



CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY  
FULLERTON

# TITAN REPORT

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## Cal State Fullerton Ranked Among Nation's Best Value Colleges

Cal State Fullerton has moved up to the top quartile of the nation's "Best Value Colleges," according to *Forbes'* recently released annual ranking of higher education institutions.

The publication — using data from the U.S. Department of Education's College Scorecard and PayScale — revised its methodology for 2018 to put more emphasis on earnings, price and debt. *Forbes* also switched to net price, which takes into account the impact of students' financial aid and the costs of room and board.

Cal State Fullerton moved up to 68th out of 300 institutions this year as compared to its ranking of 190 in 2017. The institution delivers 109 degrees at 46 percent below the national average total cost of attendance at four-year public universities, according to the U.S. Department of Education, and is among the top performers in the nation in helping low-income students reach financial success. In addition, its graduates earn 12 percent more than the national average for public universities.

## TITAN RESEARCHERS DECODE THE DNA OF AQUATIC FERNS

In a pioneering collaborative study with researchers across the globe, Cal State Fullerton biologist Joshua P. Der and his students have uncovered all the genes that make up the DNA of two aquatic ferns, azolla and salvinia.

"Both of these ferns represent a major lineage of plants that has gone unrepresented among sequenced plants," said Der, assistant

professor of biological science and lead author of the study, published July 2 in *Nature Plants*.

"It's important research because no one has studied these ferns before, and also our study can be used for other studies about plant genome sequence," said Stephany Angarita, an undergraduate health science major who is among the journal paper's co-authors.

Der and his students used high-tech supercomputers, operated by CSUF's Center for Computational and Applied Mathematics, to analyze the genome sequences.

"This project helped me develop a new set of computational skills that can be applied to almost anything I do," said Angarita, who plans to pursue a research career in the medical field.



## STUDENTS TO BUILD MULTIMEDIA SKILLS REPORTING FROM THE BORDER

While some students will be studying immigration from books and news clippings in the fall, Cal State Fullerton communications students will be at the U.S.-Mexico border, reporting and producing the stories of the families affected.

Broadcast television veteran and lecturer Jesus Ayala will teach the "Reporting About Minorities of the Southern Border" class, focusing on migrant children, border militarization post 9/11 and NAFTA's influence on border towns. The class will travel to Tijuana, report from both sides of the border and produce video segments, which could be aired nationally by CSUF partners Univision and Borderzine.com.

"Our students will be doing on-the-ground reporting that will bring to life the national and global issues in both politics and human experience," said Jason Shepard, chair and associate professor of communications.

## CAMPUS PREPARES STUDENTS FOR CAREERS IN NATIONAL SECURITY, INTELLIGENCE

To expand the pool of people gathering and analyzing intelligence following 9/11, the United States government and intelligence community began reaching out to universities to create a pipeline for students to enter such careers.

Since 2007, 73 students have completed the Intelligence Community Scholars Program at Cal State Fullerton, which offers undergraduate students mentoring, networking and advanced study of national security, intelligence, global studies, language proficiency, geography and other subjects.

“Cal State Fullerton provides the beautifully rich pool of diversity that the government and intelligence community are seeking,” said Valerie O’Regan, professor of political science and program coordinator. “We have so much diversity in terms of gender, ethnicity, religion, strategic languages and socioeconomic factors.”

According to O’Regan, alumni of the program have gone on to careers in the Office of the Director of National Intelligence, Department of Defense, FBI, military intelligence, law enforcement, sheriff’s departments, anti-terrorism task forces and more.



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## Did You Know?

North Orange County Chamber of Commerce recently honored Cal State Fullerton as one of the “Jewels of Our Community.” The award was presented June 22 during the organization’s 2018 Business Excellence and Leadership Awards. University President Fram Virjee, via video, thanked the chamber: “On behalf of Cal State Fullerton’s faculty, staff, students and its nearly 300,000 alumni —the vast majority of which live and work in Orange County — I want to thank the North Orange County Chamber of Commerce for all its support and for this honor.

“Cal State Fullerton is a university of significance, significance in Orange County, significance in our nation. And our impact is only exceeded by the unique stories of our success,” said Virjee, who acknowledged one example in Titan alumnus and fellow honoree U.S. Rep. Ed Royce.

*Pictured: U.S. Rep. Ed Royce '77 (business administration) and Kari Knutson Miller, CSUF provost and vice president for academic affairs*