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## The College of Humanities Newsletter

### Message from Humanities Dean **Elizabeth A. Say**



**Elizabeth A. Say,  
Ph.D. Alum 1984**

The end of any academic year is always a time of transition. As the 2010-11 Academic Year draws to a close, we celebrate the recent accomplishments of two of our faculty colleagues. With great sadness, we say goodbye to two of our esteemed faculty colleagues. At the same time, we anticipate welcoming to the College 13 new colleagues, whom we will profile next year. We will also introduce you to some recent developments in curricular offerings.

This issue of the newsletter contains tributes to Dr. Karin Durán and Dr. Howard Happ. Dr. Durán was a CSUN alum who—as a librarian at the Oviatt Library—provided support to students and friendship to her faculty colleagues. Dr. Happ retired from the Department of Religious Studies in 2005, after 34 years as a member of the faculty and a mentor to his students. Both Karin and Howard enriched the lives of all those they touched, and we are the poorer for their absence.

This edition will introduce you to Dr. Florence Kyomugisha and the truly life-saving work she will be engaged in as the University Research Fellow from the College of Humanities. Dr. Nayereh Tohidi has received a significant grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities that will support the development of a new minor in Middle Eastern and Islamic Studies. We also introduce you to the new Interdisciplinary Minor in Sustainability.

Finally, we are honored to have L.A. City Controller Wendy Greuel as speaker at the 2011 College of Humanities Commencement Ceremony. We will post her address on the College of Humanities website for all to read. Thank you again for your continued support throughout the year.

### This year's Humanities commencement speaker: **Los Angeles City Controller Wendy Greuel**

It would be difficult to name a more accomplished local role model for CSUN graduates than Los Angeles City Controller Wendy Greuel, the 2011 Commencement speaker for the College of Humanities. A lifelong Angeleno who was born and raised in the San Fernando Valley, Greuel became just the second woman elected to citywide office in L.A. when she was sworn in as Controller on July 1, 2009.



**Wendy Greuel**

Greuel's service to the city began upon graduation from UCLA, when she went to work for Mayor Tom Bradley's office. Later, she served in President Bill Clinton's administration as Housing and Urban Development Field Operations Officer for Southern California, where

she was instrumental in coordinating HUD's emergency response and recovery programs after the devastating 1994 Northridge earthquake, which caused \$400 million in damages on the CSUN campus.

In 2002, Greuel was elected to the Los Angeles City Council, where she served as the Representative of the Second District in the Northeast San Fernando Valley until her election as City Controller. On the City Council, where she served as President Pro Tempore, Greuel concentrated on securing the San Fernando Valley's fair share of city resources. She has also championed measures to reduce financial influence on the political process and to eliminate government fraud and waste. Throughout her career, her guiding principle has been to execute the practical over the political.

— Submitted by **Teresa K. Morrison**

## Farewell to a treasured friend and colleague, and an extraordinary educator

The September 28, 2010, gathering, with its sweetly nostalgic music and brightly patterned retro outfits, may have seemed like any other '60s -themed party but for its location in the Oviatt Library, where attendees snacked on tacos and quesadillas while reminiscing about its honoree, longtime CSUN librarian Karin Durán. It was precisely the air of celebration requested by Durán, who had passed away four months earlier, on June 11, from complications following a stroke.



**Karin J. Durán, Ph.D.**  
**B.A. Spanish 1970**

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**“THE ENTIRE RELATIONSHIP FOR HER WAS, WHAT IS IT THAT THAT PROFESSOR OR THAT STUDENT NEEDS TO DO AND GET DONE, AND HOW CAN I THEN BRING THE RESOURCES OF THE LIBRARY TO BEAR TO HELP THAT PERSON?”**

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Durán had served the CSUN community for 38 years, having returned to her alma mater (1970, Spanish) after graduate work at USC to earn her Master's and Ph.D. in Library Science. In that time it seems there were few on campus whose lives she hadn't touched, whether through her work in the Oviatt's Teacher Curriculum Center, the courses she taught in Chicana and Chicano Studies, or her service on committees and initiatives like Honors Convocation, University 100, the Teachers Education Council, and the Education Doctorate Advisory Board.

With characteristic unlimited energy, Durán devoted further time to advocacy organizations such as La Raza Alumni Association; REFORMA, the National Association to Promote Library and Information Services to Latinos and the Spanish Speaking; and Comisión Femenil San Fernando Valley. Durán also acted as advisor to Gamma Alpha Omega, a Latina-founded intercollegiate sorority established in 1993 to work toward the advancement of Hispanics and Latinas through higher learning and volunteerism. The sorority's stated mission, in part, is to serve as a motivational source for others and provide positive role models in the community — qualities that Durán reflected throughout her career.

“She did a lot in terms of mentoring students,” says Susan Curzon, Dean of the University Library. “She would really guide them and counsel them, and she never ever thought about students failing, she always thought about them being successful. So she used to work hard to make them successful and she would really just give of herself generously.” Durán spent many Saturdays volunteering her knowledge and services at Nativity Catholic School in South Los Angeles. Sister Judy Flahavan, Nativity's Principal, says Durán was instrumental in forming the school's library, spending her time cataloguing books and making it a working lending library. Durán was determined to provide students from low-socioeconomic households with as much access to library resources as those in more affluent districts.

Though charismatic and influential by nature, Durán shied from high-profile positions, preferring to dedicate herself in support roles that allowed closer interaction with those colleagues and students who needed her energies the most, focusing her librarianship on reference, instruction, and bibliography. “She was really the embodiment of the work of a librarian,” says David Moguel, Associate Professor of Secondary Education. “The entire relationship for her was, What is it that that professor or that student needs to do and get done, and how can I then bring the resources of the library to bear to help that person?” Despite her unassuming demeanor, Durán was always ready to step into leadership positions where needed, as Interim Associate Dean of the University Library in 2005, and as Acting Department Chair of Reference and Instructional Services during the Northridge earthquake recovery period.

continued on page 3

**Farewell to Karin Durán continued from page 2**

To speak with faculty, administrative colleagues, and students who knew Durán is to hear again and again how, beyond her vast knowledge and wisdom, it was her sense of humor they will most remember—her wit, her joy, and her infectious laugh. “When Karin laughed, it was a laugh from her whole heart. It was a warm laugh, it was genuine,” says Curzon. While her humility may have made her shrink from the idea of a makeshift altar established in the library — at first for friends and colleagues to hope or pray for her recovery; later for them to visit, remember, and mourn — Durán’s whimsical nature would have appreciated the winking nod that her memorial was built atop a modest book cart.

That humility and humor never diminished Durán’s force when advocating for underrepresented groups. In fact, her disarming spirit served her well. Terri Lisagor, Assistant Professor of Family and Consumer Sciences, says, “She’s like a little electron. Her smile goes up right away, her eyes just bubble with enthusiasm, and she always knows, it seems, what to say, what to feel, and how to connect with everybody she meets. She’s just awesome.” Maria Reza — President of Comisión Femenil San Fernando Valley, which promotes the political and economic empowerment of Hispanic women — noted at the campus gathering that Durán had taught her “a real warrior for social justice can also have grace, manners, and dignity.”

Durán was a driving force in the La Raza Alumni Association, which honored her with an Outstanding Achievement Award. She also sat on the board of the Los Angeles chapter of REFORMA, which named one of its scholarships for her in 2010. In recognition of her community advocacy, the Faculty Senate has honored Durán with an Extraordinary Service Award, and CSUN’s Alumni Association posthumously recognized her enormous contributions to CSUN and community organizations with a Volunteer Service Award.

Durán’s legacy is more than assured. She was recently inducted into Phi Beta Delta Omega, the Northridge chapter of the first nationwide honor society dedicated to recognizing scholarship achievement in international education, and she will continue to affect the lives of future students by way of a scholarship created in her name by the Associated Students. The scholarship will be available to students of Chicana and Chicano Studies, to be awarded by the Department in cooperation with the College of Humanities. But beyond the professional honors, her spirit may live on most indelibly in the personal memories of those who were privileged to know and work with her. “Her personal dignity, her deep respect for others, her generous nature, and her sincere wish for everyone to do well were the hallmarks of her character,” says Curzon. “We will miss her very much.”

— Submitted by Teresa K. Morrison

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**I am feeling a very deep sadness with the loss of our amazing friend, Karin Duran.** She will be missed by the students and faculty in our department, as well as her other colleagues at CSU. Karin was so personable. She had a very calming influence, which I admired. Karin especially loved her presence and input in our faculty and committee meetings, and her comments, humor, and always kind demeanor also contributed to our department being a great place. With all her intelligence, multifacetedness, and humility, Karin was truly an extraordinary individual.

Karin provided an example to me who said her life is a wonderful lesson, deeply connected to her work and family commitments and caring hearts for colleagues and students. She continues to be a great inspiration. With fond remembrance of Karin.

**Thina D. Cervantes, Colleague**

**I REMEMBER KARIN'S ENTHUSIASM, HER ENERGY, AND PASSION.**

She was never afraid to "go to work." As a Chicana and a major, she never forgot her own personal struggles to succeed and she was always available for our students. Karin was real. While others lacked, Karin worked. But, I imagine what I will remember most is her spirit and her smile.

**Karin in Struggle,  
Theresa Montano, Colleague**

**Dr. Karin Duran was a friend and mentor**

who dedicated her life to helping her community excel in higher education. I remember meeting her in the library on her way to work at various journals, collaborating with her at Race Matters and Matters committee meetings and feeling so honored to sit next to her table. She made a donation to the Chicana Studies collection where her name will be inscribed on a book that reads, "Cindy Padilla 'Carica' Duran." So I look at the table today it makes me emotional, because I know that Dr. Duran always had high aspirations for her students and colleagues. She was one of the most understanding, wise, and caring Science scholars in the Chicana Studies department. Her love, she continues to inspire and inspire us on the other side. Our education.

**Cindy Padilla, Graduate Student**

**WHEN I THINK OF KARIN,**

I think of someone who never said "No" when I needed help teaching students to be critical about information sources—she was an incredible friend and ally to me, to our students and to our CHS Department. Quiet and Strong/Gracious, Demure and Going-We miss her!

**Wendy Parada, Colleague**

**Karin graced the Chicana and Chicano Studies Department**

with her many contributions, positive attitude, and dedication. And for me, most of all, she granted me the gift of her love of learning, thoughtful support, and helpful advice. I will miss her always!

**Christina Ayala Almaraz, Colleague**

**Karin was a lovely person**

whose good ideas and insights in contributions to the Chicana Studies Department will be greatly missed. Her involvement in La Raza Hispanic Association and the scholarship program was instrumental to her generosity and enthusiasm in reaching out to colleagues, students, friends, and alumni through a variety of programs. Karin was truly available to our research and a caring. Her committee work in our department reflected her dedication and passion for the maintenance and development of Chicana Studies. She was a great team player and was always a pleasure to work with. I will miss her very much and I will cry over this. Though she is physically gone from us now, her spirit and beauty will always be here. May she rest in peace.

**David Rodriguez, Colleague**

**On Behalf of the Department of CHICANA AND CHICANO STUDIES**

**Testimonios**

**TESTIMONIO HAIKU TO KARIN DURAN**

She gives power  
That leads her dreams and inspired ours.  
We know she loved us.

**Rosa Parahita, Colleague**

**THANK YOU, KARIN.**

Thank you for always "being there," for both students and faculty. Thank you for your thoughtfulness, generosity and support and above all, for your rare integrity as a Chicana, as a mentor and as a colleague.

And with the knowledge, Karin, that your love and actions will surround us always.

**Margarita Nolas, Colleague**

**KARIN HAD A GIFT FOR TEACHING.**

I remember we spent the entire semester working on one research paper. She worked on through everything, but she demanded perfection. She read each word I wrote and would ask for a re-submission if I had any mistakes. She will be impossible to replace.

**Lein Rodriguez, Graduate Student**

**KARIN WAS THERE FOR ALL OF US.**

I never saw Karin become impatient or angry with anyone or take them down personally. And if one of us became impatient with a colleague at a meeting, Karin would lift her head, look away from the corner of her eyes or otherwise let us know she noticed our bad mood and smile slightly. This was her expression of being understanding.

We should all cover a shirt with "WIKI?" What would Karin do? It would be to treat one another with Karin's words: "Be kind and considerate of others and always think to the good end of whatever occurs."

My last interaction with Karin was on campus when the cover page of one of my favorite books fell off on the floor of an office. I saw her at an event where I could get my request. She promptly responded that she herself could repair it. I said, but I would bring it to her as soon as the semester ended. It remains an my book as a reminder of our time.

But upon reflection, I believe she would prefer that we call out "Karin Duran, Professor!"

In loving memory,  
**Maria Lopez-Garcia, Colleague**

THE DEPARTMENT OF CHICANA AND CHICANO STUDIES  
**California State University Northridge**

**Donations to the Dr. Karin Durán Memorial Scholarship may be sent to:**

Jennie Quinonez-Skinner, Oviatt Library  
California State University, Northridge  
18111 Nordhoff St., Northridge CA 91330-8327

## CSUN's Chicana/o Studies Department a force to be reckoned with at the 38th Annual NACCS Conference

Faculty, students, and graduates of the Department of Chicana and Chicano Studies at California State University, Northridge, were an influential presence at this year's annual conference of the National Association of Chicana and Chicano Studies (NACCS). Nearly 30 people affiliated with CSUN Chicana and Chicano Studies participated in 17 panels or workshops at the conference, which took place at the Westin in Pasadena, Calif., March 30 - April 2. Along with traditional presentations and research discussions, two other major events were organized by members of Chicana and Chicano Studies: a fundraiser to support the Ethnic Studies Department in Tucson, Ariz., and a showcase of graduate student art and performance.



**Pictured from left to right: Cassandra Rodriguez, Sanam Shahmiri, Professor Marta Lopez-Garza, David Guzman, and Gisella Gatica**

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**"THE PANELS, WORKSHOPS, AND DISCUSSIONS REVEALED A DIVERSITY AND WEALTH OF CHICANA AND CHICANO STUDIES RESEARCH AMONG CSUN FACULTY AND STUDENTS. TOPICS INCLUDED TEACHING SOCIAL JUSTICE AND ACTIVISM, LABOR STUDIES, NAHUATL POETRY, SON JAROCHO, PERFORMANCE AS A SITE FOR EDUCATION, AND USES OF MEDIA "**

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The NACCS is the preeminent scholarly conference of Chicana and Chicano Studies. Established in 1972 to serve the then emerging discipline of Chicano Studies in the social sciences, the conference's mission reflects the discipline's commitment to social justice through education. As such, NACCS highlights the work of established and emerging scholars whose work directly confronts inequality based on class, gender, and race in society.

With its Chicana and Chicano Studies Department among the nation's oldest and largest, CSUN has always been represented by a large contingent at NACCS. This year, 13 professors presented at the conference along with 11 graduate and undergraduate students, including the work of five Chicana and Chicano Studies graduates. Altogether, CSUN was associated with 17 panels over the course of nine of the conference's 11 sessions.

The panels, workshops, and discussions revealed a diversity and wealth of Chicana and Chicano Studies research among CSUN faculty and students. Topics included teaching social justice and activism, labor studies, Nahuatl poetry, Son Jarocho, performance as a site for education, and uses of media. Faculty and students participated in roundtable sessions, including a review of the history of CSUN's Department of Chicana and Chicano Studies, a memorial tribute to CSUN librarian Karin Durán, a student discussion with Thomas Saenz—president of the Mexican American Legal Defense and Education Fund—and a Q&A with actress Eva Longoria, who enrolled in CSUN's Chicana and Chicano Studies master's program in 2009.

Faculty and students of CSUN's Department of Chicana and Chicano Studies organized two additional events alongside the conference. The Chicana and Chicano Graduate Student Association hosted a mixer at a café in Pasadena at the conclusion of the first full day of the conference. Four graduate students displayed their artwork and discussed the theoretical underpinnings of their pieces. Graduate students and faculty performed new works of poetry and theater at the event, which also featured live Son Jarocho music. The NACCS annual conference concluded Saturday with an afternoon fundraising event to benefit the Ethnic Studies Department and Raza Studies program in Tucson, Ariz., which is currently under attack by Arizona government officials threatening ceased funding and closure. The fundraiser featured CSUN professors Rudy Acuña, Mary Pardo, and Harry Gamboa, Jr., who are also key

members of the Los Angeles Committee to Support Ethnic Studies.

— Submitted by **George B. Sánchez-Tello**

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## The environmental movement and Chicanas/os intersect

The latest 2010 census numbers show that 37% of Californians are Latinas/os and that the majority of children in California households are Latinas/os. Changing demographics in Southern California is just one of the reasons why Chicanas/os should start playing a more active role in environmental movements. A November 2010 Los Angeles Times article by Louis Sahagun notes that leading national environmental organizations such as the Sierra Club, the Audubon Society, the Wilderness Society, and the California League of Conservation Voters—groups that have traditionally been supported largely by white members—have been actively seeking to engage Latinas/os.

On March 24, 2011, the Chicana/o Studies Department hosted “Latinas/os and the Environment,” an event that brought representatives from some of Southern California’s leading environmental organizations to campus to encourage a dialogue among the academic community on the intersection of the environmental movement and Chicana/o Studies. Moreover, the event helped to introduce Chicana/o Studies majors to environmental organizing as a possible career path.

The panel included presentations from Byron Ramos-Gudiel, a CSUN alumnus and Sierra Club Senior Field Organizing Manager; Salvador Ramirez, Director of the National Hispanic Environmental Council of Southern California; Juana Torres, Sierra Club Associate Regional Representative for Los Angeles; and Daniel Rossman, Los Angeles–based Regional Associate for the Wilderness Society. The panelists spoke about the challenges of getting Latinas/os involved in environmental movements. Such challenges included institutional barriers by national organizations unaware of how to incorporate diversity into their efforts, the need of national organizations to develop more effective organizing strategies to reach the Latina/o community, and the difficulties of recruiting more Latinas/os into mainstream environmental conservation organizations.

The panel is part of an effort by the Chicana/o Studies Department to reinforce partnerships between CSUN alumni and current Chicana/o Studies students.

— Submitted by Yarma Velázquez Vargas

## Humanities’ new Interdisciplinary Minor in Sustainability

*The New York Times* reported in an April 2011 article that countries such as Egypt, Algeria, and Bangladesh are facing increased poverty levels—resulting in riots and political unrest in extreme cases—as staple food crops like corn, palm oil, and cassava root are diverted to the United States, China, India, and European nations for their soaring value as biofuel bases. That kind of cause and effect becomes clear in hindsight, but the foresight required to anticipate food shortages in the world’s poorest nations as an unintended result of mandates for cleaner energy solutions requires balanced consideration from multiple perspectives. Olivier Dubois, a bioenergy expert at Rome’s Food and Agriculture Organization, told *The Times*, “The problem is complex, so it is hard to come up with sweeping statements like biofuels are good or bad.”

Recognizing this enmeshed relationship between local quality of life and global impact, CSUN is more focused than ever on graduating students who will practice and promote sound sustainability principles at personal, business, and governmental levels—wherever their careers may take them.

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**"RECOGNIZING THIS ENMESHED RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN LOCAL QUALITY OF LIFE AND GLOBAL IMPACT, CSUN IS MORE FOCUSED THAN EVER ON GRADUATING STUDENTS WHO WILL PRACTICE AND PROMOTE SOUND SUSTAINABILITY PRINCIPLES AT PERSONAL, BUSINESS, AND GOVERNMENTAL LEVELS—WHEREVER THEIR CAREERS MAY TAKE THEM."**

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The University ushers in a major new initiative in Fall 2011 with the debut of its academic Interdisciplinary Minor in Sustainability. Housed in the College of Humanities' Liberal Studies Program, the new minor features three core courses: Interdisciplinary Perspectives in Sustainability, Best Practices in Sustainability, and Applied Sustainability, the latter of which offers a service-learning component to ground students in real-world evaluation and problem solving. Assistant Professor of Psychology Erica Wholdmann is teaching Best Practices in Sustainability as an experimental course in the semester currently under way.

The Sustainability minor complements an array of academic majors—including business management, education, engineering, environmental studies, geography, political science, recreation and tourism management, resource management, and urban planning—and many applicable courses satisfy requirements or can be taken as electives in other degree programs. The minor “gives CSUN students a chance to pursue their career paths whilst making them cognizant of how their practices—and those of their employer, the government, and everyone around them—are important to the long-term wellbeing of the planet,” says Dr. Helen Cox, Director of CSUN's Institute for Sustainability, a project developed by the Provost's Office dedicated to environmental research, education, and programs to benefit the University and community. Cox, who's also a professor in CSUN's Geography Department, adds, “The minor is not intended to train someone for a career in sustainability, but rather to supplement their knowledge in other fields and raise their awareness of the importance of this issue in all aspects of their life and work.”

Core Sustainability courses are designed to ground students in the concepts and best practices of sustainability, with an emphasis on environmental, economic, and social justice factors in both short- and long-term planning. Rounding out the minor, applicable electives are available from 15 departments. “Students will be prepared for a career in a changing world, where business decisions are based not only on economic factors but increasingly on externalities such as costs to the environment,” says Dr. Elizabeth Say, Dean of the College of Humanities. “They will be versed in new and emerging technologies and ready to serve in a world of diminishing resources.”

CSUN's commitment to environmentally sound principles isn't simply theoretical. Over a 20-year partnership between the College of Engineering and Physical Plant Management, engineering students have gained valuable real-world experience installing six 30-kilowatt microturbines, employing jet engine technology to deliver consistent, clean, efficient energy without the need to power up or down; three large solar parking lot structures that shade cars as they produce base energy; and a grid-connected megawatt fuel cell plant that generates electricity and heats water campus-wide, operating at twice the efficiency of utility companies. The University has further taken care to preserve its five-acre heritage orange grove and establish a native botanic garden, both of which benefit from an Ethernet-linked weather-sensitive irrigation system that determines water needs based on rain, temperature, and humidity levels.

Addressing the environmental issues that shape our planet demands mindful action on many fronts. Through the new Interdisciplinary Minor in Sustainability, CSUN furthers its longstanding mission to develop, facilitate, and promote principles of effective environmental stewardship in campus-wide operations, research, and curriculum.

— Submitted by Teresa K. Morrison

## Newly awarded University Research Fellow Dr. Florence Kyomugisha will continue her work with the Mbarara Mothers Project in Uganda

Gender and Women's Studies Associate Professor Florence Kyomugisha has been selected as a 2011/12 University Research Fellow, one of nine faculty members—one from each College and the University Library—appointed per cycle. Representing the College of Humanities, Dr. Kyomugisha will dedicate the additional time and resources allocated by the fellowship, commencing in Fall 2011, to continue her work in Uganda, where she is researching nutrition information, provisional challenges, and effective skills-building interventions among mothers and children.

Creating Healthier Families and Communities: Mbarara Mothers Project traces its roots to 2007, when a team of scholars and health care providers, including Kyomugisha, identified a need for a dedicated children's hospital in Uganda, where no such institution yet existed. "Children cannot be treated simply as little adults," Kyomugisha says. "Children are more vulnerable to dehydration, malnutrition, and respiratory infections, and they need professionals who specialize in pediatric care."

That initial goal was realized in 2009 in Mbarara District, Kyomugisha's childhood home, where Holy Innocents Children's Hospital became the first major medical facility in the country focused exclusively on the particular challenges faced by children. Today, the 120-bed hospital treats 900 outpatients and 300 inpatients monthly thanks to its experienced team of Ugandan doctors, nurses, and volunteers; project partners and donors in the United States; and support from Mbarara community members.

But Kyomugisha's mission certainly didn't end there. HICH has enabled doctors to document the abnormally high rates of preventable diseases they witness among their young patients—diseases largely attributed to widespread malnutrition, which leaves children with underdeveloped immune systems. HICH's health care providers have observed that a troubling number of children become ill, and many die, not because their nutritional needs cannot be met but because their mothers aren't equipped with the knowledge or resources to meet their specific needs. Many Ugandan families rely on subsistence farming, the primary economy of Mbarara District, leaving them only with the food they can grow on their land, which often results in a mono diet: for example, a grain such as millet made into a thin porridge for breakfast, lunch, and dinner.

Kyomugisha, whose body of academic research focuses on health issues in women and minority populations, notes that sub-Saharan Africa accounts for 50% of the world's child mortality burden while constituting only 11% of its population. Furthermore, Kyomugisha says, the UN Millennium Development Goal found in 2010 that 6 million of the 11 million children who die each year could be saved by "low-tech, cost-effective measures such as simple nutrition interventions." In Mbarara alone—a district with an estimated population of 450,000—13,000 children under age 5 die each year, most from illnesses such as malaria, dysentery, and pneumonia, diseases that have largely been eradicated or are far less likely to result in fatality elsewhere.

Compounding the difficulties of managing their children's illnesses, Ugandan mothers find themselves unable to tend the crops necessary to feed their families. Many are faced with a choice between traveling with one sick child to the hospital, where they often must stay to provide needed breast milk, or remaining at home to ensure their other children are fed and cared for. Illness and poverty fuel one another in Uganda, locking its population in a cycle

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**"CREATING HEALTHIER FAMILIES AND COMMUNITIES: MBARARA MOTHERS PROJECT TRACES ITS ROOTS TO 2007, WHEN A TEAM OF SCHOLARS AND HEALTH CARE PROVIDERS, INCLUDING KYOMUGISHA, IDENTIFIED A NEED FOR A DEDICATED CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL IN UGANDA, WHERE NO SUCH INSTITUTION YET EXISTED."**

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wherein even the \$2.48 yearly cost of treating malaria is out of reach to most families.

With her fellowship, Kyomugisha looks forward to tackling the dire but changeable consequences of widespread malnutrition. Employing a mixed-methods public health and feminist approach, Kyomugisha's project examines the social, economic, and cultural realities within which mothers feed their children; determines to what extent information, healthy practices, and skills-building interventions in nutrition will enable mothers to maintain health practices and well-being for their families; and explores the health care resources necessary in their community to maintain healthier living. She will conduct her research with mothers whose children are being treated at HICH, finding them at a teachable moment for effective intervention.

It is Kyomugisha's hope that her research can serve as a model to arrest and reverse the ever-rising trend of deadly diseases in neighboring sub-Saharan African nations. Kyomugisha also sees ample opportunity to involve CSUN students, not only by bringing her experience into the classroom but by inviting them to participate in service learning at HICH, which is equipped to provide room and board to international students who volunteer their services.

"Dr. Kyomugisha's research exemplifies the global and intersectional focus of gender, race, class, and sexuality [that] we foreground in our Department," says Dr. Sheena Malhotra, Chair of Gender and Women's Studies. "This award will allow her to travel to Uganda and work with women in Mbarara on health education, contributing her expertise and learning from a community with which she has a long-term association. We believe her work reflects the best possibilities of a global citizenry we value so highly in the Humanities."

— Submitted by Teresa K. Morrison

## NEH awards the College of Humanities a \$100,000 grant to develop new interdisciplinary minor in Middle Eastern and Islamic Studies

The National Endowment for the Humanities has awarded the College of Humanities a \$100,000 grant to develop a program and interdisciplinary minor in Middle Eastern and Islamic Studies (MEAIS). Dr. Nayereh Tohidi, a Professor in the Gender and Women's Studies department, spearheaded the proposal for the grant and will direct the MAIS program, which she hopes to debut as soon as the 2011/12 academic year.

Fulfillment of this longstanding dream won't arrive a moment too soon. The Pew Research Center's Forum on Religion and Public Life released a study in January asserting that the world's Muslim population will grow twice as fast as non-Muslims over the next 20 years, at which time the study forecasts Muslims will account for more than a quarter of the world's projected 8.3 billion people. In the United States, Muslims will double their share of the population, from 0.8% to 1.7%—about the same proportion currently held by Jews and Episcopalians.

More locally, Los Angeles is currently home to the largest Middle Eastern American community in the country—a statistic not expected to change—and over 600,000 Muslims live in Southern California. Despite this sizable presence, the history, politics, and culture of both majority and diaspora Middle Eastern and Muslim communities are largely unexamined and often misunderstood in the West. Tohidi believes that an undergraduate MAIS program is sorely needed—and that CSUN is the perfect place to cultivate such a program. UCLA has an excellent Islamic Studies program, states Tohidi, who is also a Research Associate at the Center for Near Eastern Studies at UCLA, but the emphasis of that program is on the graduate level, and demographics at UCLA are less representative of the local population than at CSUN—which ranks 12th in the nation overall in baccalaureate degrees conferred to minority students. “This minor will meet a great need among the diverse student body of CSUN,” says Tohidi, “especially its large [numbers of] Hispanic, Armenian, Jewish, and Muslim students of Iranian, Afghan, Turkic, Arab, and South Asian backgrounds.”

The emphasis of the MAIS interdisciplinary minor, to be housed in the College of Humanities' Office of Interdisciplinary Programs, will be on the languages, history, literatures, politics, sociology, anthropology, and culture of Muslims in majority nations, particularly the greater Middle East, though the program will be inclusive of all Islamic societies, including areas in which Muslims have minority representation, such as North America, Europe, China, and India. The program seeks to prepare interested students for careers as translators, interpreters, diplomats, international businesspeople, journalists, negotiators, scholars, and Foreign Service officers.

Among the first MAIS core courses Tohidi plans to introduce are classes examining the Sufism movement; women in Islamic literature; and gender issues among North American Muslim communities. Also envisioned are annual conferences, cultural events, film festivals, visiting scholars, and public lecture series geared toward students, faculty, and the surrounding CSUN community. In CSUN's MAIS program, Tohidi sees an opportunity for the University to act as a local and national force in cross-cultural bridge building and interreligious dialogue. With ever-changing demographics at home and abroad, such increased understanding of Middle Eastern and Muslim communities is a timely and necessary pursuit.

— Submitted by Teresa K. Morrison

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**“THIS MINOR WILL MEET A GREAT NEED AMONG THE DIVERSE STUDENT BODY OF CSUN,” SAYS TOHIDI, “ESPECIALLY ITS LARGE [NUMBERS OF] HISPANIC, ARMENIAN, JEWISH, AND MUSLIM STUDENTS OF IRANIAN, AFGHAN, TURKIC, ARAB, AND SOUTH ASIAN BACKGROUNDS.”**

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## **In Memoriam: Howard J. Happ, 1942 – 2011**

Professor Emeritus Howard Happ died on March 27, 2011. Howard taught in the Department of Religious Studies from 1971 to 2005. He came to CSUN with four graduate degrees: from the University of Chicago, Princeton Theological Seminary, and Princeton University. His principal areas of scholarship and teaching were in the histories of British and American religions. One of his generative contributions to thought was his original application of theories by the British anthropologist Mary Douglas regarding the symbolization of the human body to ethical and ritual differences among American religions. He also brought to his conversation with colleagues and students wide-ranging knowledge in languages, music, Greco-Roman history, and classic Chinese civilization. His scholarly familiarity with 17th-century English history was dazzling. Colleagues and students alike recognized him as a brilliant and capacious intellectual. In addition to his teaching in Religious Studies, Howard was a pioneer in several interdisciplinary efforts at CSUN, including the Human Sexuality Program and the NEH Liberal Arts Project. Through his labors as an Episcopal priest, his service to the community was vast. Tirelessly and persuasively arguing from a traditionalist standpoint, Howard was a leading proponent of the ordination of women. He wrote an important history of the Episcopal Diocese of Los Angeles. He guided many newer clergy and was a mentor and friend to Joseph Jon Bruno, the Bishop Diocesan. A lifelong diarist, Howard's records indicate that over the years he sponsored discussions for hundreds of students at his home, was a godfather to over 30 children (most being children of former students), and wrote a river of thoughtful and insightful letters to friends from every part of America. Howard was beset with medical problems in recent years, but he remained a generous, witty, and intellectually alive person. His smile was stirring. His friendship and humor were treasures.



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

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

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

Contribute to scholarship and creative production and innovation, and

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

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