

**UNIVERSITY STUDENT UNION**  
**CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, NORTHRIDGE**  
**BOARD OF DIRECTORS**  
**NOVEMBER 18, 2019**  
**GRAND SALON ROOM**  
**MINUTES**

**I. Call to Order**

The regular meeting of the USU Board of Directors was called to order at 12:30 p.m. by Chair Tyrone Carter.

**II. Roll Call**

<b>Present</b>	<b>Absent</b>	<b>Staff</b>	<b>Guests</b>
Melanie Alvarez	Timmothy Roberts	Jimmy Francis	Elizabeth Gutierrez
Stephanie Barboza	Diana Vicente	Kristen Pichler	Leanne Vincent
Tyrone Carter		Joe Illuminate	Tracy Buenavista
Matthew Contreras		Freddie Sanchez	Brad Hesselgrave
Arrah Ebot Enaw		Kaila Lavin	
Sharon Eichten		Sharon Kinard	
Marquita Gammage		Samantha Liu	
Debra Hammond		Sarina Loeb	
Catleya Maralit		Jonathan Navarro	
Gabriella Nguyen		Jeremy Hamlett	
Christopher Ordonez		Richard Cardona	
Tammy Rassamekiarttisak		Steven Wein	
Giselle Reyes			
Shelley Ruelas-Bischoff (arrived at 12:33pm)			
Tonee Sherrill			

**III. Approval of Agenda**

M/S/P (T. Rassamekiarttisak/M. Alvarez) Motion to approve the agenda for November 18, 2019.

Director Reyes said the A.S. Report needed to be removed from the agenda due to the A.S. President's absence.

M/S/P (G. Reyes/S. Eichten) Motion to amend the agenda for November 18, 2019.

*Amendment to the motion passed 14-0-0.*

*Director Barboza left at 12:35 p.m.*

Director Hammond said a new discussion item needed to be added to the agenda on the topic of the Dream Center.

M/S/P (D. Hammond/M. Contreras) Motion to amend the agenda for November 18, 2019.

*Amendment to the motion passed 13-0-0.*

*Amended motion passed 13-0-0.*

*Director Barboza returned at 12:38 p.m.*

**IV. Approval of Regular Meeting Minutes**

M/S/P (T. Rassamekiarttisak/M. Alvarez) Motion to approve the minutes of the October 21, 2019 meeting.

***Motion passed 13-0-1.***

**V. Open Forum**

Elizabeth Gutierrez from Associated Students (AS) said the November Cal State Student Association (CSSA) meeting took place this past weekend. She said it was a dream come true to host the monthly CSSA meeting at CSUN, and she gave a special thank you to the USU for its support. As a token of appreciation, AS Marketing created a CSSA T-shirt and gifted one to each Board member. Leanne Vincent from AS said the event presented her with the opportunity to view the USU with brand new eyes as the student leaders from other universities remarked how impressed they were with the USU facilities. She has never seen anything like the professionalism and coordination she experienced in working with the USU to coordinate the event. It was a wonderful treat. Individuals from other universities all left envious. She is grateful for how the USU makes CSUN such a great place.

**VI. Chair Report**

Chair Carter thanked the Board for a job well done this month. He encouraged everyone, particularly the students, to manage self-care throughout the remainder of the semester. He mentioned a few events that took place throughout the month. He attended a Students of Color Coalition meeting on October 25. He was invited by Dr. Watkins to attend the 2<sup>nd</sup> California State University Young Males of Color Consortium from November 5-7. The highlight of the event was the California Endowment Center for Healthy Communities, where students keynoted and shared stories, challenges, and future research endeavors. He attended breakout sessions on “How to Effectively Engage Young Men of Color” and “We Too Are Brothers: Including GBTQQ Men of Color in Strategies that Support All Men of Color.” He said that he learned a lot from the experience that he would apply to his personal life. The CSSA Plenary Meeting was hosted at CSUN from November 15-17 and it was incredible to see so many visiting leaders attend. It was another occasion where it was apparent how progressive the CSUN campus is compared to visiting students’ descriptions of challenges on their own campuses.

**VII. Vice Chair Report**

In honor of November being Native American History Month, Vice Chair Barboza acknowledged that CSUN sits on land that was originally called Achoicominga and home to the Feranandeño Tataviam, the original stewards of the territory. She went on to mention a couple of events that took place in the past month. There was a Board and committee member training held on November 4 on StrengthsQuest led by Manager, Reservations & Operations Samantha Liu. The training was very uplifting and interactive. She shared a couple of takeaways: first that it is important to continue to develop one’s self instead of change one’s self, and second, that most development is done in areas of strengths rather than weakness. On November 5, 6, and 13, she and Chair Carter held check-in meetings with committee chairs and co-chairs. It was good to hear that committees are engaged. The Finance Committee had an introduction and training for its first meeting that Director Rassamekiarttisak said was very effective. The Personnel Committee toured the USU during its second meeting, which Director Enaw said members enjoyed. Barboza concluded by mentioning that she and Chair Carter would be attending the Circle of Change Leadership Conference this weekend at CSU Dominguez Hills and will report on the experience during the next Board meeting.

**VIII. Executive Director Report**

Director Hammond said the latest report from the USU’s actuarial consultant indicated that as of September 30, the discount rate went down to 3.1% with has a negative financial impact of \$320,125. The USU will continue to monitor and will make a decision whether or not to record the increase in expense when the second quarter report is received from the consultant during the 6&6 Budget Review. As a result, the USU will be vigilant in deciding to approve expenditures throughout the remainder of the fiscal year. The Finance Committee is looking at this topic as a regular agenda item. She then introduced Emery Hernandez, the new Administrative Support Coordinator for the Board of Directors. Hernandez will be supporting the Board directly. She has a great background for the role, having worked for the USU as a Student Assistant Employee in the Accounting & Finance department as an undergraduate. Hernandez is an asset to the Board and Hammond is excited to have her back with the USU. Hammond said the Association

of College Unions International (ACUI) just held its Regions I & IV Joint Conference over the weekend in Reno, Nevada. Three USU staff from Marketing presented on the topic of building a successful referendum marketing campaign and she is told that it was well received. She referred to the Programs section of her report to emphasize that many programs are going on in the USU that are impacting lots of people, including the “We Heart Our Veterans Week” produced by the Veterans Resource Center (VRC) in honor of Veterans Day and Trans\* Empowerment Week sponsored by the Pride Center. Associate Director, Marketing & Programs Freddie Sanchez served as a presenter for the second installment of the Provost Success Series. His presentation was titled “Communicating with Inclusive Language and a Growth Mindset: Contributing to Student Sense of Belonging, Motivation and Academic Success” and was co-presented with Mark Stevens, Professor of the Marriage & Family Therapy (MFT) Program. The presentation was well attended. She concluded by mentioning that USU Events Supervisor Pero Akinbohn was recognized with the Debra L. Hammond Outstanding New Professional Staff Award at the ACUI Regions I & IV Joint Conference in Reno.

## **IX. Committee Chair Reports**

- Diversity & Inclusion Committee: Chair Contreras said the committee met on November 4 to discuss and finalize goals. The committee will vote on these goals at the next committee meeting. Over the past month, the committee has met with Black Leadership Council, Asian American Studies Pathway Project, Muslim Student Association, and Revolutionary Scholars to identify their needs and learn what the USU can do to support their programs. The committee will continue to communicate with the Facilities & Commercial Services Committee in connection with these efforts. On November 14, Chair Contreras and Co-Chair Alvarez attended the ACUI Joint Region I & IV Conference to present an educational session with Associate Director, Marketing & Programs Freddie Sanchez on the topic of “Cultivating a Cross Cultural Center Experience: Engaging Students as Part of the Process.” Through presenting and attending the conference, Contreras learned how other student unions support free speech, how other student unions are approaching housing and food insecurity, and ways to collaborate with other student leaders off campus. On November 12, he attended the Commission on Diversity & Inclusion’s retreat with Director Hammond. He gained a better understanding about the history and process needed to support diversity on campus. It was an interesting retreat and he had a great time.
- Facilities & Commercial Services Committee: Director Reyes said she just attended the National Association for Campus Activities (NACA) West Conference and led an educational session on “Evaluation and Assessment of Events.” The conference was welcoming and open, and she networked with awesome people doing awesome work. The committee is continuing to pursue its goals.
- Finance Committee: Director Rassamekiarttisak said the committee would meet on Wednesday to address four action items that will be submitted to the Board at its December 2 meeting. They will work on a mid-year committee report and recruit 1-2 more students for next semester. She thanked Associate Director, Accounting & Finance Joe Illuminate and others for their support.
- Personnel Committee: Director Maralit said the committee had a successful tour of the USU led by committee member and USU Administration student employee Christopher Hernandez. Christopher led the tour from the angle of a student employee as he took the committee through the various departments. The committee is working on approving the USU employee salary range and bonus policy and will present them at the December 2 Board meeting.
- Retirement Committee: Director Barboza said the committee’s next meeting will take place December 4. The committee hopes to have its goals approved then.

## **X. Discussion Items**

### **A. USU Renovation/Construction Update**

Associate Executive Director, Operations and Services Jimmy Francis said that the week of October 21 the USU learned through the program validation process that it is on track with square footage for the project. The week of November 7 was exciting because it focused on design. The USU was presented with seven big picture designs and whittled the options down to three. CannonDesign met with the U-Rise Committee and talked with them about the space. The week of November 11 focused on budget and personnel and the long-term plan of the USU. A lot has changed with staffing plans and alignment for the future. Today, the focus is back to design, meeting with stakeholders and CannonDesign again

with the first chance at seeing what the renovation spaces might look like. Tomorrow, a few people are visiting a Steelcase® pop-up (a company that provides 25 brands of furniture to higher education) to gather a variety of ideas for the new spaces. Director Gammage asked about the outcome of the contracting firm decision. Francis said that while the decision has not been formally announced, the decision is far enough along to share that the contractor will be Hathaway Dinwiddie. This same contractor built the Oasis Wellness Center and worked with CannonDesign in the past. Director Hammond mentioned that Hathaway Dinwiddie's bid was lower than its competitors by \$1 million. This savings means that \$1 million can be put back into the project in other ways. Francis added that selecting the contractor is different than selecting the architect in that the contractor selection process scripted by the Chancellor's office. Chair Carter said that he had the chance to be involved in the contractor selection process and it was exciting.

## **B. Dream Center**

Director Hammond said that a couple of weeks ago the USU was approached by the university with a proposal to take on the operations of the Dream Center. She discussed this topic with Chair Carter and Vice Chair Barboza. It is critical that a) the acquisition would be cost neutral to the USU since USU dollars are committed to the renovation/construction project, and b) the Dream Center would operate within the organizational structure of the USU. The possibility is under consideration and will go through committee. The USU management team and Student Affairs are aware, and Director Hammond distributed an email to USU staff this morning to make them aware as well. She introduced one of the Dream Center founders and Asian American Studies faculty member Dr. Tracy Buenavista to provide a history about the Dream Center, along with some context and thoughts. Buenavista said that last week the Supreme Court heard arguments about the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program. She said that of the 100,000 undocumented high school graduates each year, one quarter reside in California and only 10% go to college. CSUN has the largest population of undocu-students (1,600) and the CSUN Dream Center serves the largest population of these students among the nation's four-year institutions. Even before CSUN became undocu-friendly, it has had undocu-students in leadership roles. The CSUN Dream Center is a result of an AS resolution passed in November 2015, and the USU Board followed suit. Now the Dream Center is a tenant of the USU. Once the Dream Center become housed in the USU space, numbers tripled within one semester. In the last academic year, the Dream Center served 2,000 people (not only students but also individuals from the community). The Dream Center would like to be housed in the USU because the service numbers can and should be greater. The Dream Center celebrates its five-year anniversary in the spring. Its three key pillars are centralized space, peer mentoring program, and ally and capacity building. Buenavista said she is excited about the possibility of bringing holistic, growth-minded services to the USU. Director Eichten asked for clarification about how many CSUs have Dream Centers. Buenavista said 15 (soon to be 16) have Dream Centers. Director Eichten asked how the Dream Center is funded. Buenavista said resources are taken from Education Opportunity Program (EOP) and Campus Quality Fees (CQF). CSUN has the largest Dream Center in terms of staffing with three full-time staff whereas other CSUs have one-to-two staff members. Director Gammage asked how CSUN can ensure students' sense of security on campus. Buenavista said these students have the highest levels of assertion and do not feel the need to be protected. Operating from a deficit perpetuates the stigma, so she suggests moving away from that particular concern.

*Director Eichten left at 1:45 p.m.*

Chair Charter asked what elements are working and what are not working on other campuses. Buenavista said every program looks completely different. The number one thing that works is collaboration with university partners. The number one challenge is buy-in from administrators, but the San Fernando Valley has a high number of undocumented residents so the CSUN culture is different than the culture at other CSUs. Director Nguyen asked what the reason is behind the request to join the USU. Buenavista said it is a capacity issue. As an auxiliary, the USU has greater flexibility and sense of urgency being that it is student driven and student run. The stateside is more bureaucratic. Director

Sherrill commented that in his eyes this request is a high honor that speaks to the inclusivity the USU has built. He encouraged the Board to take a moment to acknowledge this. Buenavista added that if the USU accepts the Dream Center into its operations, the CSUN Dream Center would be the first undocumented program that is student run in the United States. Director Contreras agreed with Director Sherrill regarding the honor and it being one-step closer to achieving the USU's goals. Director Ruelas-Bischoff said she appreciated the sharing of the history and the advocacy with so much heart and dedication to the people the Dream Center serves. She said it is important for stateside to remain invested in supporting auxiliaries and looks forward to seeing how this goes. Buenavista said the Dream Center would likely have to restructure to align with other USU goals, and this is a really good time to envision what that would look like. Director Hammond said this topic is philosophically-based. The role of the college union is to serve students. She looks at what the USU used to do and what it does now; if the USU always did the same thing as before, it would not have the Student Recreation Center and the Pride Center. The USU will have to work to understand more about the center but from a philosophical standpoint, it is an opportunity to push the vision of the USU forward. That is who we are. The role of the college union is constantly changing so it is important to keep in mind "what's next for us, not what was for us" in looking at the future and how to best serve CSUN students. This is a proposal for the USU to consider, discuss, and make open to feedback and concerns. She would like to dig deeper to ask the questions that go below the surface. The only way to make a good decision is to look at all of these factors. She thanked Buenavista for the opportunity and thanked the Board for continuing to evolve. Director Contreras asked that the Diversity & Inclusion and Facilities & Commercial Services committees to be kept in the loop as it pertains to their service. Director Ordonez said he believes the Dream Center needs to be institutionalized. He goes there daily and values its mission.

**XI. Announcements**

- Chair Carter said that it was Vice Chair Barboza's birthday on November 15 and asked the Board to give their wishes.
- Chair Carter announced that Director Sherrill will be stepping down from the Board as he moves to Northern California to take on the Executive Director role for Associated Students at San Francisco State University. Director Sherrill said that he was a USU student employee 13 years ago when he attended his first ACUI conference and learned about the USU's reputation and Director Hammond's recognition in the field. He has been proud to serve on the USU Board. His goal in his new role is to make Director Hammond and Acting Assistant Director, Administration and Technology Sharon Kinard proud. His last Board meeting will be December 2.

**XII. Adjournment**

Chair Carter adjourned the meeting at 2:07 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by,

Debra L. Hammond,  
Executive Director