

TV News Anchor and Music Alum to Address Grads

More than 10,300 Graduates Eligible to Receive Degree at Commencement

Television news anchor Rick Garcia, Los Angeles City Controller Wendy Greuel, entertainment executive Jim Berk '81 (Music) and JPL engineer Michael Gross '96, MS '08 (Electrical Engineering) are among the dignitaries who will address Cal State Northridge students when they graduate later this month.

An estimated 10,319 students—about 8,543 bachelor's and 1,776 master's degree candidates in a total of 64 fields—are eligible to take part in the ceremonies scheduled to begin the evening of Monday, May 23.

"Commencement is a moment to savor achievement and the transformative power of a college education," said Cal State Northridge President Jolene Koester. "The proud faces of our newest graduates—and those of their families, friends and the university's faculty and staff who have helped them along the way—remind me and the rest of us who



Jim Berk

work at California State University, Northridge of the importance of what we do in providing opportunities and a bright future for our students."

The graduation celebration begins

"Commencement is a moment to savor achievement and the transformative power of a college education."

—President Jolene Koester

2,000 graduating students have been invited to participate.

Garcia will serve as this year's convocation speaker. He attended CSUN in the early 1980s and is an Emmy-winning television news anchor for Los Angeles station KCAL Channel 9. In 2008, Garcia received the National Hispanic Media Coalition's Excellence in Broadcast Journalism award. He also has been honored by the Minorities in Broadcasting Training Program with a Striving for Excellence Award that recognized his career achievements and community contributions.

The formal commencement ceremonies are as follows:

- Students in the Mike Curb College of Arts, Media, and Communication will celebrate their graduation beginning at 8 a.m. on Tuesday, May 24, on the lawn in front of the Oviatt Library.

2011 Commencement *continued on page 3.*

Presidential Scholars Culminate Yearlong Projects

Diverse Group Given Opportunity to Work with Faculty Mentor

Five accomplished Cal State Northridge undergraduates who each had the opportunity to work closely with a faculty mentor were honored at the annual Northridge Scholars Program exhibit on Wednesday, April 20 at the Orange Grove Bistro.

The 2010–2011 Presidential Scholars presented poster summaries of their yearlong research projects to President Jolene Koester, the university vice presidents and deans.

Benjamin Sherman, a junior majoring in physics with an astrophysics

option, presented his project "Methane under High Pressure" with faculty mentor Dayanthie Weeraratne; Sofia Radillo, a graduating senior majoring in biology, presented "Cell Cycle Regulated Cyclopropane Fatty Acid Synthases in *Caulobacter Crescentus*" with faculty mentor Sean Murray; Lisseth Ochoa, a junior majoring in communication studies and political science with an emphasis in government and politics, presented "A Pedagogy for Change" with faculty mentor Renee Moreno; Robert Haughton, a

senior majoring in cell and molecular biology, presented "Recognition of DNA Damage" with faculty mentor Paula Fischhaber; and Cynthia Urena, a senior majoring in nursing, presented "CSUN BSN History: A Window to the Future" with faculty mentor Martha Highfield.

The Presidential Scholars for 2011–2012 will be Lindsey Acosta, Caitlin Negrete, Andrew Duhancioglu and Benjamin Sherman, who has been selected again.

This year's students received a

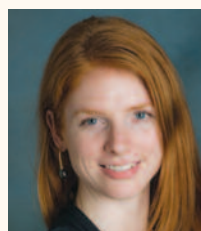
\$5,000 scholarship, text book discount at the Matador Bookstore, priority registration for classes, recognition at the President's fall Convocation, a recognition reception at the University House with President Koester and the opportunity to work closely with faculty on a scholarly project.

For more information about the Presidential Scholars program, visit <http://www.csun.edu/finaid/presidential-scholars.html>. ■

—Arman Sadri



The 2010–2011 Presidential Scholars were honored on April 20 for completion of a yearlong project with a faculty mentor. The scholars shared poster presentations of their research at the event. From left: Robert Haughton, Lisseth Ochoa, President Jolene Koester, Sofia Radillo, Cynthia Urena and Benjamin Sherman.



Community Connection

By Brittany McCarthy, Director of Government & Community Relations

Do you have ideas, concerns or observations about the university or the community? We need your input. We want to hear from you!

This initiative is part of California State University, Northridge's efforts to strengthen neighbor and community relations. The Office of Government and Community

Relations has developed a survey and will host a series of focus groups to assess the campus' neighbor relations and determine areas of strength and areas for improvement.

Please take the short survey. It shouldn't take more than five to *Community Connection continued on page 3.*

Wolfson Scholar Gained Confidence and Direction at CSUN

August Samie Among Outstanding Seniors to Receive Awards at CSUN Honors Convocation

When August Samie started at Cal State Northridge, he was shy and introverted. He was struggling to sync his culture, religion, sexual identity and his career goals.

Today, the 22-year-old English major is a confident student leader who embraces the layers of his life as a gay Muslim and inspires others to give back in their own unique way. That's one of the reasons Samie has been selected as the 2011 California State University, Northridge Wolfson Scholar.

"I think being here (CSUN) has really helped me come into myself," Samie said. "I've learned to express myself and be comfortable with who I am."

He will be among several students recognized during the university's Honors Convocation ceremony at 6 p.m. on Monday, May 23. He is one of CSUN's outstanding graduating seniors. The award is presented each year in memory of Cal State Northridge's first vice president, Leo Wolfson. Not only must the student have an exceptional academic record, but he or she must have made significant contributions to CSUN or to the community through co-curricular and extra-curricular activities.

Samie has a 3.99 GPA and is an English major with a double-option in literature and creative writing. This means that he has received all A's—with the exception of one solitary A-minus—and will be graduated Summa Cum Laude. But Samie has not always demonstrated his academic abilities. The Valley native left Granada Hills Charter High School in the 10th grade because of failing grades and poor attendance. He ended up in an independent study program and eventually enrolled at Los Angeles Pierce College where he earned an associate's degree.

Since arriving at Cal State Northridge in 2008, Samie has been studious but also committed to community service.

He is president of Sigma Tau Delta International English Honors Society. His activities with the society have allowed him the opportunity to coordinate academic conferences—as well as present at 10 conferences. As president of Sigma Tau Delta, he is "bridging the academic gap" in helping to create the Lesbian Gay Bisexual Transgender Resource Center at CSUN. He has served as a supplemental instruction leader for two years, a position which he says greatly benefitted his own writing. He has volunteered as a tutor at Our Lady of Guadalupe in Canoga Park. While at CSUN, Samie decided to learn a new language and began work in the Russian Language Immersion Program, allowing him to study abroad this summer at the Russian State University for the Humanities in Moscow.

"His commitment to campus activities extends beyond his own personal interests into forming alliances with other student organizations and supporting other student events," wrote Martin Pousson, an assistant professor in the English department in his



August Samie

recommendation letter for the award.

Accepted by a number of universities for advanced study, Samie has decided to accept a full scholarship to attend the University of Chicago in the fall, working on his master's in Middle Eastern studies. He is already fluent in Persian and Russian but also plans to study Arabic, Uzbek and French. His long term goals include earning a doctorate in comparative literature and eventually teaching at a university.

"Everything I've learned has been here at CSUN," Samie said. "The courses have been challenging and my professors have supported me and allowed me to explore my ideas."

Other students recognized during Honors Convocation include: 2011 Outstanding Graduating Senior Award Winners:

Jodi Bonassi, of Canoga Park, is a fine art major who has attained a 3.91 GPA. Bonassi is an accomplished artist who has created a career based upon juried art and invitational exhibitions. She has successfully balanced academic excellence while working as a student art assistant, judge for elementary and middle school exhibits, president of the Painting Guild and university scholar teaching at high schools. Bonassi's achievements include the Delta Alpha Pi International Honor Society (2008–present), University Scholars Award (2008–2010), Dean's Outstanding Senior Student Award (2010), Hans Burkhardt Memorial Scholarship (2010), and Best in Show at the Annual Juried Student Art Exhibition (2011). In spite of her dyslexia, Bonassi has become an accomplished scholar and established herself as an Outstanding Graduating Senior. Bonassi will continue to maintain a private art practice as well as pursuing community art projects.

Tissyana Camacho of Canoga Park is a psychology major who has maintained a 3.38 GPA. Camacho made the Dean's List during several times and was awarded a scholarship by the National Institute of Mental Health – Career Opportunities in Research, a

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program that helps underrepresented individuals get into a doctoral program. Camacho has also received the Northridge Achievement Award for academic excellence for the 2010-11 academic year and the Judge Julian Beck Award for graduating seniors by the Psychology Department. In addition, she has been recognized by the Society for Research in Child Development and was named a 2011 SRCD Millennium Scholar. During her time at Cal State Northridge, Camacho has worked as an undergraduate research assistant with professor Gabriela Chavira, served as an undergraduate psychology peer mentor and, among her off-campus endeavors, completed a research internship at Chrysalis, a Pacoima-based nonprofit agency that assists the economically disadvantaged and homeless, and has volunteered as an athletic coach at recreation centers. She has been accepted into a doctoral program in psychology at the University of Michigan. Her goal is to become a university professor.

Lyudmila Gogolushko, of Northridge, is a recreation and tourism management major who has achieved a 3.93 GPA. Gogolushko has overcome many obstacles but has achieved great success. She emigrated from Russia to the United States when she was 7-years-old. She was diagnosed with spinal muscular atrophy, a progressive neurological disease, when she was 9. She now uses a wheelchair. None of that has stopped her involvement on- and off-campus. Her activities have included serving on the Residential Housing Association and Student Allocation Committee as well as being decorations leader for the Clubs and Organizations Awards Ceremony in 2008. She has been a resident advisor and organized the spirit kick-off celebration to promote the International Technology and Persons with Disabilities Conference. Her other activities include taking part in an Associated Students' recreation internship and creating a disabilities-etiquette training course for the ushers at the Valley Performing Arts Center. Outside of campus, she

has volunteered with the Vintage Hills Planned Community Association and the Muscular Dystrophy Association. She has been accepted into a master's program in communications at Cal State Northridge. Her goal is to become an event planner and inspirational speaker.

Lauren Michaels, of Northridge, is a marine biology major who has achieved a 3.88 GPA. Although serving as a member of Cal State Northridge's varsity women's track and field team is challenging, Michaels has not allowed it to interfere with her academic success or involvement in the community. She has been a member of the varsity women's track and field team for five years, helping win four Big West Conference titles from 2007 to 2010, and one indoor title in the Western Athletic Conferences in 2007. Since 2007, Michaels has tutored math and sciences and mentored student-athletes. She is a member of Phi Delta Epsilon, a co-ed international medical fraternity, and has served as historian committee chair. Her passion for the marine sciences has led to her working more than 300 hours as an unpaid intern at the California Wildlife Center in Calabasas during summer 2010, where her tasks included marine wildlife rescue, database management and tissue sample collection and preparation. With Phi Delta Epsilon, Michaels has helped raise money for AIDS and cancer research and assistance. She also has volunteered in the emergency department at Tempe St. Luke's Hospital and a pediatric therapy facility in Tempe, Ariz. Her goal is to become a veterinarian.

Outstanding Graduating Veteran Award Winner:

James Allison, of Valencia, is a recreation and tourism management major who has achieved a 3.49 GPA. He was born to a teenage mother and suffered with a brain and respiratory condition which caused him to stop breathing. As a teenager, Allison struggled in school and decided to join the U.S. Marine Corps. He completed three combat tours to Iraq. He sustained an injury during his third tour and was transferred back to the United States, where he underwent multiple surgeries and extensive physical therapy. He is a Purple Heart recipient and was awarded a certificate of commendation, the Good Conduct Service Medal and the National Defense Medal. After receiving his honorable discharge, he enrolled in college, transferred to CSUN and became involved in a variety of activities. He coordinated events for students and veterans in the San Fernando Valley and worked as a teaching assistant. He was president of the Recreation Management Association and received the prestigious Department Chair's Award for his contributions to the Department of Recreation and Tourism Management. He also volunteers for the city of Santa Clarita and the Veteran Administration Hospital in the hospice area. ■

—Shanté Morgan

Former Foster Care Youth Applauds CSUN's Resilient Scholars

EOP Program Offers Support to Emancipated Foster Youth

Demontray "Dee" Hankins was placed in foster care when he was a two-month old baby. He had lived in 12 different homes by the time he turned 12-years-old. Some thought he was a lost cause. However, when Hankins was a junior in high school, he received a call from an organization offering him a college scholarship. That changed his life.

"I was going down a negative path. I was a bad kid," Hankins recalled.

He credits the persistence of the counselor at the agency that offered him the college scholarship for helping to save his life. Hankins completely funded his education at Cal State Long Beach with scholarships he found through research and assistance from others.

"That simple, simple thing changed my whole life in that instant," said Hankins, who initially ignored the counselor who contacted him but complied because of her persistence and genuine concern.

Hankins spoke as part of the Educational Opportunity Program's Resilient Scholars Program first campus-wide event. The program was established at California State University, Northridge in 2009 to assist emancipated foster care youth in navigating and finding resources to attend college. The 23-year-old Cal State Long Beach graduate talked about the importance of programs



Demontray "Dee" Hankins speaks during the EOP's Resilient Scholars Program.

like the Resilient Scholars in helping students get an education.

He is one of about 4,000 California youth who exit the foster care system annually when they turn 18, according to the Children's Advocacy Institute, a foster care youth advocacy organization supported by the University of San Diego School of Law. The institute has found that only about 20 percent "emancipated" foster youth who finish high school pursue higher education and only 1 to 3 percent

will receive a college degree.

The Children's Advocacy Institute has also found that about 65 percent of foster youth have no place to live once they age out of the system at 18, and approximately 51 percent are unemployed. Foster care youth advocates say these statistics pose serious challenges when it comes to attending a university, financially as well as emotionally.

"The EOP Resilient Scholars Program seeks to change that trend

at CSU Northridge," said Jose Luis Vargas, director of Cal State Northridge EOP. He said universities that do not have programs like the Resilient Scholars Program see a trend of less than 1 percent of foster youth continuing their educations. Northridge is one of 12 CSU campuses to provide support services to former foster care youth.

According to data provided by CSUN's Office of Institutional Research, as of fall 2010, there were 151 former foster care youth enrolled at CSUN, of which 40.4 percent were in EOP. This, however, only reflects the number of former foster youth who reported that status on the university enrollment application, Vargas said. There are still many more former foster care students on campus that can benefit from the services provided through the program, he added.

Vargas said there are very few financial resources available to former foster care youth. The federal John H. Chafee Foster Care Independence Program offers some financial support to assist with the transition from foster care to independent living. The Educational Opportunity Program is also trying to bridge the gap.

For more information about the Resilient Scholars Program, contact Jina Gonzalez, (818) 677-4151 or jina.gonzalez@csun.edu. ■

—Angela Browne

Future of Higher Education...

Continued from page 1.

Entertainment executive, educator, philanthropist and Northridge alumnus Jim Berk will receive an honorary doctorate of fine arts during the ceremony. Berk, who received his bachelor's in music from CSUN in 1981, is CEO of Participant Media, the company responsible for such socially relevant films as "An Inconvenient Truth" and "Waiting for Superman." He began his career as an educator. He was recognized by the university in 2007 as a Distinguished Alumni.

□ **The College of Science and Mathematics'** graduation ceremony is scheduled to begin at 3:30 p.m. on Tuesday, May 24, on the lawn

south of Manzanita Hall near the southwest corner of campus near Nordhoff Street east of Etiwanda Avenue.

□ **The College of Health and Human Development** will celebrate its students' graduation at 6:30 p.m. on Tuesday, May 24, on the Oviatt Library Lawn.

□ **The College of Social and Behavioral Sciences'** graduation ceremony is scheduled to begin at 8 a.m. on Wednesday, May 25, on the Oviatt Library Lawn.

□ Electrical engineering alumnus Michael Gross will address the graduates during the College of

Engineering and Computer Sciences' ceremony, which will take place at 3:30 p.m. on Wednesday, May 25, on Manzanita Hall Lawn.

Gross, who earned a bachelor's degree from CSUN in 1996 and a master's degree from the university in 2008, is the manager of the power and sensor systems section of the Jet Propulsion Laboratory at the California Institute of Technology.

□ Los Angeles City Controller Wendy Greuel will address **the College of Humanities'** graduates during their ceremony scheduled to begin at 6:30 p.m. on Wednesday, May 25, on the Oviatt Library Lawn.

Greuel served as a member of the Los Angeles City Council

representing portions of the San Fernando Valley from 2002 to 2009, when she was elected Los Angeles City Controller. As controller, Greuel monitors spending by city officials and identifies and eliminates wasteful spending.

□ **The College of Business and Economics** will celebrate its students' graduation at 8 a.m. on Thursday, May 26, on the Oviatt Library Lawn.

□ Students of **the Michael D. Eisner College of Education** will celebrate their graduation at 6:30 p.m. on Thursday, May 26, on the Oviatt Library Lawn. ■

—Shanté Morgan

Community Connection...

Continued from page 1.

10 minutes of your time. If you participate, you will be eligible to win a \$50 gift card to use at any of the 22 campus food locations!

The survey is available online for your convenience. To access the survey, please visit <http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/csunnighbors>

In addition, six focus groups are being planned, including one for each Neighborhood Council in Northridge. Refreshments will be provided and you will be eligible to win a \$50 gift card to campus food locations.

For ease and efficiency, we've scheduled the focus groups with the Neighborhood Councils to take place immediately before their regularly scheduled monthly meetings:

□ Northridge East Neighborhood Council will take place on Wednesday, May 18 at 5:30 p.m., Orange Grove Bistro on the California State University, Northridge campus.

□ Northridge South Neighborhood Council, Thursday, May 26 at 5:30 p.m., Northridge Middle School, 17960 Chase St., Northridge.

□ Northridge West Neighborhood Council, Thursday, June 14 at 5:30 p.m., Beckford Elementary School, 19130 Tulsa St., Northridge.

To sign up for a focus group, please call (818) 677-2123 or send an email to communityrelations@csun.edu with your name and the date of the focus group you'd like to attend.

If you can't attend any of the above dates but are interested in us arranging a focus group on a different date, please send an email to communityrelations@csun.edu. Please include your name and that

you are interested in participating in a focus group. If you have any questions about this project, please call Brittny McCarthy, director of government and community relations, at (818) 677-2123.

The Office of Government and Community Relations now publishes a semi-monthly e-newsletter for community leaders, area business owners and neighbors of Cal State Northridge. If you would like to receive the e-newsletter, please send an email to communityrelations@csun.edu. ■

Distinguished Alumni Honorees Thank CSUN for Start



Photo by Lee Choo



Photo by Lee Choo



Photo by Lee Choo



Photo by Melissa Kneeland



Photo by Melissa Kneeland

1. From left: Alumni Association President Tammy Tolgo MBA '02, past honoree Adriana Ocampo Uria '97 (Geology), new honoree Don Hahn '75 (Music), past honoree Grant Ashley '78 (Accounting), new honoree Carol Vaness MA '76 (Music), Hon. DFA '98, past honoree Linda Lingle '75 (Journalism), past honoree Irene Tovar '69 (Sociology), President Jolene Koester, past honoree Bob Hiegert '64, MA '68 (Physical Education), new honoree Irv Zakheim '71 (Physical Education), past honoree Dan Chernow '67 (History), MA '89 (Education), MA '03 (History), past honoree Joe Buttitta '64 (Journalism), past honoree Bob Myman '67 (Political Science) and Bill Griffith '80 (Journalism).

2. The campus community congregates at the event.

3. From left: Lauren McAllen '13 (Deaf Studies), past honoree Grant Ashley '78 (Accounting), Linda Ashley and Sydni Powell '13 (Psychology). Photo by Melissa Kneeland.

4. From left: past honoree Irene Tovar '69 (Sociology), Vanessa Bustamante '11 (Communication Studies), Ryan Roope '13 (Cinema and Television Arts), Sigourney Nunez '11 (Journalism), Bill Griffith '80 (Journalism), Janet Mazzuto and athletics director Rick Mazzuto.

5. CNBC commentator and master of ceremonies Bill Griffith '80 (Journalism) greets the crowd at the annual Distinguished Alumni Awards on April 16 at the Four Seasons Hotel in Westlake Village.

Award-winning producer Don Hahn '75 (Music) proved dreams do come true; celebrated opera singer Carol Vaness MA '76 (Music), Hon. D '98 (Fine Arts) received rave reviews; and successful entrepreneur and business executive Irv Zakheim '71 (Physical Education) proved teamwork pays on April 16 as the newest recipients of Cal State Northridge's Distinguished Alumni Awards.

Each honored alumni thanked California State University, Northridge for giving them a start on the journey

to a successful career. Hahn said Northridge was the place that "welcomed" him even though he was "dangerously introverted." Vaness credited an emeritus music professor with honing her talent. Zakheim said being a member of the Matador's 1970 NCAA national champion baseball team changed his life.

"There are many ways to measure what a great university is but surely one of the most important ways to judge the significance of the university is to consider its alumni and their

impact on their professions, on their communities and on the world," said President Koester. "Through tonight's honorees...we have the very best of California State University, Northridge."

President Koester, CNBC commentator and master of ceremonies Bill Griffith '80 (Journalism), and Alumni Association President Tammy Tolgo '02 MBA presented the awards to the honorees before an audience of nearly 400 guests at the Four Seasons Hotel in Westlake Village, Calif.

Tolgo welcomed guests on behalf

of the nearly 12,000 Cal State Northridge Alumni Association members. She expressed the university's and Alumni Association's appreciation to the event's Sponsors: Northern Trust, Zak! Designs, Liberty Mutual, Capital One and Debbie and Milt Valera '68 (Journalism).

For more information about the honorees, visit <http://blogs.csun.edu/atcsun/news/trio-of-accomplished-alumni-to-be-honored-at-event/>.

—Shanté Morgan

Officials Predict Future of CSU to Change Drastically

Predicting that California's public higher education system will be drastically different 50 years from now, top CSU officials and a state elected leader told Cal State Northridge faculty, staff and students to prepare for change and let local and national elected officials know how important the CSU system is to the future of the state.

"What you need to do is ask California to reinvest in public higher education," said CSU Chancellor Charles Reed to the audience that attended the "CSU: The Next Fifty Years," a conference on April 22 at California State University, Northridge aimed at opening a dialogue among stakeholders on what higher education might become in the 21st century.

Reed encouraged attendees, particularly students, to write and visit the offices of Gov. Jerry Brown and other local and national elected officials to express their concerns about cuts to education and increased fees.

State Sen. Alex Padilla (D-Pacoima) said "dialogue" was important in finding solutions. He encouraged the campus to continue to dialogue with each other and elected officials.

The CSU: The Next Fifty Years conference was the second in a three-part series organized by the Committee on the Future of Higher Education, a group that includes CSUN faculty, staff, students and administrators. The event was opened by a welcome from Faculty President Steven Stepanek who provided a brief history of California's Master Plan for Higher Education, which was originally adopted in 1960. The plan set up a system for postsecondary education which defined specific roles for the already-existing University of California (UC), the California State College (CSC) system of senior colleges, now California State University (CSU), and the California Community Colleges system (CCC). The plan was originally enacted as the Donahoe Higher Education Act of 1960. The plan laid out that the top 12.5 percent (one-eighth) of graduating high school seniors would be guaranteed a place at one of the University of California campuses; the top third would be able to enter the California State University; and that the community colleges would accept all applications.

However, President Koester said California's ability to fulfill the master plan has been "severely compromised" because of a number of factors, particularly the state's financial problems. She said the CSU system will have to

change to adapt to changes in the financing of public higher education, the public's expectations about higher education and accountability, the use of technology, and student's need for a new pedagogy and curriculum.

She urged all stakeholders to respond to these changes with "civility and dialogue."

In addition to the addresses by Reed and Padilla, the day included protests by the Students for a Quality Education. About a dozen students stood in silence as Chancellor Reed delivered his keynote address. Outside of the conference room, dozens of students marched and chanted slogans like, "The Students United Will Never Be Defeated."

After the morning session, Reed agreed to meet with students privately to answer questions. Students questioned him on a range of topics

"What you need to do is ask California to reinvest in public higher education."

—Charles Reed,
CSU Chancellor

including whether he would endorse the use of alternative tax revenue sources and changes to the selection of representatives on the CSU Board of Trustees.

Reed said he does not have any power or authority to raise taxes nor change the structure of the board of trustees.

The day concluded with four panel discussions that included several CSU and other education leaders. The panels included discussions about the CSU and Community Colleges, Funding Models for the CSU, Serving Students, Serving the State, and Instruction, Technology and the CSU.

Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs Harry Hellenbrand summed up the day by saying California needs another model for education and society needs to prepare for change.

"We need to be more cooperative among our silos. We have to work regionally across institutions," Hellenbrand said.

"We simply must get the job done," he said. ■

—Shanté Morgan



1. From left: Sen. Alex Padilla, CSU Chancellor Charles Reed and Faculty Senate President Steven Stepanek.

2. Students stand in silence as Chancellor Charles Reed delivers his keynote address at the "CSU: The Next Fifty Years" lecture, as part of the day's protests by Students for a Quality Education.

3. Faculty and staff listen to a panel discussion about "P-12, Community Colleges and the CSU" at the University Club after the morning keynote address.

4. Judy Heiman, principal fiscal and policy analyst in the California Legislative Analyst's Office, was one of four panelists who participated in a discussion of "Funding Models for the CSU" during a breakout session in the afternoon.

Social Work Major Receives Top Graduate Student Award

Terriel Cox Plans to Use Her Education to Help Other Foster Care Youth

Terriel Cox lived in 11 different foster care homes and attended five different elementary schools by the time she was 11-years-old. Her father was not in her life and her mother was an alcoholic who struggled with substance abuse.

The native of San Diego said she could have been one of the hundreds of youth in California's foster care system that never go to college but a social worker changed her life. When Cox arrived at California State University, Northridge in 1998, she began a mission to help young people like herself who have been raised in the foster care system.

That's why the 30-year-old will graduate this month with a master's in social work and be honored with the prestigious Nathan O. Freedman Memorial Award for Outstanding Graduate Student. She will be among several students recognized during the university's Honors Convocation ceremony at 6 p.m. on Monday, May 23. The award is presented to a CSUN graduate student who shows the best record of distinguished scholarship, has a minimum GPA of 3.5, and has made significant contributions to their field of study.

Cox has a 3.83 GPA. She earned her bachelor's degree in communications at Cal State Northridge in 2003.

"My goal is to be a support and provide those aftercare services to foster care youth when they are emancipated," Cox said. "I want to let them know that they too can achieve their dreams."

Cox credits much of her success to CSUN's Educational Opportunity Program. She was a "special admit" student and attended the Summer Bridge transitional program the summer before starting college in 1998. She said the staff in EOP supported her "emotionally and academically." She has served in



Terriel Cox

several leadership positions on campus and in the community. She was a resident advisor and received the Resident Advisor of the Year award, the University Village Apartments Team Leader Award and Best Mentor Award. She has helped pilot Northridge's EOP Resilient Scholars Program, which provides support and assistance to college students who have been emancipated from the foster care system.

"California State University, Northridge has taught me that I can be an agent of change, and I can make a difference," said Cox, who upon graduation, will work for the Los Angeles County Department of Children and Family Services as a social worker.

Cox is among several graduate students who received prestigious awards this year. Four graduate students have been selected to receive the Association of Retired Faculty Memorial Award. The award recognizes and provides financial

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—Terriel Cox

support to graduate students for excellent scholarship and creative activity. The award will support a project that is part of a master's program. The determining factors for the award are based on a record of distinguished scholarship, a minimum GPA of 3.5, and contributions to the field.

The 2011 ARF Memorial Award recipients are:

Ralph D'Ignazio, a music major with a 3.88 GPA. For his project, "A New Endeavor in Acoustical Instruments: Handmade Instruments of Various Metals," D'Ignazio will create acoustic instruments that incorporate various metals to produce original sounds for use in his own compositions. He seeks to introduce new instruments and sounds to the field of music. His faculty supervisor is Liviu Marinescu. D'Ignazio has extensive experience in musical performance, composition and metalworking.

Paul Laverack, a journalism major with a 4.0 GPA. His project, "Nothing to Lose but Their Chains: A Thesis Project in Journalism," is a feature-length documentary that follows the efforts of university food service workers who do not work at CSUN, to be represented by a major Los Angeles labor union. His faculty supervisor is Jose Luis Benavides. Laverack has a master's degree in screenwriting and has produced a 40-minute documentary and multiple short films pertaining to union activities and student activism.

Alissa Luken, a biological science major with a 3.84 GPA. Her project, titled "Testing the Physiological Consequences of Evolution in Reverse: Do Day-active Geckos Return to Performance Levels of Typical Lizards?," entails the study of a certain species of gecko that have exhibited what is called "evolutionary reversal," or the evolution of a trait to an ancestral form. Her faculty supervisor is Robert Espinoza. Luken's work will significantly impact her field because so little work has been done on this evolutionary biology phenomenon.

Esther Villegas-Sandoval, a sociology major with a 3.9 GPA. In her project, "Waking Up to Broken Dreams: Undocumented Students in Post-Secondary Education," Villegas-Sandoval studies the effects of being an undocumented immigrant on obtaining post-secondary education. She will defend her thesis in August of 2011. Her faculty supervisor is David Boyns. There is little study of undocumented immigrant students and Villegas-Sandoval's research will contribute to the discipline's understanding of this group and serve to inform the general public of the issues. ■

—Shanté Morgan

Professor Wins at 11th Annual Beverly Hills Film Festival

Quinn Saunders Receives Best Producer Award

"Who is Cherry?" People found out at the 11th Annual International Beverly Hills Film Festival when the film "Cherry" and its producer, Cal State Northridge assistant professor Quinn Saunders, received the "Best-Producer" award.

"Having 'Cherry' win this award at the Beverly Hills Film Festival was a great experience," said Saunders. "It always feels good to believe that your work has impacted people, and because the jury was composed of so many successful people from the entertainment industry, it was even more gratifying."

The film is about the sweet and sensitive Brian Cherry who falls for the beautiful, electric and damaged Jules, who turns his ideas about women and sex upside-down. "Cherry" is a hipster "Sex, Lies and Videotape," a suspense/drama about misogyny

and male impotence. "Cherry" will next appear at the Charleston International Film Festival in Charleston, South Carolina on May 21.

"The best part of the festival was

"The best part of the festival was interacting with the audience and other filmmakers. They were so complimentary of our work, and it really seemed to have affected them; that made the years of work it took to put 'Cherry' together truly worthwhile."

—Quinn Saunders

work it took to put 'Cherry' together truly worthwhile."

Before becoming an assistant professor at CSUN, the award-winning director/writer/producer was an assistant professor of media production at Quinnipiac University in Connecticut and taught previously at the New York Film Academy at Universal Studios in Los Angeles.

Saunders has also directed the reality TV show "Big Brother" for CBS for the last six years, and his previous project, the short film "Fortunate Son," won five Best Short Film Awards at various film festivals, and appeared in over 20 festivals worldwide.

For more on Quinn Saunders' current film "Cherry" and to view the trailer, visit www.whoischerry.com. ■

—Sergio Sanchez

Ashley Griffith & Kristy Burkey: A Friend Helping A Friend

Sign Language Bonds Track and Field Teammates

It is indeed a small world. And fate happens everywhere.

Just ask Cal State Northridge track and field athlete Ashley Griffith and teammate Kristy Burkey.

Griffith's passion is track and field, but she was having a tough time last year as a freshman trying to become better in the high jump. Griffith, who has been deaf since birth, couldn't find somebody to help her communicate with her coaches and her fellow athletes.

"I have always loved track and field," remarked Griffith. "But it was hard at the start of the year because there was no one available to help interpret during practice. But I was able to text the coaches and I was able to read lips."

Enter Kristy Burkey, a distance runner on the Matador track and field team.

Burkey is a deaf studies major at Cal State Northridge who aspires to become an interpreter for deaf people. Though only a sophomore, Burkey has become fluent in sign language. The CSUN coaching staff and team members suggested Burkey meet Griffith to see if she could help Griffith during team meetings, at daily practices and during the track and field season that lasts several months beginning in January.

"With Kristy's knowledge of sign language, she has really helped in the day-to-day operations of the track and field program," said Don Strametz, CSUN's director of track and field. "At team meetings and at meets, Kristy is able to help interpret for Ashley. It's been a great situation for the both of them. Both of them have learned from each other. They are great friends."

Strametz first noticed the athletic talents of Griffith during a California high school state meet several years ago. Griffith decided on attending Cal State Northridge because of its reputation for supporting deaf students.

"Ashley is a person who is driven to achieve high goals," said Strametz. "It's been a challenge because she hasn't always had an interpreter to help her [during practice, team



Ashley Griffith (left) and Kristy Burkey.

*"I have always loved track and field.
But it was hard at the start of the year
because there was no one available to help
interpret during practice.
But I was able to text the coaches
and I was able to read lips."*

—Ashley Griffith

meetings and at track and field meets], especially with the type of technical language that coaches use in the [high jump]. But it's a testimony to her because she continues to make good progress in order to fulfill her dreams. She's been a great addition to the team."

Griffith's passion for track and field started in the sixth grade and has continued to grow each year. "In the eighth grade, I started to really get excited about the sport and with the opportunity to join the team," said Griffith. "That excitement has continued to grow."

Griffith's story is strikingly similar

to that of CSUN basketball player Michael Lizarraga, who like Griffith, was born deaf, grew up the Sacramento area, have sisters who are deaf, attended the California School for the Deaf in the Bay Area and continued their education and athletic careers at Cal State Northridge.

Lizarraga fulfilled his dream to play college basketball (2007–11) at CSUN. Griffith, a sophomore, is now realizing her athletic dreams, competing as a high jumper for the five-time defending Big West Conference championship women's track and field team.

"Michael is an inspiration," said

Griffith, who has attended several Matador basketball games. "When people told him he couldn't do it, he proved them wrong. He never gave up. Michael's participation in basketball proved to everybody that you can do it. He is an inspiration to help me continue my dream as a track and field athlete."

Despite her inability to hear, Griffith has competed in the sprint running events and the sprint relays in addition to the high jump and the long jump at Cal State Northridge. Although deaf, somehow Griffith has been able to "hear" a faint "pop" sound from the starter's gun at the beginning of the race. In high school, Griffith competed in the hurdles, the long jump and the sprints (200 and 400 meters).

"People have never really said no you can't compete, but they often ask me 'how can you compete if you can't hear?'" said Griffith. "I tell them I can compete. I am not going to give up."

Griffith, a kinesiology major, has two more years of collegiate eligibility after this season and she intends to improve each year.

"The high jump is really challenging," admits Griffith, who also keeps busy by being a member of the deaf sorority Alpha Sigma Theta and member of the Deaf CSUNIANS. "The techniques are really hard. But you just need to keep working hard to get higher and higher over the bar."

During the course of their relationship, Burkey and Griffith have become great friends. Burkey helps Griffith and vice versa.

"Give credit to Ashley," said Burkey, who, in addition to her skills as a distance runner, is a mentor and tutor for both Griffith and Lizarraga. "Ashley has really helped me develop my sign language skills. In team meetings, if I need help, Ashley will offer her advice. Plus, Ashley is another friend I have on the track and field team. Whenever Ashley and I get together, I introduce her to other people in hopes they can develop their sign language skills." ■

—Bob Vazquez

CSUN Student Norma Hernandez Tapped as 'Latina to Watch'

Hispanas Organized for Political Equality Bestowed the Title on Hernandez

"Latina to Watch" is a moniker that Cal State Northridge graduate student Norma Hernandez wears with pride and a little bit of nervousness.

Hispanas Organized for Political Equality bestowed the title on Hernandez recently. Hernandez was one of about a dozen Latina women who were recognized as "future history makers," young women who are expected to make a difference in the world.

"It's a lot of responsibility, but I am honored that they chose me for

recognition," said Hernandez, 25, of Palmdale, who will be graduating from Northridge this month with her master's degree in social work.

"With graduation near, I've already started the job hunt. I don't know where that is going to take me," she said. "But there is one thing I am sure of. I know that I can be successful. I've already overcome a lot of obstacles just to get my degree. I definitely want to work at something where I can make a positive impact on the Latino community."

Hernandez grew up in South Los

Angeles and is the first in her family to earn a college degree. Her mother, who emigrated from Mexico, and her father, who emigrated from Honduras, placed a priority on education as she was growing up. They celebrated every academic success that she and her four younger brothers achieved.

Despite their encouragement, Hernandez admitted she wasn't sure if she wanted to go to college. But a visit to the Cal State Northridge campus changed her mind.

"It was beautiful, and it was far enough from home that I could have

the 'college experience,'" she said, "but near enough that I could drive home when I wanted."

Hernandez, who has worked as an aide to autistic children, said she would eventually like to earn her doctorate in sociology. In the meantime, she wants to work in the mental health arena helping poor families with children with disabilities who may not be aware of the services available to help them.

"I know I can make a difference in people's lives," she said. ■

Valley Performing Arts Center's Star-Studded Season Revealed

Jazz Legend Arturo Sandoval and Actor and Author Jamie Lee Curtis Among the Season's Openers

The 2011–12 season at the Valley Performing Arts Center at Cal State Northridge will feature world-renowned artists and icons with a greater number of performances than last season.

"Building on the successful first few months of programming, this season highlights a cross-section of the world's finest musicians, dancers and speakers," said Robert Bucker, dean of the Mike Curb College of Arts, Media, and Communication and executive director of the Valley Performing Arts Center.

The new season will open with Arturo Sandoval's "Tribute to My Friend Dizzy Gillespie" and Latin music on Sept. 10. Sandoval, a protégé of iconic jazz musician Dizzy Gillespie, is an accomplished multi-instrumentalist who has won four Grammys, six Billboard awards and an Emmy. A regularly performing musician and tenured professor at Florida International University, Sandoval will bring his versatile repertoire to the Valley



Jamie Lee Curtis

Performing Arts Center's stellar fall lineup.

On Sept. 24, actor, author and speaker Jamie Lee Curtis will host a talk, "Love Wisely, Love Well." A household name, Curtis has been a prominent figure on the silver screen for nearly five decades. Next on stage



Arturo Sandoval

will be the National Acrobats of the People's Republic of China on Sept. 30, the first such act of its kind to debut in the Valley Performing Arts Center Great Hall.

Other performance highlights include country music sensation Wynonna, acclaimed tap dancer

Savion Glover's "Bare Groundz," Royal Winnipeg Ballet's popular "Moulin Rouge – The Ballet," jazz legend Ramsey Lewis with six-time Grammy nominee Nnenna Freelon, actress and activist Geena Davis and prolific troupe The Acting Company's "Julius Caesar."

"The Valley Performing Arts Center addresses an important need in the San Fernando Valley community, a community of nearly two million residents that has long dreamed of experiencing a world-class cultural destination close to home," said Bucker. "The capabilities of this extraordinary new space guarantee an outstanding experience for audiences—and an unparalleled opportunity for students engaged in the arts."

Season subscriptions go on sale July 8 and are available at www.ValleyPerformingArtsCenter.org, Ticketmaster or at the box office at (818) 677-3000. For more information, visit www.ValleyPerformingArtsCenter.org.

—Arman Sadri

Calendar

The A.S. Ticket Office in the University Student Union (USU) sells tickets to many events on campus, except for some held by outside groups. The Ticket Office is open from 10 a.m.–6 p.m. Mon.–Fri. For prices not given, call (818) 677-2488. **To park on campus for performances, athletic events, lectures and other activities, guests must purchase a \$6 parking permit.**

Alumni Events

For info or to RSVP, www.csunumni.com or (818) 677-2137 unless otherwise noted.

Hollywood Bowl Opening Night

Join alumni and friends for Opening Night 2011 at the Hollywood Bowl and the annual Bowl Hall of Fame honoring Harry Connick Jr. and Gloria Estefan with presentation by Hilary Swank. Proceeds benefit Music Matters, supporting the Los Angeles Philharmonic's education programs. Register by June 1. Fri., June 17, 8:30–10:30 p.m. (picnic area reserved starting at 6 p.m.) Hollywood Bowl, 2301 N. Highland Ave, Los Angeles \$30 for Alumni Association members and guests, \$38 for general public. For more info, contact Cheryl McMillan at (818) 677-4938 or cheryl.mcmillan@csun.edu.

Track and Field Reunion and Don Strametz Retirement Celebration

Join us for a reunion of Cal State Northridge Track and Field teams and a retirement celebration in honor of coach Don Strametz. Register by July 8. Sat., July 9, 5:30–9:30 p.m. Warner Center Marriott, 21850 Oxnard Street, Woodland Hills \$50 for event, \$6-\$19 for parking, \$99 plus tax for hotel room rate. For hotel reservations, call (818) 887-4800; reservation code for CSUN rate is CRRCRRA. For more info, contact Bridget Sullivan at (818) 677-5473 or bridget.sullivan@csun.edu.

Art and Exhibits

For gallery info, call (818) 677-2156. Main gallery hours: Mon. through Sat. 12–4 p.m. and Thursdays 12–8 p.m. Admission is free unless specified. For library exhibits, call (818) 677-2285.

Master of Fine Arts/Master of Arts Thesis Exhibition

CSUN's second annual Graduate Thesis Exhibition will showcase stunning array of work from various disciplines that are a culmination of intensive study and experimentation fulfilling thesis requirements for the master of fine arts and master of arts degrees. Graduate open house: Sat., May 21, 4–7 p.m. Opening reception: Sat., May 21, 6–9 p.m. Through Sat., June 11. Main Gallery, Art and Design Center

One of a Kind: Celebrating Thirty-Seven Years of Special Collections

Exhibit features rarely seen pieces from the Library's Special Collections and Archives, including unique books, letters, costumes, maps, sculptures, paintings, engravings and manuscripts. Through Fri., July 22. C.K. and Teresa Tseng Gallery, Oviatt Library

Images of Haiti: Selections from the Dolores Yonker Collection

Exhibition highlighting artwork donated to the Oviatt Library Special Collections by CSUN emeritus professor of art Dolores Yonker (1926–2008), an art historian, artists

and hounsi kanzo/Vodou initiate who traveled frequently to Haiti and created striking pen and ink vignettes of Haitian life. Through Mon., Aug. 22. Oviatt Library Lobby

Athletics (home games):

Alumni Association members receive discounted admission to selected home events throughout the year. For more info, call (818) 677-2488 or visit www.GoMatadors.com.

Baseball

5/27	CSU Fullerton	3 p.m.
5/28	CSU Fullerton	1 p.m.
5/29	CSU Fullerton	1 p.m.

Meetings

Brad Sherman Town Hall

Congressman Brad Sherman's town hall meeting. Sun., May 15, 3–4:30 p.m. Valley Performing Arts Center, Main Hall. The event is free to the public. Parking is included only for B1 and B2. For more info, call (818) 501-9200.

CA Redistricting Hearings

May 26: pre-map input hearings with line drawer staff (engagement and public input). May 27: Open meeting for review, commission directs Line Drawer. Thu., May 26 & Fri., May 27, both 9–5 p.m. Valley Performing Arts Center, Kurland Lecture Hall. The event is free to the public. Parking is included only for G3. For more info, visit wedrawthelines.ca.gov.

Theater/Performance

Interpreted performances subject to change.

Piano Trio Voce

The Music Guild's 66th season. Wed., May 18, 8–10 p.m. Plaza del Sol Performance Hall \$5–\$45

An Acoustic Evening with Lyle Lovett and John Hiatt

Grammy award-winning Americana artist Lyle Lovett and Nashville songwriter John Hiatt will perform an intimate acoustic show featuring songs from their respective careers, mixing country, swing, folk and blues. Fri., June 3, 8 p.m. Valley Performing Arts Center, Great Hall \$24–\$70

Jungle Book

Presented by Teenage Drama Workshop, directed by Ronnie Sperling and Corky Dominguez, and musical direction by Ed Archer. Fri., July 22, 7 p.m. Sat., July 23, 11 a.m. Wed., July 27, 11 a.m. Thu., July 28, 7 p.m. Fri., July 29, 11 a.m. Sat., July 30, 7 p.m. Wed., Aug. 3, 11 a.m. Thu., Aug. 4, 11 a.m. Fri., Aug. 5, 11 a.m. Sat., Aug. 6, 11 a.m. Little Theatre, Nordhoff Hall 121 \$7–\$14

Music Man

Presented by Teenage Drama Workshop, directed by Ray Saar, musical direction by Diane Ketchie, and choreography by Candy Sherwin.

Wed., July 27, 7 p.m.

Thu., July 28, 7 p.m.

Fri., July 29, 11 a.m. & 7 p.m.

Sat., July 30, 11 a.m. & 7 p.m.

Wed., Aug. 3, 11 a.m. & 7 p.m.

Thu., Aug. 4, 11 a.m.

Fri., Aug. 5, 11 a.m.

Campus Theatre, Nordhoff Hall 100 \$7–\$14

10 Minute Play Festival

By Teenage Drama Workshop student playwrights. Thu., Aug. 4, 7 p.m. Fri., Aug. 5, 7 p.m. Studio Theatre, Nordhoff Hall 113 \$7–\$14



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