-supported to little more than state-assisted institutions. In some cases, the percentage of support coming from state general funds has fallen to nominal levels.

The question before Cal State Northridge at this watershed moment in its history is, what path should it take to sustain academic excellence, ensure continued momentum and effectively fulfill its core responsibilities to the region and future generations? As the funding model shifts, it seems increasingly clear that the answer lies in a combination of new business enterprise solutions, increased external sponsorship of research (both public and private) and enhanced philanthropic support.

With more than 200,000 graduates and at least that many non-degreed alumni, plus numerous friends throughout the region, Cal State Northridge today is poised to take advantage of new possibilities as never before. Thousands of highly successful people whose careers and businesses have been advanced by their affiliation with Cal State Northridge recognize and appreciate the quality of scholarship and education provided by the University. One key to the future will be the intensified engagement of this generation of alumni and friends to assume leadership for its success.

### **Task Force Goals**

- Establish an external relations blueprint that will help to ensure the sustained excellence of the University in the years to come.
- Help to identify and hone key messages, communications vehicles and organizational strategies that will attract and retain a substantially larger cadre of highly successful and influential alumni and other key stakeholders to help guide and support the University.
- Begin the process of strengthening, expanding and integrating the University's future volunteer leadership.

### **Task Force Organization**

A three-stage organizational strategy is envisioned. Stage one will involve 10-15 exceptional leaders from disparate fields who share ties to CSUN.

Participants willing to be enlisted for no more than two initial face-to-face meetings will serve as an Executive Organizing Team for the Task Force. This team will discuss the charge, goals, data requirements, process, and outcomes, and it will help lead the effort as a whole, including overseeing its report and recommendations.

Stage two will involve 30 or more additional participants who will agree to review materials, provide input, comment on findings and recommendations, and attend a culminating Conference on Engagement.

All participants involved in both stages will constitute the Special Task Force on Engagement. Membership will be enlisted through the process outlined below.

### **Task Force Leadership**

An overall chair will be enlisted in a process involving the president of the University, chairman of the Foundation Board of Directors, and vice president for University Advancement. The chair will subsequently recruit one or more vice chairs (or co-chairs).

### **Task Force Enlistment Process**

Methods for enlisting Task Force members will be highly individualized. Strength of affinity, professional accomplishment and likelihood of participation will govern the order of the process. Early members will be asked to assist in recruiting later members, as appropriate. All members will be given the opportunity to indicate whether they wish to participate in the Executive Leadership Team or be involved more broadly as participants.

### **Timeline**

- Review of Task Force charge by California State University, Northridge Foundation Board of Directors (complete).
- Approval of Task Force plan by the president and senior leadership of the University and the chair of the Foundation Board (complete).
- Recruitment of Task Force members and identification of Executive Organizing Team, April-June 2010.
- First meeting of the Executive Organizing Team, November 2010.
- Second meeting of the expanded Executive Organizing Team, winter-spring 2011.

- Recruitment of stage two members to react and comment on initial recommendations from stage one efforts.
- Stage two meeting of the Task Force on Engagement, attended by all Task Force members, fall 2011.
- Final report and recommendations winter 2011-12.

### **Culminating Meeting of the Task Force on Engagement**

A culminating meeting of the full Special Task Force on Engagement will be held on campus in fall 2011 to review recommendations and identify next steps. The meeting will be widely publicized and given a name to establish it as a major strategic event in the history of the institution. It will combine business and social events for Task Force members and their guests.

### **Task Force Report**

The final report of the Special Task Force on Engagement will be printed and widely circulated throughout the University and the Southern California community. Accountability for implementation of its recommendations will shift immediately thereafter to the University, in concert with the volunteer leadership of the Foundation.

**California State University, Northridge  
Special Task Force on Engagement Members**

**Co-Chairs**



**Earl Enzer (Finance '83)** is a managing director in the Private Client Services Group of Goldman Sachs & Company, which he joined in 1986. In this role, he has been responsible for regional office management, recruiting and mentoring. Prior to joining the firm, Mr. Enzer was a research analyst at Houlihan, Lokey, Howard & Zukin, a Los Angeles-based investment banking firm. Mr. Enzer is chairman of the California State University, Northridge Foundation Board of Directors and serves on the College of Business and Economics Dean's Advisory Board. He has also served on the board of Westmark School in Encino, a school for students with learning differences that is closely tied to the Michael D. Eisner College of Education at Cal State Northridge. Mrs. Enzer is also a CSUN alumna. The Enzers reside in Pacific Palisades.



**Hon. Linda Lingle (Journalism '75)** completed her second term as the governor of Hawaii in December 2010. She previously served as mayor of Maui and chair of the Hawaii Republican Party. Her career has taken her from working as a public information officer for the Teamsters and Hotel Workers Union in her state to founding the Molokai Free Press, a successful community newspaper. She received CSUN's Distinguished Alumni Award in 2004. She resides in Honolulu, Hawaii.

**Other Members**



**Richard Bergman (Accounting '77) and Barbara Bergman (Health Sciences '76)** have been deeply involved in the volunteer and philanthropic leadership of a number of educational, medical and social organizations, including UCLA, where they began their undergraduate educations. Mr. Bergman served as chair of the College of Letters and Science Campaign Cabinet during UCLA's \$3 billion capital campaign which concluded in 2006 and chaired the Pauley Pavilion Renovation Committee from 2006 to 2009. Mrs. Bergman was a member of Women and Philanthropy and Today/Tomorrow Children's Fund at UCLA until 2009. As a result of their work, Mr. and Mrs. Bergman were each awarded an honorary fellowship at UCLA, and Mr. Bergman was named Advocate of the Year in 2007 by the University of California. Mr. Bergman's Los Angeles-based investment management firm, Bergman Group, Inc., provides advisory services to entities in which he is the majority owner specializing in real estate, marketable equity and fixed income securities and private company investments. The Bergmans reside in Brentwood.



**Jim Berk (Music '81, Hon. D. '11)** is chief executive officer for Participant Media, the leading provider of entertainment that inspires social change. Under Mr. Berk's leadership, Participant has released 27 films, including "Good Night Good Luck," "An Inconvenient Truth," "The Visitor," "The Kite Runner," "Countdown to Zero," "The Informant," "Food Inc.," "Charlie Wilson's War," "Fair Game," and "Waiting for 'Superman.'" Mr. Berk was previously president and CEO at Gryphon, Fairfield Communities and Hard Rock Cafe International, founding executive director of the National Academy of Recording Arts and Sciences Foundation and principal of Alexander Hamilton High School. He was the youngest principal in the history of the Los Angeles Unified School District. Prior to Hamilton, he founded the Academy of Music public school magnet in Los Angeles and began his career as a music teacher at Carson High School. Mr. Berk currently serves on the boards of Summit Entertainment, Me to We Inc., Community in Schools LA, Soliya, UCLA School of Theater, Film and Television, and the USC Rossier School of Education. He received CSUN's Distinguished Alumni Award in 2007. Mr. Berk resides in Beverly Hills.



**Hon. Mike Curb (1962-63, Hon. D. '09)** founded Curb Records, the oldest private record label in the United States, when he was a student at San Fernando Valley State College (now CSUN). He attended college with his mother, who was also a Valley State student at the time. Over the intervening 46 years, Mr. Curb has become a major presence in American culture, having written, produced and/or performed in more than 300 number one selling recordings. Mr. Curb served as lieutenant governor of California from 1978 to 1982 and for approximately one year as acting governor of California. He has advanced his interest in music by endowing centers and colleges at Belmont University, Vanderbilt University, Rhodes College, Daytona State College and the Nashville Symphony. In 2006, Mr. Curb received a CSUN Distinguished Alumni Award. In 2007, Mr. Curb received his star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame. Mr. Curb has also endowed the Mike Curb College of Arts, Media and Communication and the Valley Performing Arts Center at Cal State Northridge. Mr. Curb resides in Nashville, Tennessee.



**Debra Farar (English '75, Early Childhood Education MA '87)** was appointed to the Board of Trustees of the California State University system in 1999 by Governor Gray Davis and was reappointed by Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger in 2006. Dr. Farar served as chair of the board from 2002 to 2004. Prior to joining the board in 1999, she was a senior advisor on education policy in the office of then-Lieutenant Governor Davis. Dr. Farar taught elementary school, made community service contributions to public schools in the Los Angeles area and continues to provide services as an educational consultant. She currently serves on higher education boards and is very active in national and state politics. She received a CSUN Distinguished Alumni Award in 2009. She resides in Pacific Palisades.



**Larry R. Feldman (Business '66)**, a litigation partner in the national law firm Kaye Scholer LLP, has been recognized as one of the top ten commercial litigators in the nation. He is an elected member of the prestigious American College of Trial Lawyers as well as the International Academy of Trial Lawyers. He received a CSUN Distinguished Alumni Award in 2005. Mr. Feldman's wife is also a CSUN alumna. They reside in Pacific Palisades.



**David Fleming (Hon. D. '09)** is of counsel in the Los Angeles-based national law firm of Latham and Watkins LLP. He has practiced law in Southern California and the San Fernando Valley for more than 50 years. Mr. Fleming is widely recognized as one of the primary civic leaders of the region, having served on many boards and commissions, including the California Community Foundation and the CSUN Foundation boards. He is also a founder of both the Economic Alliance of the San Fernando Valley and the LA Business Federation.

Mr. Fleming resides in Studio City.



**William C. Griffeth (Journalism '80)** is a prominent business journalist. A long-standing anchor at Financial News Network (FNN) and then CNBC, Mr. Griffeth is considered one of the founders of broadcast business and financial journalism. Mr. Griffeth is also an author of three books whose topics range from business to religion. In 2000, he received CSUN's Distinguished Alumni Award, and he joined the CSUN Foundation Board of Directors in 2009. Mrs. Griffeth is also a CSUN alumna. The Griffeths reside in Park Ridge, New Jersey.



**Bill Imada (Human Resource Management '84)** is chairman and CEO of IW Group Inc., one of the leading advertising and public relations agencies in the country focused on the Asian-American market. Mr. Imada serves on the boards of several professional and civic organizations, including the Advertising Educational Foundation, Asian Business Association, Asian and Pacific Islander American Health Forum, Center for Asian American Media, and the Eli and Edythe Broad Stage. He resides in Los Angeles.



**Michael Kramer (Finance '90)** is a partner in Perella Weinberg Partners, a privately owned financial services firm that provides corporate advisory and asset management services to clients worldwide. His career began at Houlihan Lokey Howard & Zukin in Los Angeles (and after 1994, New York) and has included time at Greenhill and Co. (2001-04) and his own firm Kramer Capital (2005-06), which was subsequently sold to Perella Weinberg Partners in 2007.

Mr. Kramer specializes in restructurings, financing and mergers and acquisition-related transactions for corporations, government agencies and other parties in interest. In addition to his advisory relationships, he has served on several public and private company boards, such



as Trump Entertainment, US Power Generating Company, Unity Media GmbH and Pacific Crossing, among others. At CSUN, he was president of the Alpha Kappa Psi fraternity. His father, mother and sister are also CSUN alumni. Mr. Kramer resides in New Canaan, Connecticut.



**Lauren B. Leichtman (Psychology '72)** is CEO of Levine Leichtman Capital Partners, a private investment firm that manages more than \$5 billion in institutional investment capital. Mrs. Leichtman is also president of the Lauren B. Leichtman and Arthur E. Levine Family Foundation. She actively supports community and educational organizations throughout the Los Angeles area. Ms. Leichtman is a member of the board of directors of the LA Opera, the Wallis Annenberg Center for the Performing Arts and Southwestern Law School. She was recognized with the CSUN Distinguished Alumni Award in 2010. She resides in Beverly Hills.



in Los Angeles.

**Philip S. Magaram (Hon. D. '03)** is a partner in the Century City law firm Valensi Rose LLC. He is a long-standing member and former board chair of the CSUN Foundation, and also serves on the boards of the Joseph Drown Foundation and the Southern California Arthritis Foundation. Mr. Magaram was instrumental in founding the Marilyn Magaram Center in Food Science, Nutrition and Dietetics, which continues the work of his late first wife Marilyn, who was an alumna and member of the CSUN faculty. Mr. Magaram resides



in 2002. Mrs. Noski is also a CSUN alumna. The Noskis reside in Palos Verdes Estates.

**Charles Noski (Business Administration '73, Accounting MS '95, Hon. D. '07)** is the vice chair and former CFO of Bank of America and a board member of Microsoft Corporation. He is former vice chair of the board of AT&T, CFO of Northrop Grumman Corporation and COO of Hughes Electronics Corporation. Mr. Noski served on the board of the CSUN Foundation for over a decade, beginning in 1995. He received the University's Distinguished Alumni Award



Distinguished Alumni Award recipient in 2008. She resides in Washington, D.C.

**Adriana Ocampo Uria (Geology MS '97)** is science project manager at NASA's Science Mission Directorate, responsible for the Juno mission to Jupiter (with a \$1 billion budget) and the Venus Exploration Analysis group, which develops strategic plans and recommendations for the investigation of this planet. Born in Columbia and raised in Argentina, she has lived in the United States for more than 30 years. In 2007, she moved to the Netherlands to complete her Ph.D. at Vrije Universiteit, Amsterdam. Ms. Ocampo was a CSUN





**Robert D. Taylor (Engineering '82)** is a founding partner of Centinela Capital Partners LLC, an alternative investment firm that provides discretionary investment management services to select institutional investors. Previously Mr. Taylor was a founding partner of Blue Capital, a middle-market private equity firm, and partner in McKinsey and Company. He is currently senior vice chairman of the National Urban League and serves or has served on the boards of the Los Angeles Urban League, California Science Center, Stanford Graduate School of Business Management, and Stanford Law School Board of Visitors. Mrs. Taylor is also a CSUN alumna. The Taylors reside in Los Angeles.



**Irving Zakheim (Physical Education '72)** is founder and CEO of Zak Designs, a Spokane-based supplier of children's lunch kits, dinnerware, travel ware, and tabletop and kitchen products. He owns the Spokane RiverHawks, a collegiate summer league baseball team. He is the winner of the SBA Small Business Person of the Year award in the state of Washington. At Cal State Northridge, he played on the 1970 NCAA College World Series Championship baseball team for which he was inducted into the CSUN Athletics Hall of Fame. Following graduation, he played professional baseball in the minor leagues for the Chicago White Sox organization. Mr. Zakheim was a CSUN Distinguished Alumni Award recipient in 2011. He resides in Spokane, Washington.

California State University, Northridge  
Consolidated Operations--Revenue Sources  
Fiscal Years 2007-08 through 2009-10

(Amounts taken from audited financial statements)

	2007 -2008		2008 -2009		2009 -2010	
	Revenue	Percent	Revenue	Percent	Revenue	Percent
Student fees:						
Registration--matriculated students (a)	130,973,836		145,407,173		176,187,694	
Registration--continuing education students	12,519,852		14,204,924		14,892,868	
Health facilities	227,926		234,811		210,345	
Student government	7,225,200		7,496,831		7,337,271	
Student union	6,729,001		7,331,847		7,477,928	
Subtotal	157,675,815	36.46%	174,675,586	44.62%	206,106,106	46.16%
Campus enterprise operations:						
Housing	14,901,194		15,777,935		16,767,786	
Parking	9,082,940		9,710,153		9,884,271	
Other operations	10,027,951		11,167,307		14,570,287	
Subtotal	34,012,085	7.86%	36,655,395	9.36%	41,222,344	9.23%
Auxiliaries:						
CSUN Foundation	10,356,271		5,576,525		13,526,180	
The University Corporation	31,985,407		32,571,131		33,173,815	
Subtotal	42,341,678	9.79%	38,147,656	9.74%	46,699,995	10.46%
Total campus-based revenue sources	234,029,578	54.11%	249,478,637	63.73%	294,028,445	65.86%
State resources:						
Lottery	2,628,040		2,736,712		2,566,389	
State appropriation (non-capital)	195,832,161		139,275,832		149,870,236	
Total State resources	198,460,201	45.89%	142,012,544	36.27%	152,436,625	34.14%
Total resources	432,489,779		391,491,181		446,465,070	

(a) Discounted for State University Grant set aside

Appendix C



## Volunteers on Campus-wide and College Boards With Some External Relations Responsibility

