



Basic Needs Services supports students with things like obtaining food and housing or finding their way out of a financial bind.

BASIC NEEDS SERVICES

CAMPUS PROGRAM HELPS STUDENTS AT RISK REMAIN IN SCHOOL

Facing food insecurity, financial crunches

By Nicole Gregory,
contributing writer

Throughout the school year, Cal State Fullerton students who struggle with food insecurity or who face an unexpected financial burden such as a major car repair or suddenly lose their housing can find help from the Basic Needs Services program on campus, so their studies are not derailed by hardship.

“Throughout the academic year we are fairly consistent with requests,” said Victoria Ajemian, director of the program, adding that students’ needs are directly affected by trends in the economy.

“High gas prices are impacting students, especially commuter students,”

she said. Loss of COVID-19 protections and higher grocery costs are also causing hardship for students and their families. “Challenges have shifted through the COVID-19 pandemic with economic demands like the high cost of living and inflation,” she said.

For large, urgent needs, students meet with Ajemian or one of her trained counselors, who will assess their situation and connect them with help.

A big need is food. Free food is available from a pantry on campus overseen by Associated Students, Inc., but Ajemian and her team also provide gift cards to places such as Togo’s and Baja Fresh and alert students to other nearby food pantries.

Cal Fresh is a federal program for low-income people who meet certain federal criteria (there are specific criteria for students) and provides a monthly benefit that can be used for buying food. Ajemian and her counselors can walk students through the Cal Fresh application process so they can receive

this benefit.

They also make sure students know about the Titan Bites app, an alert system that sends out a message to students whenever there is leftover food from a campus event.

Housing can suddenly become a need for some students who have come to the end of a lease and can’t find a place to go or are forced to vacate an apartment due to flooding or who’ve fallen out with their family and have resorted to sleeping in their car or couch-surfing.

“We’re able to provide up to three weeks of living on campus in a shared apartment with a temporary parking permit,” Ajemian said.

This is in addition to meals in a campus dining hall. Housing is provided on a first-available basis, and students must meet certain criteria to receive this help. They must be currently enrolled or matriculated, they must be in good standing in regard to personal conduct and must continue

their search for housing while they are in temporary housing.

The support from the Basic Needs Services program is ongoing. “We meet with them weekly to help them find outside housing and to provide support,” Ajemian said.

She recognizes that affordable housing in Orange County is difficult for anyone to find. “But we know of community-based organizations, such as HomeShare OC,” she said. This program connects homeowners who have an extra room to rent with students who need affordable housing. Ajemian also works with Homeless Intervention Services of Orange County.

Students who face a major expense they cannot pay, such as a medical bill, can fill out an application for assistance from the Basic Needs Services program and then meet with one of the Basic Needs Services counselors. “We talk to them about their circumstances to find out if they’re eligible for a basic needs

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THEATER

Staging a shift in focus: ‘The Boys and the Nuns’

Community grant funds production

By Greg Hardesty,
contributing writer

When he started at CSUF in 2021, Josh Grisetti, an associate professor of musical theater, wanted to make sure the university was taking concrete action to honor its designation as a Hispanic Serving Institution. Coming from the world of professional theater, Grisetti was acutely aware of the unfortunate lack of diversity in stage productions – and the need to incubate at CSUF works that represent the Latiné experience, as well as those of other underrepresented communities.

Fast forward to early November 2023, when for three days, a musical Grisetti produced, “The Boys

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Josh Grisetti, actor and CSUF associate professor of musical theater, center, plays his part on “The Marvelous Mrs. Maisel.”

LEGACY

Paul Folino remembered for rebirth of golf at CSUF

Benefactor helped set the course

By Lou Ponsi,
contributing writer

If it were not for Paul Folino, there would be no golf program at Cal State Fullerton.

Those were the sentiments shared by Jason Drotter, the director of the CSUF golf program, when discussing Folino’s efforts in not only helping to restart men’s and women’s golf at the university after a 20-year hiatus but to help put mechanisms in place to ensure Titans’ golf will exist well into the future.

Folino, a business leader and philanthropist who contributed greatly to the advancement of several CSUF programs, died Oct. 14. He was 75.

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Enrolling
TRANSFER STUDENTS
in California

■ U.S. News & World Report, 2023

Cal State Fullerton

SUSTAINABILITY SUMMIT

Addressing climate change goals, clean-energy strategies

Region, campuses share vision

By Lou Ponsi, contributing writer

With a climate action plan that includes emissions forecasting, greenhouse gas inventory and reforestation strategies, Cal State Fullerton is among the forerunners in pursuing clean energy initiatives, with an end goal of long-term sustainability.

For the second consecutive year, CSUF hosted its Energy Sustainability Summit, which featured three panel discussions involving elected officials, industry professionals and academics in higher education.

Panelists for the Oct. 27 summit discussed current methods of collaboration plus strategies for continuing the transition to clean energy.

Among the panelists were Elissa Thomas, transportation demand manager at CSUF and Tamara Wallace ('08, '13), senior manager of energy, sustainability and transportation in the Department of Capital Planning, Design and Construction, Cal State University Office of the Chancellor.

Sen. Josh Newman, of the 29th Senate District of California, was the keynote speaker for the event, which was co-sponsored by Southern California Edison and Wells Fargo.

Greg Saks, vice president for university advancement at CSUF, delivered opening remarks.

"I truly believe that the fact that this summit is happening again is a testament to our region's collective commitment to advancing a collaborative effort to meet the state's climate goals and really be that catalyst for change," Saks said. "And it being at Cal State Fullerton seems so appropriate."

Saks cited a series of New York Times articles on energy transition from coal to renewables that stated 23% of electricity will come from renewable sources within months.

California remains committed to reducing carbon emissions by 40% by 2030, Saks said.

"Cal State Fullerton is the largest campus of the Cal State system," he said. "We have over 41,000 students, and we really are thrilled and excited about the amazing and important role we take in preparing students for this new industry and these new climate goals."

Thomas talked about what Cal State Fullerton is doing to help the state achieve its climate goals.

For example, CSUF was the first campus in the CSU system to craft an electric vehicle master plan, she said.

Thomas said such a master plan is necessary because transportation makes up the largest part of the carbon footprint.

CSUF currently has 48 electric vehicle charging ports on campus and has secured funding for another 52 ports through a partnership with Southern California Edison, Thomas said.

"So, we're going to effectively more than double our EV-charging infrastructure, thanks to that partnership with SCE, and better prepare our campus for the future," she said.

Newman, who serves on multiple committees related to climate change strategies and is chair of the Select Committee on Transitioning to a Zero Emission Energy Future, said the potential impacts of a warming planet could cost the state dearly on multiple levels.

"Today, my participation on these committees has given me what I would describe as a ringside seat on many of the challenges facing California as we work very hard to decarbonize our economy and our society," Newman said. "These climate events challenge our infrastructure and damage lives and communities. Here in Orange County, we're already seeing the effects of a changing climate, from atmospheric rivers to unprecedented heat waves to severe wildfires. Climate change will eventually affect every community around the world."

However, Californians can be proud of the state's demonstrated commitment to decarbonizing the most polluting sectors of the economy, the senator said.

"Climate change will eventually affect every community around the world," Newman said.

Wallace discussed what is being done within the entire CSU system to help reverse the negative impacts of current climate events.

The CSU encompasses 23 campuses with 500,000 students and 50,000 employees, spread across the entire state of California.

The student populations range from around 1,000 students to 42,000 on campuses in suburban, urban and rural settings.

"So, the range is very dramatic," Wallace said. "We also are the most diverse institution in the United States. We're the largest four-year public higher education institution in the United States."

First and foremost, CSUF is a community-serving institution, Wallace said.

"Many of our students actually come from the community, attend their local campus, and then gradu-



PHOTOS COURTESY OF CSUF NEWS MEDIA SERVICES

Carlos Pena, left, explains the Titan IV Road Harvest Project on Oct. 27 at the Energy Sustainability Summit.

ate and oftentimes live, work, and raise their families in that same community," she said. "So, in that sense, we are hyper-connected."

The CSU sustainability policy aligns with the state's initiatives now, but the next goal of 40% carbon emission reduction by 2030 is only six years away.

So, the time to start planning and implementing change is now, she said.

The implementation could come from the CSU students themselves, who are already having an impact while they're in school.

"So, impacting their educational opportunities and research opportunities,

that's where we can really make this shift, and I think that's where the transition really comes into play," Wallace said.

Several projects developed by students that were designed to advance clean energy into the future were displayed during the summit.

Other panelists included Stella Ursua, senior programs and partnership manager at Grid Alternatives and attorney Kristen Gomez, senior group manager, regulatory compliance and eco-mobility at Hyundai, and Paul Da Veiga, director of planning design and construction at UCI Health.



From left, Paul Da Veiga, Elissa Thomas, Tamara Wallace and Aja Clarke host a panel discussing during the Energy Sustainability Summit at Cal State Fullerton.



One of the student groups that presented eco-friendly projects during the summit.

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Cal State Fullerton

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DIVERSITY

Students get hands-on opportunity in cancer research

CSUF News Media Services

For biological science student Gloria Castañón, studying cancer treatment disparities among the Hispanic population is personal. Family members have been diagnosed with breast, lung and prostate cancers.

Castañón grew up in Oxnard in Ventura County, where her family worked in strawberry fields and picked other crops.

“Finding out more about cancer is especially important to me because I come from an agricultural community in which my family is exposed to harmful pesticide-related toxicities,” she said. “The lack of health care knowledge directly impacted my father, grandmothers and paternal grandfather.”

Castañón is learning about cancer and treatments as an undergraduate researcher in Cal State Fullerton’s Cancer Health Equity Research Partnership, which trains students in cancer disparities research.

Health disparities are gaps in the quality of health and health care that mirror differences in socioeconomic status, racial and ethnic background, and education level, according to the National Institutes of Health.

Marcelo E. Tolmasky, professor of biological science and director of CSUF’s Center for Applied Biotechnology Studies, directs the grant program, which partners with UC Irvine’s Chao Family Comprehensive Cancer Center.

“This firsthand experience is helping me to identify inequities experienced by marginalized communities and has reinforced my desire to solve health care disparities,” Castañón said.

Her research project addresses treatment disparities in Hispanic adults with B-cell acute lymphoblastic leukemia, a blood and bone marrow cancer.

In 2021, Cal State Fullerton was awarded a \$905,787 grant from the National Institutes of Health’s National Cancer Institute for the program. So far, the university has received \$683,612 in funding for the four-year program.

“The grant program focuses on providing cancer research education to build a pipeline of diverse future scientists in cancer health disparities research,” Tolmasky said.

“This partnership with UCI will contribute to the enhancement of cancer health equity research in Orange County through the development of institutional capacities, support of meritorious joint cancer research pilot projects, and the provision of cancer research experiences and programs for underrepresented students.”

Twenty undergraduate and graduate students, called Cancer Research Edu-

cation Program Scholars, have been selected for the program. While current scholars are studying science and public health, the program is open to all majors, Tolmasky said.

Ten students, including Castañón, started the program in fall 2022, and a new class of 10 scholars began this fall. Undergraduate students spend five semesters in the program, while graduate students complete their training in three semesters.

CSUF and UCI researchers also collaborate on pilot projects centered around the study and disparities of triple-negative breast, ovarian and testicular cancers and tumor growth.

Students receive research training with CSUF faculty in laboratory skills and scientific communication, take additional coursework on topics in public health and health care disparities, and attend seminars and conferences. In the summer, students spend 10 weeks working alongside research mentors at the Chao Family Comprehensive Cancer Center.

This summer, Castañón worked under the mentorship of Shawn P. Griffin, UCI health sciences assistant clinical professor in the Department of Clinical Pharmacy Practice. She worked with patients and combed data from their charts to compare two treatment regimens for adult patients with acute lymphoblastic leukemia. While this is a common type of cancer in children, it also affects older adults.

Castañón is collecting data to determine treatment-related toxicity in Hispanic patients receiving pediatric-inspired regimens to treat Acute lymphoblastic leukemia.

“This regimen has been the standard of care for adults who have ALL, but potentially causing a disparity within the Hispanic population,” she added. “We hypothesize that adult Hispanic patients who receive pediatric-inspired regimens have worse outcomes.”

The researchers plan to publish their results early next year, with Castañón a co-author on the research.

“The research is important because we want to decrease cancer health disparity within the Hispanic population and provide a more ethical and effective way of treating patients diagnosed with ALL,” Castañón said.

“I saw how my research could impact future patients by reassessing chemotherapy regimens and providing better patient outcomes for the Hispanic community.”

Castañón plans to present her research project at the 2023 CABSCon 8 meeting on Dec. 1, sponsored by the Center for Applied Biotechnology Studies.

Castañón transferred to CSUF in 2021 from Ventura College. She serves as a



PHOTO COURTESY OF CSUF NEWS MEDIA SERVICES

Gloria Castañón, center, with Marcelo E. Tolmasky, director of the research program, and UC Irvine’s Sora Park Tanjasiri, associate director of Cancer Health Equity and Community Engagement at the Chao Family Comprehensive Cancer Center

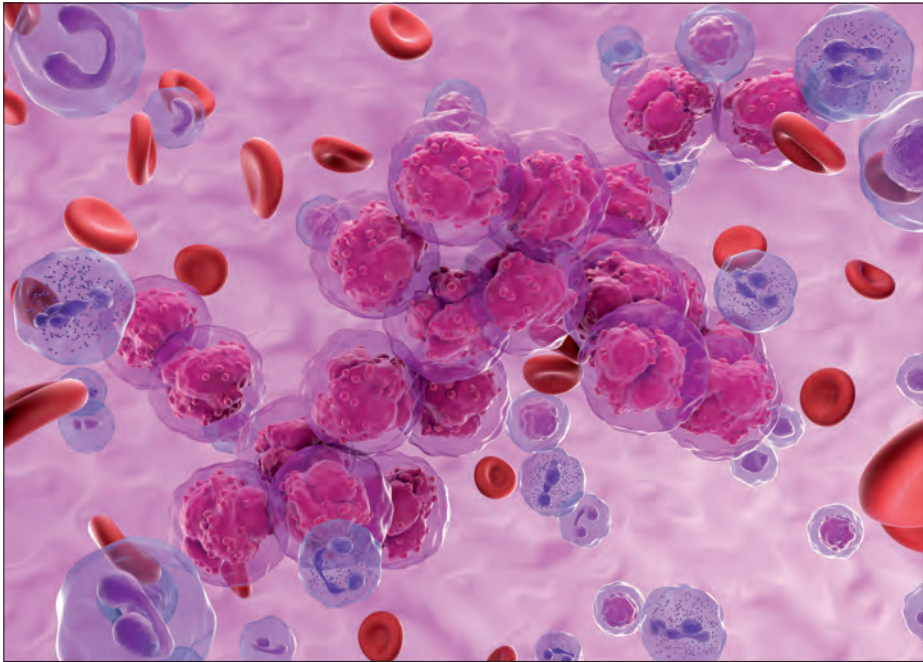


PHOTO ADOBE STOCK IMAGES

Acute lymphoblastic leukemia cancer cells in the blood flow

CSUF ambassador for the Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities and a peer adviser for Project RAISE. She also volunteers with the Flying Samaritans, a student organization that offers free medical treatment to people in the border town of El Hongo in Tecate, Baja California.

By participating in the research program, Castañón was introduced to opportunities in the pharmacy field. After she

finishes her bachelor’s degree program this fall, she plans to pursue a doctorate in pharmacy to become a pharmacist-scientist and is currently applying to pharmacy schools.

“Being a part of the grant program has inspired me to lead transformational changes in the health care system by researching ways to strengthen access to education and care for under-resourced and underserved communities,” she said.

FARM TO STUDENTS

Arboretum and Campus Garden keep The Pantry stocked

CSUF News Media Services

Jane Fonesca holds a pair of pruners in one hand and gently grabs a ripe desert gold peach hanging from a branch with the other. She handpicks the fruit at the Fullerton Arboretum, filling a container with six ready-to-eat peaches.

Fonseca, a Cal State Fullerton senior, volunteers to gather the day’s harvest of peaches, avocados and Valencia oranges, which will help feed fellow students who have been impacted by historically high costs of food and other living expenses.

Through a partnership with Associated Students Inc. Food Pantry (The Pantry), students experiencing food insecurity can reap the benefits of surplus harvests from the arboretum and CSUF Campus Garden.

“The fruit trees we care for can make a difference to students,” says arboretum horticulturist Amy Bulone. “Public garden horticulture is all about connecting people to plants, and there is no easier way to do that than by putting food on the table.”

Fonseca knows firsthand the benefits of having a campus food pantry with fresh-picked produce. In the past, she turned to The Pantry to help her with weekly groceries and learned about other resources that help students, such as food assistance programs and local food banks.

“I work a minimum wage job. I have to pay rent, bills and school expenses,” says Fonseca. “I don’t always have a lot of extra money for food. Thankfully, The Pantry has helped provide me with the food I needed.”

Since opening in August 2021, 3,333 students have accessed The Pantry.

“As we work to become a well-known service among all students at CSUF, we anticipate serving more students every year,” shares Keya Allen, ASI associate executive director.

The Pantry has received more than 2,800 pounds of fresh fruit from the arboretum since the partnership started in early 2022.

The 26-acre arboretum grows a bounty of other fresh fruit, including apples, pears, plums, nectarines, lemons and limes. Crops vary each season to donate to The Pantry, with the arboretum’s team harvesting pears and apples this fall, followed by persimmons and pomegranates.

The arboretum’s crops also include tomatoes, peppers, carrots, zucchini, herbs and, later in the fall season, leafy greens

such as chard and lettuce.

In return for the fresh fruit, pantry produce past its shelf-life is taken to the arboretum to recycle into compost.

“Old produce from The Pantry results in compost that goes back underneath the fruit trees to nourish new fruit — coming full circle,” Bulone says.

A 2018 study of students’ basic needs by the California State University Office of the Chancellor found that nearly 42% of students across CSU campuses experienced food insecurity.

During the pandemic, a campus survey conducted by public health faculty members Tabashir Nobari and Maria Koleilat revealed that 19% of the students surveyed faced chronic food insecurity.

“It’s hard for students to make ends meet with high rent, educational expenses and transportation,” relays Chris Mikaelian, Class of 2023 international business graduate who served as 2022-23 ASI vice president.

“Basic human needs should be the last thing any student should worry about when obtaining an education. The Pantry is an essential service that helps students maintain their well-being and achieve student success.”

To address students’ basic needs at Cal State Fullerton, ASI started a monthly mobile food pantry in the fall of 2018.

Three years later, a permanent 700-square-foot pantry opened in Titan Student Union. Students can shop for free produce and essential food items — eggs, milk, bread, snacks, ready-to-eat frozen foods and soups — in a confidential environment.

“Early on, it was clear that ASI needed to increase food resources and operating hours for CSUF students and improve accessibility to tackle food insecurity on campus,” says Dave Edwards, ASI executive director. “We want students’ basic needs met with fewer hurdles.”

The Pantry is moving to a more spacious and prominent location in the Titan Student Union in October. The new space is double the size of the current location and can serve an increased number of students weekly.

This increased need among students is due to the rising cost of living and the challenging responsibilities that college students face, Allen notes.

In addition to the arboretum partnership, the CSUF Campus Garden and The Pantry began working together earlier this year to address student food insecurity and hunger issues. The garden opened last spring between the Humanities-Social Sciences Building and Gordon Hall.

Student organizations, campus departments, centers and classes oversee the garden’s nine beds, which sprouted bountiful harvests of vegetables and herbs in spring. The garden has donated carrots, radishes, kale, sugar snap peas, and herbs, including cilantro, parsley and sorrel.

“Each group is responsible for maintaining its

bed for a semester or academic year, and many have chosen to provision their produce to The Pantry,” says John Bock, professor of anthropology and director of the Center for Sustainability, which provides training and support in growing, maintaining and harvesting.

The center’s future endeavors include expanding the garden with additional beds, offering plots to individuals and starting a garden club.

“The garden is an opportunity for the campus community to experience all the benefits of gardening and to recognize the importance of a resilient and sustainable local food system to address food justice and food and nutritional insecurity,” Bock said.

“Through our collaborative efforts with the arboretum and garden, The Pantry is addressing food insecurity among CSUF students by distributing food and produce at no cost that is nutritious and easily accessible,” Allen said.



PHOTOS COURTESY OF CSUF NEWS MEDIA SERVICES
Amy Bulone, Fullerton Arboretum horticulturist



In the Titan Student Union, The Pantry is stocked with fresh fruits for CSUF students.

GIVING TUESDAY

Donors can help people by choosing their favorite cause

Basic Needs has matching grant

By Jenelyn Russo,
contributing writer

A day recognized globally each year with its focus on generosity, Giving Tuesday – the Tuesday after Thanksgiving – aims to create a culture of compassion and philanthropy by encouraging individuals to donate to their favorite cause, nonprofit or charity.

One local opportunity for Giving Tuesday is to donate in support of Cal State Fullerton's Basic Needs Services, a critical department on campus that provides resources to students in need in areas such as food insecurity, temporary housing, hygiene products and career clothing.

In addition to providing items of support through the ASI Food Pantry or Tuffy's Career Closet, CSUF Basic Needs Services also provides Basic Needs Grants, financial assistance for students who are experiencing unforeseen hardships in areas related to housing, transportation, utilities or medical care. Monetary donations received this Giving Tuesday in support of CSUF Basic Needs Grants will help ensure Titans can stay focused on their educational path.

"These grants are provided to (students who) find themselves in very unexpected circumstances where they can't pay for their housing or their transportation method is taken away from them," said CSUF Director of Annual Giving, Grace Johnson. "With what we are able to provide with these grants, it gives them options that allow their lives to be as disturbed as little as possible."

Since the COVID-19 pandemic began, CSUF Basic Needs Services has seen triple the requests, which equates to approximately 600 students per week. Economic inflation has played a large role in this increase in need, but Johnson says the objective is to not let the economy keep these Titans from pursuing their educational goals.

"We don't want those outside factors to be the reason they are getting pulled away from their career path and from where they want to be," Johnson said. "For any student, Cal State Fullerton is a stepping stone to what they want to do for the rest of their lives. They're spending these very transformative years here to get somewhere else, and for some people, it's to get to a better life. With Basic Needs Services, they're able to stay on track, graduate and get to that next point."

In the past four years, Giving Tuesday donations have raised more than \$50,000 for Basic Needs Grants, and this year, the goal is to surpass \$10,000 in giving in support of this emergency funding for students. For 2023, a generous donor is providing a matching gift up to \$5,000, allowing each person's donation to have an even greater impact.

"We're really grateful for our matching gift donor," Johnson said. "It allows people who think that their donation might not mean a lot to actually have a really great value. It means a lot when people choose on Giving Tuesday to prioritize Cal State Fullerton because they recognize the value that this institution serves to our Orange County community, which allows us to continue to be a partner in that way."



Grace Johnson, director of Annual Giving at Cal State Fullerton

PHOTO COURTESY OF CSUF NEWS MEDIA SERVICES

Giving Tuesday is Nov. 28, but those who want to contribute to the efforts of CSUF's Basic Needs Services can donate now by visiting give.fullerton.edu/kindness. A monetary gift not only supports Titan students but the greater Orange County community that continues to benefit from CSUF graduates who are making an impact on the local workforce.

"That speaks to the power of this institution and how much we support the Orange County community," Johnson said. "When someone makes a donation on Giving Tuesday for Cal State Fullerton Basic Needs Services, they're helping continue to power Orange County and to drive the professional community that much further."

"And not just Cal State Fullerton," Johnson continued. "It's greater Orange County that benefits from this. We are putting our graduates out into the workforce. It's really inspiring to see that people in the community care about our students and about where Cal State Fullerton is going and what we are doing for Orange County by making a donation."

To donate in support of Cal State Fullerton's Basic Needs Grants, visit give.fullerton.edu/kindness

To learn more about Cal State Fullerton's Basic Needs Services, visit fullerton.edu/basic-needs/



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Cal State Fullerton donors support programs, scholarships and student needs.

ADMINISTRATION

Sociology professor will lead academic programs

CSUF News Media Services

Eileen T. Walsh, professor of sociology, is stepping into her new role as Cal State Fullerton's associate vice president for academic programs. Her new appointment, effective Nov. 1, is for a limited term through December 2024.

"I'm passionate about the transformative power of learning and committed to developing programs that improve the student college experience," Walsh said.

Walsh, who grew up in a working-class family in East Los Angeles and was the first in her family to attend and graduate from college, joined the university in 2006.

During her tenure, she has served as chair of the Department of Sociology from 2013-19, as department graduate adviser, and developed four new courses for undergraduates and one for graduate students. She also initiated forming the Transfer Student Learning Community in 2018 for incoming sociology majors, which has dramatically improved graduation rates.

Since 2006, Walsh has served on a number of committees of the Academic Senate, including being elected to the executive committee six times. Walsh has been chair of the Academic Senate for the 2022-23 academic year and is stepping aside to begin her new administrative position. Matthew Jarvis, chair and associate professor of political science and Academic Senate vice chair, assumes that role.

The Office of Academic Programs in the Division of Academic Affairs facilitates the planning and coordination of academic curriculum and programs for undergraduate education and general education. The office oversees curriculum changes and also focuses on graduate programs and ways to expand offerings to serve students better, Walsh noted.

The office includes Graduate Studies, Undergraduate Studies and General Education and the Faculty Development Center.

"Our office is laser-focused on reducing academic barriers that impede students' progress to graduation in a timely manner, reducing the equity



Eileen T. Walsh, associate vice president for academic programs

PHOTOS COURTESY OF CSUF NEWS MEDIA SERVICES

gaps across the board and finding appropriate support systems to integrate students into their major programs," she said.

In her new role, Walsh looks forward to supporting the work of Academic Programs, including efforts to implement mandated programs by the California State University Chancellor's Office. These programs include the Program Pathways Mapper, a tool used to clarify the pathways to graduation for transfer students.

Walsh will assist in complying with other mandates and strategies to improve student retention and expansion of graduate programs. She also will help with the Faculty Development Center's

plans for a leadership academy for college department chairs.

"There are a few other important initiatives that I will address in the short-term, including embedding equitable pedagogy in all Faculty Development Center training and improving the retention, tenure and promotion process for faculty as a strategy to reduce equity gaps," Walsh said.

In 2019, Walsh received the university's Leadership Award, which recognizes a staff or faculty member or administrator who demonstrates exceptional leadership qualities and motivates and inspires others to a high level of commitment by creating a compelling vision. She received the accolade for be-

ing an extraordinary role model and leader in the College of Humanities and Social Sciences.

Before entering higher education, Walsh had a 20-year career with the County of Orange as a research analyst and was promoted to several executive management positions. She has served on the board of several community organizations and as an elected member of the Laguna Beach Unified School District Board of Education.

Walsh, whose research interests include equitable and culturally relevant pedagogy and white supremacy, earned a bachelor's degree in English and a master's degree and doctorate in sociology from USC.

Needs

FROM PAGE 1

grant, which is a one-time option,” Ajemian said.

One of the more popular aspects of the Basic Needs Services program is the full-size hygiene products that students can receive for free. “Students can come in once a month without an appointment and pick up items such as shampoo, toothpaste, deodorant, shaving cream, dental floss and more,” she said.

They can also choose up to six items of gently used clothing from the Tuffy Career Closet if they need professional clothing for a job interview or if they’re starting an internship.

The hygiene products and professional clothing are donated by faculty, staff and others.

Workshops for students that explain how to manage the practicalities of their lives are also offered. “We have a financial literacy series and a healthy eating series. We give a basic needs seminar on how to be proactive in creating a budget, finding an apartment—it’s a holistic approach,” Ajemian said. Workshops have also covered managing debt, understanding taxes, graduation on a budget, financial wellness and consumer awareness.

Much of her work is connecting students to resources they didn’t know about on campus such as the ASI food pantry or the Career Center, which can help them find employment. Her goal is to allow students with unforeseen hardship to continue their education all the way to graduation.

And she hopes the services the program offers will expand.

“For instance, we’d like to provide grocery store gift cards, which would be helpful if a student has dietary restrictions or an infant to feed — this is not part of our pantry, and it would be great to expand. We’re always looking for opportunities to grow,” she said.



PHOTOS COURTESY OF CSUF NEWS MEDIA SERVICES

Tuffy’s Basic Needs Services is on the first floor of McCarthy Hall on the CSUF campus.



Food and financial assistance, temporary housing and a career closet are all available to students in need.



Once a month, students can receive complimentary full-sized hygiene products.

Arts

FROM PAGE 1

and the Nuns,” enjoyed a successful run in the Arena Theatre at the Clayes Performing Arts Center.

Unlikely alliance

The musical, inspired by real events, recounts the unlikely alliance between a group of Catholic nuns and gay activists in 1980s Chicago who band together to get an ordinance protecting the rights of gay people passed (the ordinance eventually was passed).

The main character in the story, the brainchild of Sandra Delgado, a Colombian American writer, actor, singer and producer, is Pablo, a musician searching for his place in the world. Featuring music of the ’80s, “The Boys and the Nuns” examines identity, belonging, and faith.

“Beyond being something that serves the needs of the school and diversity issues and all of those important things,” says Grisetti, who wrote a grant proposal that made the production possible, “it’s also just a really cool piece with a great story, really fun characters and catchy music.”

New digital toys

“The Boys and the Nuns” was made possible by a \$113,000 HSI Community Grant sponsored by Cal State Northridge and Apple, Inc.

Included in the package was nearly \$30,000 in new technology that CSUF students and faculty will be enjoying for years to develop and stage new musical theatre works.

The theater department received six desktop computers with all the latest bells and whistles and creative software, plus 10 new-generation iPads for producing scripts and scores with blocking and stage management functions, as well as six cameras and two high-quality microphones.

We had been operating on a handful of older computers,” Grisetti said. “I’m sure over the coming years, “we’ll find a million uses for this technology.”

Collaborators

Chicago native Delgado, while on a one-year assignment as an artist-in-residence at the Loyola University Chicago Department of Fine and Performing Arts, began working on “The Boys and the

Nuns” just before the COVID-19 pandemic hit.

“I love my city and its history and was really motivated to share lesser-known things about Chicago that I believe deserve wider recognition and that showcase Latiné lives,” said Delgado, who wrote the script and some of the lyrics, most of which were written by her collaborator in Chicago, composer Michael McBride.

Jonny Martinez was director and choreographer of “The Boys and the Nuns,” and Rod Bagheri was musical director.

Ryan Morales Green, the New York-based executive director of the Latiné Musical Theatre Lab who collaborated with Grisetti on the grant, was instrumental in getting the musical staged at CSUF.

Delgado and McBride worked into the score Spanish-language power ballads as well as synthesizer-drenched new-wave tunes and Chicago’s homegrown house music.

A spark?

Grisetti hopes that “The Boys and the Nuns” spurs more diverse representation on the stage.

“From an industry perspective,” he says, “there’s a huge shortfall of creative work in the pipeline — you can count on one hand the number of shows that explicitly showcase Latiné characters and performers.

“Most university theater does what Broadway does,” Grisetti said, “but if Broadway is not serving the needs of the students or society in general because those diverse stories are not being told, we need to incubate new material that could end up on Broadway or in other national theaters.

“This production served our students as well as the industry.”

Working together

Delgado often turns to history for inspiration for her works.

A team of her students helped her transcribe interviews and conduct research for “The Boys and the Nuns.”

Developing the work during stay-at-home orders during the pandemic, Delgado said, was a unique experience.

“It was very eerie to be working on a play during a pandemic that was about another pandemic,” Delgado said. “Some of the lines in the play took on a different meaning and became very real to everyone.”

Delgado said the themes of “The Boys and the Nuns” have particular resonance in such divisive times.

“These nuns were fighting for equal rights in the church, and I thought how beautiful and uplifting it was to have these two very different populations that you wouldn’t normally put together working toward achieving something together.”



PHOTO BY MICHAEL KITADA, ORANGE COUNTY REGISTER/SCNG

Paul Folino, former CEO of Emulex and longtime Cal State Fullerton donor, shown at his office on July 7, 2003.

Folino

FROM PAGE 1

“We have lost a true Titan,” CSUF President Sylvia Alva said of Folino’s passing, “His willingness to share freely of his time, connections and resources made him a Titan in the truest sense of the word.”

Folino, the chief executive of Emulex, a Costa Mesa-based computer networking company, spearheaded a fundraising effort to reestablish golf at CSUF for the 2009-10 season after an economic downturn prompted the sport to be disbanded more than 20 years earlier.

Folino had a business connection with Drotter’s wife, and the two men became acquainted at social events.

Both men were also avid golfers.

In a meeting at Folino’s office, Drotter said he was surprised CSUF didn’t have men’s or women’s golf because many Orange County students would be looking for a program while in college.

Folino agreed.

“And the funny thing, about two or three weeks later, I got an invite to his office again,” Drotter said. “And in that office was the president of the university, Milton Gordon.”

Brian Quinn, CSUF’s athletic director at the time, was also in that meeting and was in full support of the return of golf.

At that meeting, Folino committed to raising the necessary funds to establish a Titans golf program and keep it going for five years.

Gordon said the university would fund the program after five years, Drotter recalled.

A fundraising committee was established with Drotter serving on the committee as a golf consultant.

Drotter, a teaching pro with coaching experience at the high

school level, then came on as the head coach of the men’s team. Professional golfer Pearl Sinn-Bonanni was hired as the women’s coach.

Fundraising became more difficult with the onset of another economic slump, and the university had a new president after Gordon stepped down.

“And so, the original commitment of being funded by the university didn’t come through after five years, Drotter said. “And Paul agreed to stay on for as long as it would take, and he stayed on for nine years.”

Folino was the architect of the Folino Invitational, a golf tournament and fundraiser that raised more than \$1 million during the five years of his commitment.

Following the first five years, Folino kept the Folino Invitational going for another five years to build a \$1 million endowment for the Titan men’s and women’s golf programs.

“We want to make sure that there’s a foundation,” Drotter said. “We have \$1.5 million in a golf program foundation, and Paul was instrumental in that, as well. It was kind of an idea that we kicked around, but if it weren’t for Paul, we wouldn’t be able to do it.”

Under Drotter’s guidance since the rebirth of golf at CSUF, the Titans won Big West Men’s Golf Championships in 2013, 2014 and 2019, earning Drotter coach-of-the-year honors three times.

The Titans have also made two NCAA Tournament appearances and have also had multiple golfers named to all-conference teams.

Along with CSUF, Folino was a major supporter of Chapman University, the Orange County Performing Arts Center and South Coast Repertory.

He was also instrumental in orchestrating Emulex Corp.’s partnership with the Hoag Classic Golf Tournament, where he served as chairman and CEO.

Folino’s death was reported in multiple newspapers, business publications and websites.

“He walked the walk and talked the talk,” wrote Trish Reed, associate director of development at CSUF.

Folino also has the distinction of having the only street on the CSUF campus named in honor of an individual.



PHOTO COURTESY OF CSUF NEWS MEDIA SERVICES

The cast of “The Boys and the Nuns,” which ran for three performances at the Arena Theatre at the Clayes Performing Arts Center at Cal State Fullerton this month

MEN'S BASKETBALL

Taylor motivates players to live up to their potential

By **Brian Robin,**
contributing writer

Dedrique Taylor was in an expansive, almost exuberant, mood, his usual reserved, cool, clinical demeanor buried under an excitement usually seen at the end of the season — if then.

For that, you can thank two factors: his Cal State Fullerton men's basketball team has played in the last game of the Big West Tournament four of the last five years, and that, yet again, his fellow Big West coaches ignored this fact and did him another huge favor.

They picked the Titans to finish sixth in the preseason coaches poll.

"I love it. They're so smart, they're stupid," he said, his voice rising in excitement with each letter. "You picked the program that has reached the finals of the Big West Conference Tournament four of the last five years sixth. ... It's par for the course, and I appreciate it. We'll take it and keep on going. We'll do what we do, and the rest of you can read about it when we're still playing and you're at home. It's awesome."

Speaking of "awesome," Taylor has redefined what that word means in the big picture of Cal State Fullerton men's basketball. He enters his 11th season as the first coach in program history to put up back-to-back 20-win seasons and the only coach to take two CSUF men's teams to the NCAA Tournament, bringing the Titans to the 2018 and 2022 Big Dances. Along the way, the Titans lost in the finals of the 2019 and 2023 conference tournaments.

This, naturally, affects recruiting. Taylor attracted several players who enjoyed success at smaller programs. On the surface, there's not a marquee ex-pat from the transfer portal coming in with the same impact E.J. Anosike brought to Fullerton two years ago. Then again, nobody at the outset of the 2021-22 season saw Anosike as the on-court game-changer he became.

"When you have success and experience success, you're able to point back on why you're able to have success," Taylor said. "We've been able to have success the last five years and we can always revert back to that in recruiting. ... We're looking for not just talent, but guys who have high character. Guys who fit a certain type of character. The more we do it that way, the more our staff is able to identify those guys and go get them."

"When we get them, we reference quite a bit about our past, telling them, 'This is why we won. This is why we lost."

Now, how are you going to define your time here?"

Definition is the key word here because there is what Taylor described as the theme of the 2023-24 Titans' season. Can a Titans team who had its leading scorer — Latrell Wrightsell Jr. — take his 16.3 points, 2.4 assists and 1.5 steals per game to Alabama, define the moment? Or will the moment define the Titans?

Wrightsell's transfer hit Taylor like a 2-by-4 between the eyes, especially since the first-team All-Big West guard told Taylor two weeks earlier he was staying put. But Taylor refuses to let it define the Titans' season going forward. He sees it as a defining moment in his program.

"Does it hurt? Yes, it hurts ...," Taylor said. "But my thought is that this is a trend moving forward, and let's make the best of it."

That's Taylor, taking a page from his book and defining this moment in time. And when he's not asking his players to define the moment, he's asking them to do a simple thing. A simple thing relevant to their abilities and their skill sets, the success of which will define the Titans' season.

"I've been on a rant for the last four weeks about doing your ... job," Taylor said, his voice again taking on an animated quality.

Taylor has created motivational signs that he says freshmen kind of get but seniors really understand.

"I love that. I appreciate that because our seniors have been here and understand what it means to do your ... job."

That starts with senior Tory San Antonio, who became only the second CSUF player in program history to be named Big West Defensive Player of the Year. In the conference tournament, San Antonio did his job so well that he nearly doubled his season scoring average, contributing a 14.3-point average in three games. Taylor said that sent San Antonio into this season with a confidence heretofore unseen in his CSUF career.

It continues with senior guard Max Jones, who averaged 12.5 points a game last year, doing his job so well that he averaged 16.3 points over the last 11 games, providing a key offensive alternative to Wrightsell down the stretch. Those two will help define where the Titans are going this season.

"We're not asking them to do anything other than what they're capable of: but do their job and do it confidently," Taylor said. "I think the growth with these two guys confidence-wise is they understand the tasks and they understand what their jobs are."



PHOTO COURTESY OF CSUF NEWS MEDIA SERVICES

The Titans' Grayson Carper goes for a shot against B.J. Davis of host San Diego State on Nov. 6.

Supplementing those two are returners John Mikey Square, Vincent Lee and Grayson Carper. Those three, whom Taylor called "the glue guys," will play deeper, more involved roles than they did last year. Taylor said his expectations for those three are reasonable, given their skill sets and talent level. But their leash for making mistakes is shorter. Taylor and his staff have bought stock in that trio, and they now expect growth.

The rest of the Titans' growth rests on how fast transfers Jalen Cooper, DJ Brewton, Zack Visentin and Beril Kabamba define their moments and adjust to doing their jobs in a new environment and with new demands.

The 6-foot-3 Brewton, who Taylor said "will dictate a lot of what happens to us as a team," was an all-conference guard at Alcorn State, where he averaged 12 points a game. Cooper, a 6-6 forward, averaged 17.4 points and 8.7 rebounds at Palm Beach Atlantic. The 6-5 Kabamba averaged 28.6 points and 8.7 rebounds at Spring Hill College in Alabama. And the 6-9, 280-pound Visentin, who spent two seasons at Idaho State before transferring to Snow College last year, averaged 11.5 points and 6.6 rebounds for Snow.

How they adapt to the speed and rig-

ors of Division I is important. But more important is how they adapt to, well, doing their new jobs.

"When they were at Division 2, they were bigger, stronger and faster than everyone at that level," Taylor said, largely referring to Cooper and Kabamba. "Now, what becomes their separator? I tell them to look to their right and look to their left and now everyone's the same. Those physical things they possess are no longer attributes. Once they understand how to use their talent to become separators, they can be beneficial and productive to us going forward."

Three freshmen: guard Antwan Robinson, 7-footer Kendrick De Luna and Keith Richard, who Taylor said is so athletic that he played in a state championship game on a Tuesday night, then went out and ran a 10.6-second 100-meters on a partially fractured shin, will see time as well.

"We have the chance to be a really good ball club. Whether we do or don't depends on how you are going to define the moment. Because those moments will happen," Taylor said, sticking to his animated tone. "There are plenty of opportunities to define what those moments will look like. It's up to you to define them."

TITAN OF EMPOWERMENT

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