

CAL STATE

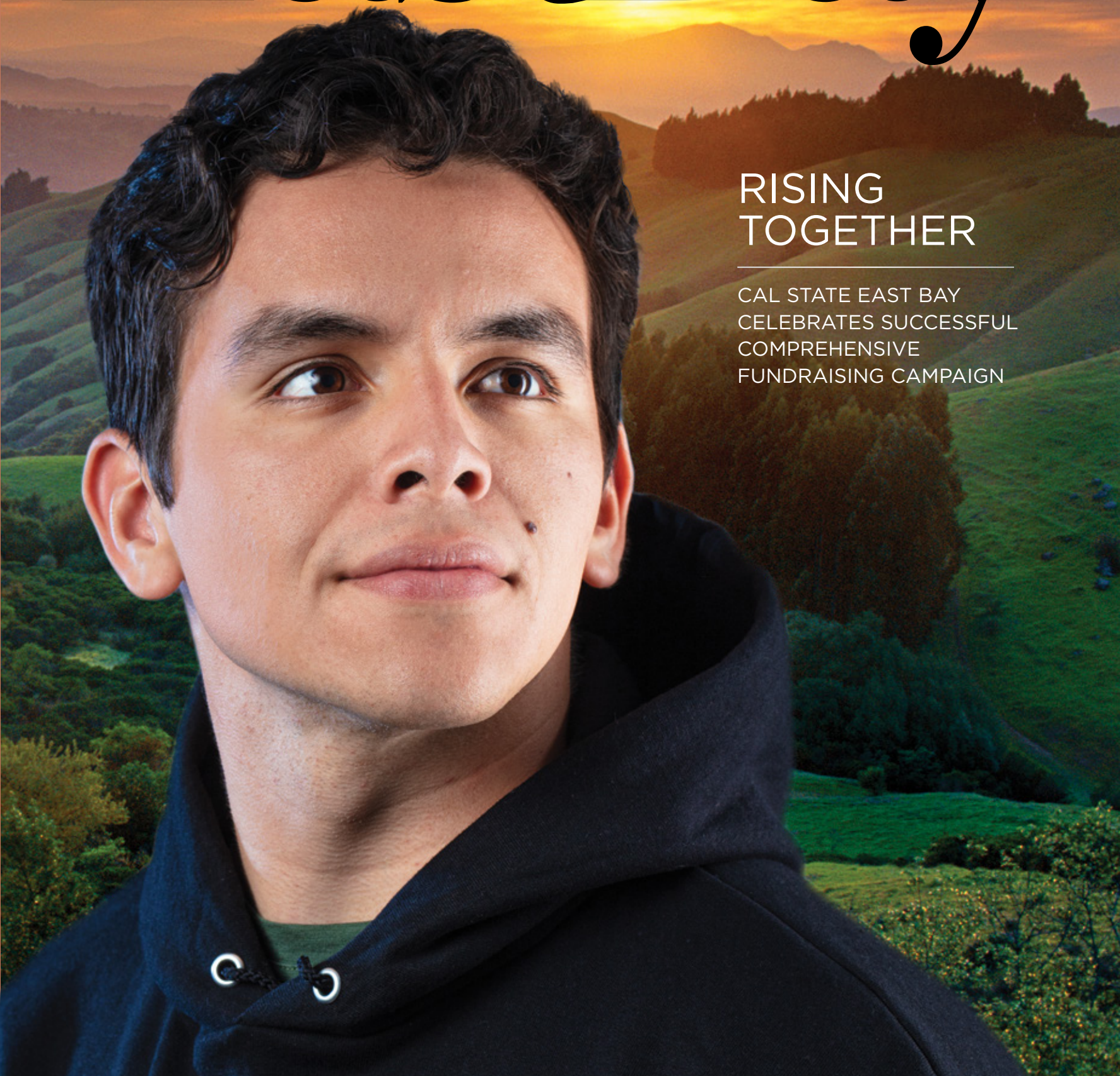
FALL 2019

# East Bay

## RIISING TOGETHER

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CAL STATE EAST BAY  
CELEBRATES SUCCESSFUL  
COMPREHENSIVE  
FUNDRAISING CAMPAIGN







# CAL STATE East Bay

magazine is published by the Office of University Communications and Marketing, a department of the Division of University Advancement.

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\*Please note: Letters will be printed at the discretion of Cal State East Bay and may be edited for publication.

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COVER: Pablo Villaseñor is a junior at Cal State East Bay and a communications major expected to graduate in the spring of 2021. Born and raised in San Leandro, Villaseñor chose Cal State East Bay for its high-quality education and proximity to his home and family. As an on-campus student employee and member of Sigma Delta Upsilon, a local fraternity, he embodies the university's commitment to student success and experiential learning.  GARVIN TSO & GARY CRABBE / ENLIGHTENED IMAGES; ENLIGHTPHOTO.COM

## CAL STATE EAST BAY





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Fetid adder's tongue or slink pod (pictured here) is one of the many plants faculty and students at Cal State East Bay's new Green Biome Institute will be sequencing in the next year. To learn more about GBI, see page 18.

📷 COURTESY OF CHRIS BAYSDORFER



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# PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

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The fall issue of Cal State East Bay Magazine celebrates an important achievement for the university. Three years ago, during our 60th anniversary, I challenged our campus community to raise \$60 million in honor of the milestone. I am pleased to share that the Rising in the East comprehensive campaign is now concluding having exceeded its goal, raising \$71 million for our priority areas of People, Place and Purpose.

Given this extremely ambitious effort for Cal State East Bay, we needed to be deliberate about the fundraising we do for our university — our students, faculty and staff; the places on all three of our campuses — Hayward, Concord and Oakland — where we learn, discover and create; and the purposes that ultimately influence our communities and the ever-changing and evolving world around us.

My goal has always been to work collaboratively with our staff, faculty, alumni and community partners as we help our students dream, be successful in their endeavors, and become socially responsible citizens in the world. In the forthcoming pages, I invite you to learn more about a few of the significant successes we have had and the lives we are changing.

For example, this fall, we announced the creation of the Green Biome Institute, which will be housed within the College of Science and provide our students with experience and research opportunities not currently available at any other California State University or University of California campus. The work done at GBI will help preserve the genetic diversity of plants in California, contribute to the discovery of new and useful biological processes that can improve human lives, and will create publicly-available molecular profiles of endangered native California plants. As a result, Cal State East Bay is now uniquely positioned to become a leader in the world of modern plant conservation genetics.

The stories in this magazine demonstrate our past and continued commitment to support the upward mobility of Cal State East Bay students and alumni. I hope as you read their stories located on the campaign website ([csueastbay.edu/rising](http://csueastbay.edu/rising)), you feel proud to have supported our Rising in the East campaign and understand how your participation has directly improved the lives of our students who will graduate ready to improve their communities and the world.

Earlier this fall, I announced I will be retiring from Cal State East Bay and the CSU system on June 30, 2020. As I said in my message to campus, out of my 40 years as a California state employee, the last eight years serving as president of this university have been the most fulfilling of my career. As I reflect on the achievements we have had together, I know this university will continue to be “Rising in the East,” because we have more people to serve, more opportunities to uncover and more solutions to be found.

Go, Pioneers!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Leroy M. Morishita". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Dr. Leroy M. Morishita  
President



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# CAL STATE EAST BAY University News

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## Cal State East Bay Among Most Diverse Universities in Nation

When it comes to diversity, Cal State East Bay tops the charts. According to a new Wall Street Journal/Times Higher Education College Rankings list, the university is one of the most diverse (No. 6) in the nation.

The rankings measure a school's environment based on various factors, including the percentage of Pell Grant recipients as well as the diversity of students and staff, and the number of first-generation students enrolled. At Cal State East Bay, first-generation students make up 61 percent of the student population, and 41 percent received Pell Grants in 2018-19.

Nine other campuses from the California State University made the top 27 list in the environment category, including California State University, Northridge (No. 2) and San Francisco State University (No. 5).



The Wall Street Journal listings also ranked universities in several other categories, including resources, engagement and outcomes. Cal State East Bay was ranked 601 out of 800 overall.

A full listing of the rankings and more information about the methodology used is available on the Wall Street Journal's World University Rankings website ([timeshighereducation.com](https://timeshighereducation.com)).

## CSUEB Receives Sixth HEED Award

Cal State East Bay has once again been recognized for championing diversity and inclusion. For the sixth consecutive year, the university has received the Higher Education Excellence in Diversity award from "INSIGHT Into Diversity" magazine.

The award is the only national recognition honoring universities and colleges for their efforts and successes in diversity and inclusion.

For example, Cal State East Bay's Sankofa program aims to support African American transfer students and is the first of its kind in the California State University system to become an official affiliate of the Umoja Community Program. And a similar program focused on Latinx transfer students, known on campus as GANAS, boasts a 4-year graduation rate of 90 percent.



According to "INSIGHT Into Diversity," the HEED Award is open to all colleges and universities in the U.S. and Canada and is awarded based on the institution's level of commitment to broadening diversity and inclusion on campus. This could be through

initiatives, programs, retention and hiring practices for faculty and staff.

Several other CSUs received HEED awards this year, including CSU Fresno, CSU Fullerton, CSU Los Angeles, CSU Northridge and CSU San Marcos.



# Solving California's Teacher Shortage

Online teaching credential programs may be the key to solving the state's teacher shortage, and Cal State East Bay recently launched the California State University system's first such program.

"Many people today want to teach, and they could be great teachers, but they just can't get access to a good teaching pro-



gram," said James Mitchell, a teacher education professor. "Now that we have the technology to work with students remotely, we can reach candidates who would otherwise not be able to attend this kind of program."

Mitchell is referring to Cal State East Bay's new Online Single Subject Teaching Credential Program, a yearlong online pro-

gram dedicated to providing the skills needed to effectively teach adolescents. The fully online program offers a credential for those who want to teach grades six through 12.

"This is the program that will meet the needs of today's learners," said Mitchell, who is also the program's director. "We want to train Bay Area teachers from the communities they're going to serve, as well as those from outside our territories."

According to the California Teachers Association, there is currently a strong need for middle and high school teachers in the Bay Area and across the state. California will need an additional 100,000 teachers over the next decade, and Mitchell says this program will contribute to reducing that staggering number.

"This kind of program needs to happen now because in five years we're going to need teachers more than ever," he said.

Currently, there are 42 students in the program's first cohort. Half of them are from Alameda and Contra Costa counties and the rest are from outside the Bay Area. Students outside California can also earn this credential by completing the California requirements and then reciprocating it in 43 other states.

Because this program is completely online, students are able to complete the coursework at their own pace. Classes are set up to be asynchronous so students can individually log on at any time of the day. Along with the assigned coursework, teachers can easily upload videos related to the topic being studied. Students are also able to join online class discussions and send direct messages to their professors.

"Teaching online has really evolved," Mitchell said. "This is something that really wasn't available five years ago at such an easy user-friendly level. This is a great program in terms of delivery and offering students specific feedback in everything they do."

According to Mitchell, the program received three times the estimated number of applications and candidates he referred to as "pioneers in their field."

As for the future, Mitchell isn't worried. "It's only our first year, and we refer to challenges as opportunities, not problems," he said. "I'm very confident in the success of this program. So far we're off to a really good start."

—Elias Barboza

## University Appoints New Dean of CLASS

Earlier this year, Cal State East Bay appointed Wendy Ng, previously the associate dean of graduate and undergraduate programs at San Jose State University, to the position of dean for the College of Letters, Arts, and Social Sciences.

Ng, a sociologist, has her bachelor's degree from Mills College, and her master's and doctoral degrees from the University of Oregon. She was a faculty member at San Jose State beginning in 1989, where she served as chair of the sociology department before moving into the dean's role.

She is the author (with Peter Kivisto) of "Americans All: Race and Ethnic Relations in Historical, Structural, and Comparative Perspectives" (2nd edition, 2005) and "Japanese American Internment During World War II" (2001), as well as the author of numerous articles and book chapters.

While at San Jose State, Ng spearheaded several of their Graduation Initiative efforts, including the development of a course for first-year students and a freshman seminar for sociology majors. She helped the Department of Sociology become the Department of Sociology and Interdisciplinary Social Sciences and was responsible for developing a training program for faculty



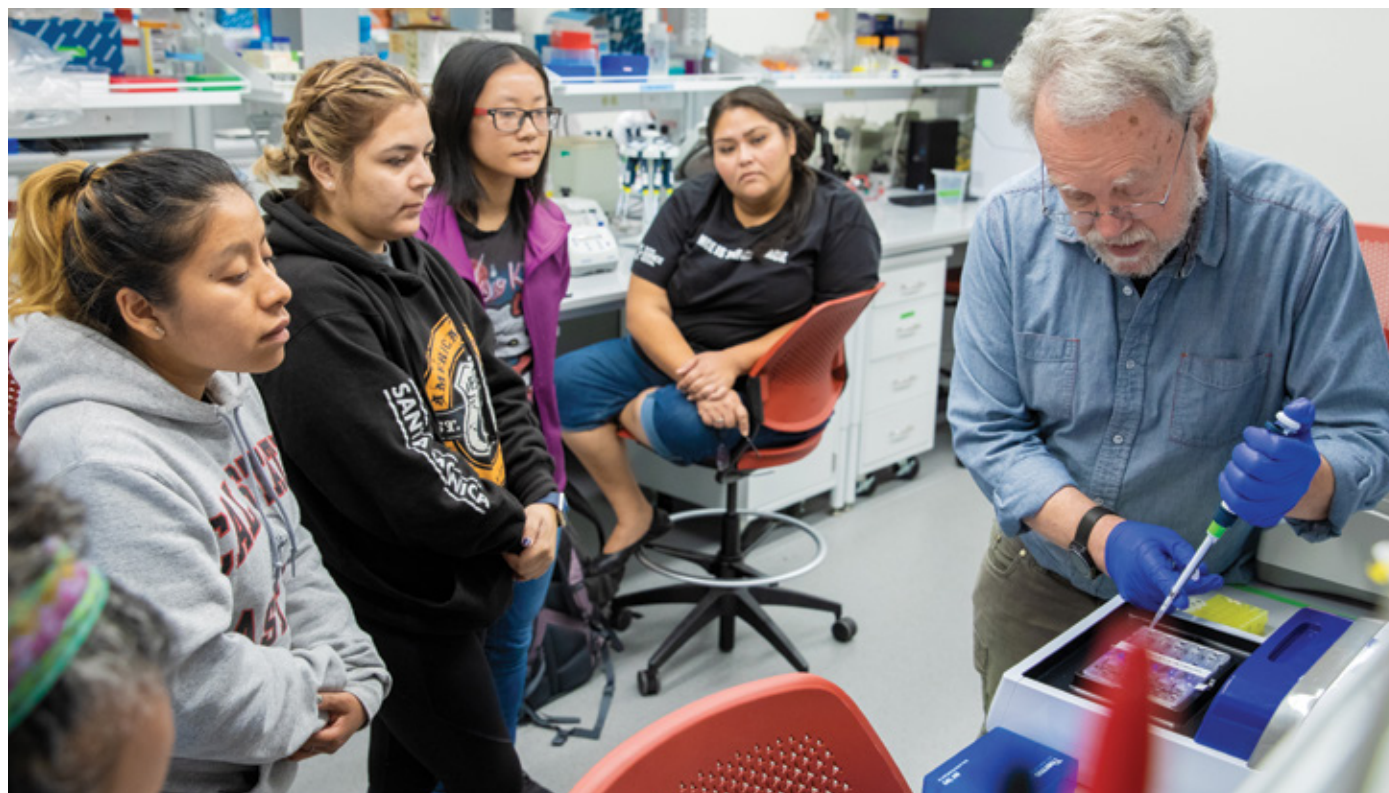
teaching writing across the curriculum.

In a statement, Ng said she was thrilled to be joining the university.

"Cal State East Bay plays an important role in providing education for first generation and historically underrepresented students and that mission resonates with me based upon my own personal and fami-

ly experiences with higher education. I'm proud to provide leadership to help grow the excellent and rigorous programs in CLASS and to continue the many innovative collaborations initiated by the faculty. As dean, I hope to build support for the College and promote the importance and necessity of a liberal arts education."





## University Receives Largest Individual Gift on Record to Support Applied Sciences Center

Marvin Remmich (BS '69, Business Administration), a community business leader and president of RAM Properties, and his wife, Susan, have committed \$5 million toward the creation of the university's Applied Sciences Center. The gift is the largest ever given by an individual and ties as the second-largest private contribution ever received by the university.

The 20,000 square foot Applied Sciences Center will have two floors with a unified theme of providing spaces for students to engage in their learning actively — whether in the classroom or research laboratory — with up-to-date technology as a hallmark of each lab and learning space. It will also house the newly-created Green Biome Institute, the first plant conservation and genomic profiling institute in the California State University or University of California systems.

"Marv and Susan's commitment to our students' futures and the university's aspira-

tions is not just commendable, but remarkable," said President Leroy M. Morishita. "Their generosity leaves a legacy that will benefit generations of budding scientists and our faculty researchers through best-in-class facilities. We are grateful for their dedication to Cal State East Bay."

Remmich has a long history with Cal State East Bay both as a student and as a member of the Cal State East Bay Educational Foundation Board of Trustees, which he has served on since 2005. He was Board Chair from 2017-2019.

"The university has meant a great deal to me, and Susan and I are pleased to support an area that will become a beacon for the entire East Bay region," said Remmich. "Not only will this new space be a state-of-the-art learning environment, but it will inspire the work that will solve today's and tomorrow's pressing issues in healthy living, natural resources and environmental sustainability. We are honored to have a role in

those possibilities."

The university has raised more than \$24 million toward this \$30 million project and seeks further private support to complete the facility, as well as install fixtures and equipment. The new facility, planned for the Hayward campus, is expected to open in late 2022.

The Remmichs' gift is part of Cal State East Bay's Rising in the East campaign, which concludes at the end of this year, with more than \$71 million — well above its \$60 million goal — raised for the ideas of "people, place and purpose."

"The Rising in the East campaign provided the resources elevate our students' experiences through improved facilities and further support for our faculty," said Bill Johnson, vice president for University Advancement. "Marv and Susan's support is evidence that these efforts are essential to the university, but more so, the people of the East Bay region."



# Rising in

## THE CAMPAIGN FOR

**F**OR MORE THAN 60 YEARS, Cal State East Bay has stood as a beacon of educational opportunity and social change in the region we serve. With one of the most diverse student populations in the U.S., we are educating the very people who will become the region's workforce and lead the transformation to a more just and inclusive society.

Rising in the East, the campaign for Cal State East Bay, sought to raise \$60 million for the ideas of People, Place and Purpose that would modernize our campuses, further strengthen our faculty, reinforce existing programs and launch new ones, and more importantly, expand learning opportunities for our students.

These campaign priorities motivated many of our plans, activities and deliberate engagement of those who care about our university, with focus on:

**People:** Strengthening our greatest asset, namely, our student body, faculty and administrative staff.

**Place:** Modernizing our facilities and bringing our campuses into the 21st century so that students can partner with faculty on creative projects, research and lab work.

**Purpose:** Enhancing our ability to serve the greater good of our communities through educational leadership.

We surpassed our own goals, raising \$71 million from alumni, student donors, faculty and staff, corporations and friends. During this time, the university had record-breaking fundraising years and engaged thousands of donors who invested in Cal State East Bay's success.

Eleven years ago, when this campaign started, few of these programs existed, and those that did were likely on a smaller scale. The Rising in the East campaign has modernized our campus, further strengthened our faculty and support for students, and elevated the excellent work we do at Cal State East Bay. With this success, we have created a permanent foundation that will allow this university to continue rising. ▶







Rising in the East  
THE CAMPAIGN FOR CAL STATE EAST BAY

GARVIN TSO



# PEOPLE



## PIONEERS FOR H.O.P.E. FOOD PANTRIES

After a study by the California State University Chancellor's Office revealed that one in five CSU students do not have consistent access to food, Cal State East Bay took action by opening three free food pantries. Run by Pioneers for H.O.P.E., an intervention program for food- and housing-insecure, the Hayward and Concord campuses are able to offer shelf-stable and fresh food for any student worried about their next meal.



## CLASS GIFT/ENDOWED SCHOLARSHIP FUND

Beginning with the Class of 2018, hundreds of graduates have contributed small donations prior to commencement to establish a class endowed scholarship fund. The Class of 2019 raised over \$25,000 among 600 graduates to support student scholarships and research. Class gift donors receive an exclusive cord to wear at graduation.



## SCHOLARSHIP IN SOCCER

For the student-athletes who play in Cal State East Bay's 15 intercollegiate sports, the word "student" comes before "athlete" for a reason: they are here to obtain a college degree. Yet balancing the intense schedule of sports and schoolwork leaves little time for student-athletes to have part-time jobs to fund their education. In support of his studies, sophomore Michael Francisco Ajoleza received the Frank and Kristy Fudenna Scholarship in Soccer, helping this criminal justice major solve the cost of college while staying in his hometown.



## CAROL SUGHRUE SCHOLARSHIP FOR PEACE AND UNDERSTANDING

Designed to support first-generation students who have committed to working with refugee and immigrant populations or promoting international peace, the \$25,000 scholarship was first awarded in 2018-2019. The scholarship received more than 130 qualified applicants, and the amount was split into four scholarships, covering almost the entirety of the recipients' tuition for the year.



People are the core of our university: students, faculty and staff, as well as our engaged alumni. During the Rising in the East campaign, support for student scholarships has been strong. Whether they are student-athletes, emancipated foster youth who are involved in the Renaissance Scholars program, or young adults from our surrounding communities who aspire to become teachers and return to their own elementary schools, these students are grateful for the votes of confidence that a scholarship gives them.

Gifts during the campaign have also helped us enhance support programs for transfer students, create data-driven advising programs to identify students who most need academic counseling and provide basic needs such as food and emergency grants through the Pioneers for H.O.P.E. program.



### JACK ACOSTA FELLOWSHIP

Together with his wife, Susan, technology executive and Cal State East Bay Educational Foundation trustee Jack Acosta (B.S., '75, Business Administration; MBA '78), endowed two professorships in the College of Business and Economics. This has allowed professors such as Sinan Goktan to continue producing high-impact research and mentoring students.



### GANAS

Gaining Access 'N Academic Success is an innovative access and retention program that targets and serves newly arrived community college transfer students. The GANAS model offers integrated academic and cultural approaches that welcome and socialize students while increasing their confidence, engagement, resiliency, academic success and, ultimately, degree attainment rates. GANAS is open to all students and provides a supportive environment that focuses on Latinx and multicultural content.



### RENAISSANCE SCHOLARS

From tuition fee waivers to priority for residence halls and registration, Cal State East Bay's Renaissance Scholars program gives current and former foster youth the tools — and community — they need to succeed in college. The Renaissance Scholars program aims to ensure that all participants successfully complete their degrees and are prepared to embark successfully upon the next chapter of their lives — whether they are going on to a graduate degree, starting their career or pursuing other dreams.



### STUPSKI GRANT

Thanks to a \$400,973 grant from the Stupski Foundation devoted to addressing hunger and creating opportunities for underserved students in the Bay Area, Cal State East Bay is going further than just meeting the urgent needs of the university's food-insecure and homeless students. The campus is now also focusing on devising the long-term strategies at-risk students need to not only complete their degrees but also become leaders in their communities.



# PLACE



## STUDENT CENTER FOR ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT

The Student Center for Academic Achievement offers free peer tutoring for math, statistics, writing, science, online services, course-embedded programs and workshops. The SCAA's mission is to help students improve their skills and to become self-aware, confident and independent learners, as well as active members of the university community. One of the center's most successful programs is the Writing Skills Test boot camp. Participants pass the test at a 27 percent higher rate than the general test-taking population.



## CORE BUILDING

The forthcoming CORE building will be a destination for "high impact" learning that connects our students' aptitudes and abilities with the needs of employers and California. The space will also include traditional library services and learning support. When students arrive at CSUEB, they have already been challenged and proven to be resilient, driven and smart. The learning they'll do in the CORE building will help them be successful and competitive in becoming the next generation's workforce.



## HUB FOR ENTREPRENEURSHIP

This collaboration zone in CORE will be the nerve center for projects among students and faculty, drawing on perspectives and expertise from multiple fields. A full-time resident innovation expert will bring together thought leaders and entrepreneurs from the region to help students explore original concepts and products, identify financing and patent opportunities and launch their ideas.



## BECHTEL SCIENCE LABS

A newly designed 5,500 square-foot lab space complete with cutting-edge technology is offering even more collaborative, hands-on learning opportunities in the College of Science — which has double the number of students majoring in STEM fields than it did a decade ago. Completed in 2018, the lab is the university's newest and largest renovation of research and teaching space and will help faculty prepare both undergraduate and graduate students for careers in science.



We are proud of our campuses in Hayward, Concord and Oakland and the roles they play in helping our students, faculty and staff create an inspiring environment. Support for our labs means that we can train nurses, biologists and teachers who are experienced in working in true-to-life clinical, research and classroom spaces. Early next year, the university will break ground on the CORE, which, when it is completed in 2021, will be a center for learning, engagement and collaboration right at the heart of our Hayward campus.

Cal State East Bay has also secured more than \$22.5 million for the creation of a new Applied Science Center building, which will be a vibrant place of discovery for our 21st century scientists — both students and their professors — to work in “learning on display” open laboratories.



## APPLIED SCIENCES CENTER

The number of science, technology and mathematics majors at Cal State East Bay has increased by more than 50 percent since 2010. The Applied Sciences Center will provide a purpose-designed space to foster student and faculty collaborations. It will feature state-of-the-art, interdisciplinary space for student and faculty research projects; innovation space to explore new methods and technologies; and well-equipped labs to support more students working on research projects with their professors.



## COMMUNITY COUNSELING CLINIC

The Community Counseling Clinic at Cal State East Bay provides no-cost counseling services to some of the area’s neediest residents while also serving as a training lab for the university’s graduate-level professional counselors-in-training.



## NURSING LABS

The Cal State East Bay simulation labs are hands-on, collaborative learning spaces that serve as a training ground for the regions’ nurses of tomorrow. In addition to technical skills, the nursing program’s curriculum requires professors to teach the latest technology and best practices of the profession, which they are able to do thanks to the labs. The two programs at Cal State East Bay are highly competitive, with more than 950 students vying for 126 spots each year.



## HOST LABS

Located at both the Hayward and Concord campuses, the popular Hands-On Science Teaching (HOST) Labs help Cal State East Bay students explore careers in science education while reinvigorating local middle schoolers’ interest in science. Learn more about the HOST Labs on page 16.



# PURPOSE



## OSHER LIFELONG LEARNING INSTITUTE

The Osher Lifelong Learning Institute at Cal State East Bay's Concord campus provides learning opportunities for mature students — those aged 50 and older — creating space for them to explore new topics and challenge themselves intellectually. The program is only \$40 and offers courses and field trips in science, art and the humanities, all led by Cal State East Bay emeritus faculty or other distinguished educators.



## INSTITUTE FOR STEM EDUCATION

The university's Institute for STEM Education is improving the way teachers and faculty teach science, technology, engineering and math by focusing on the design and implementation of programs that increase access to STEM education and opportunities for students of all levels and backgrounds.



## MATHEMATICS ENGINEERING SCIENCE ACHIEVEMENT

After 40 years, the Mathematics Engineering Science Achievement program has a proven track record transforming thousands of educationally disadvantaged students into math and science college graduates. Through its classes, hands-on competitions, counseling and transfer support for students from middle school through college, the MESA program is helping students grow in their love and knowledge of math and science.



## COLLEGE LINK

Founded in 2010, The College Link Program is an ancillary student support services program designed to provide services beyond the typical accommodations provided through the Americans with Disabilities Act. Its goal is to assist students in leveraging their individual strengths to facilitate academic and social success. The CLP staff fosters student educational, career, social and independent living skills through creative and flexible approaches to individual needs.



From our early learners in the Hayward Promise Neighborhoods to our lifelong scholars at the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute, our university serves a broad range of communities in our region. Cal State East Bay connects the resources around us to improve the lives of our students and their families, the systems in our area, and the more significant social and physical problems that our world faces.

The many centers and institutes that received support during the campaign tell you, by name alone, what they achieve: the Center of Entrepreneurship and Innovation, the Center for Science Education Research, the Institute for Community and Civic Engagement, and the newly created Green Biome Institute — these all provide a broader context for how we can help improve learning, inspiration and engagement.



## HAYWARD PROMISE NEIGHBORHOODS

HPNs is a collaborative partnership working to alleviate poverty and ensure educational success along with a safe, healthy, and thriving community for all Hayward residents. Part of the national Promise Neighborhood Initiative, HPNs' goal is to lift up two of Hayward's most distressed neighborhoods — Jackson Triangle and South Hayward — so that all children, families and community members have access to equitable opportunities along the cradle-to-career continuum of services and support.



## DISCOVER ENGINEERING!

Each summer, Cal State East Bay hosts dozens of students from underrepresented communities in Contra Costa County for a weeklong engineering and construction management program called Discover Engineering! The camp, sponsored by Chevron and Marathon Petroleum, introduces students to engineering and the idea of pursuing college after high school. Throughout the week, campers stay at the university dorms, take field trips, and build and test model bridges and robots.



## FACULTY SUPPORT THROUGH AN ENDOWMENT

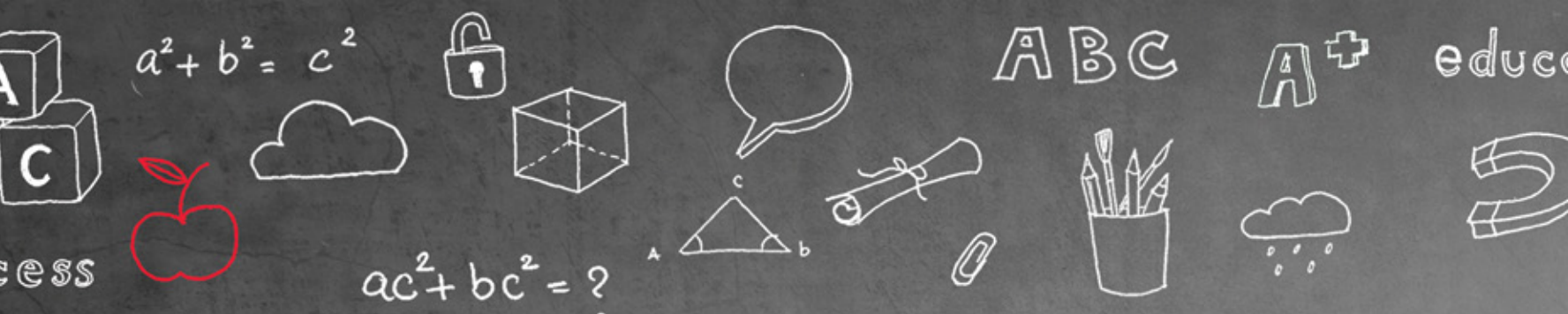
In spring 2018, Professor Emerita Joan Sieber and the university announced her \$1.5 million planned gift dedicated to creating an endowment for the College of Science Collaborative Research Program. The gift provides small grants for those faculty — both new and tenured — who are working on projects involving students and industry experts. Money can be used to pay a stipend to student researchers, purchase materials, and if needed, travel to a professional meeting or conference.



## SUPPORTING STUDENT-FACULTY RESEARCH

Through a \$95,000 gift from his company Systems Biosciences, former CSU Trustee Kenneth Fong created the Kenneth Fong SBI Research Award, which established an industrial research opportunity for a tenure-track faculty member. Through the program, biology Professor Claudia Uhde-Stone spent several days a week working at SBI on research alongside two students, including Amierali Afshari, who now works full time at SBI as an assistant manager and researcher.





# Training the S<sup>6</sup>TEM Teacher

BY ILENE LELCHUK

Wearing pristine white lab coats and safety glasses, 29 sixth graders from Fremont's Ardenwood School rocketed into a morning of planetary science at Cal State East Bay's Hands-On Science Teaching Labs.

They rotated and revolved on office chairs. They speculated about space junk. They plunged into a physics lesson about impact craters by dropping different sized metal balls from various heights into a bucket of flour topped with blue powdered paint.

"In the end, they were covered in blue flour," laughed Emily Holley, a Cal State East Bay junior and "science guide." "The coolest and most memorable thing was their excitement to learn science — their evolution and growth."

Holley is one of several undergrads who, as liberal studies majors on the teacher preparation path, get to experience HOST at the lab on the Hayward campus.

"I think everyone should do it even if science isn't your focus," Holley said about the course. "It forces you to 'host' something. You have to be confident. It's about being organized and finding your teaching style. In just one lab, I already learned so much about myself and my teaching style."

In January 2020, even more Cal State East Bay students will have an opportunity to become "science guides" as the HOST Labs program expands to the university's Concord campus.

Marathon Petroleum Corp., which runs a refinery in Martinez, made this second lab possible with a \$70,000 grant. The donation includes funds for school field trip transportation costs. (Hiring a bus



can cost the schools up to \$1,000 — a big barrier for some districts.)

Not only is the acclaimed program becoming more accessible to west Contra Costa County sixth- to eighth-graders, but it is also it is becoming more attainable to area undergrads who otherwise would have an hour-long commute to Hayward to take the student teaching course, which is a graduation requirement for liberal studies students on the Teacher Preparation Pathway.

During a time of acute teacher shortages, the expanding HOST Labs program bolsters the California State University system's mission to entice and train more college students for careers in education.

As many as 80 percent of California school districts grapple with staffing scarcities, according to the Learning Policy Institute.

The shortage is especially dire in low-socioeconomic communities and in STEM instruction — science, technology, engineering and math. California is projected to need at least 33,000 new math and science teachers in the next decade.

In response, the California State University system announced





ation

# Teachers California Needs

in fall 2019 it will pump \$10 million into its Mathematics and Science Teacher Initiative during the next four years to recruit new students, provide scholarships, and create other resources for soon-to-be-credentialed teachers.

Cal State East Bay takes that mission seriously.

"We probably are the largest producer of teachers for Contra Costa area schools. Most of our alumni are working somewhere in this county or on the edge of Alameda County or Solano County," said Robert Phelps, director of the Concord campus.

During the 2018-19 academic year alone, the Concord campus counted 65 single subject and multiple subject credential program graduates.

HOST Labs launched in 2014 in Hayward thanks to grants from the S.D. Bechtel, Jr. Foundation and the National Science Foundation, said Associate Dean Danika LeDuc from Cal State East Bay's College of Science.

Each year, about 30 undergrads complete the course at Hayward, learning how to create and execute creative earth science lessons. Roughly 400 local students from diverse schools come through per year.

No boring lectures for these middle schoolers. They learn about viscosity by creating Mentos and soda volcanoes, they test cabbage-infused gelatin cubes with pH indicators, and they master the concept of mass by balancing Play-Doh planets and stars on skewers.

Holley, who hopes to teach elementary or middle school science someday, described the 1.5-hour sessions as "speed dates with science."

Classmate Maria Candido, a junior, said the HOST Labs course opens her eyes to the possibility of a teaching career. She recently instructed a crew of kids about the difference between planetary rev-

olution and rotation.

"The students were very engaged. It made it really fun to work with them," Candido says.

The HOST Labs course puts budding teachers like Candido and Holley "way ahead of the curve," according to LeDuc.

"When they go on their job interviews, they already have experiences to talk about. They have had that opportunity to think about how to make engaging science activities for students. That's what I'm really proud of."

Middle school teachers love the program so much that when registration opens each year, all field trip slots fill within 24 hours.


Jan Robertson, a science instructional coach for Mt. Diablo Unified School District, can't wait to send students to the new Concord lab.

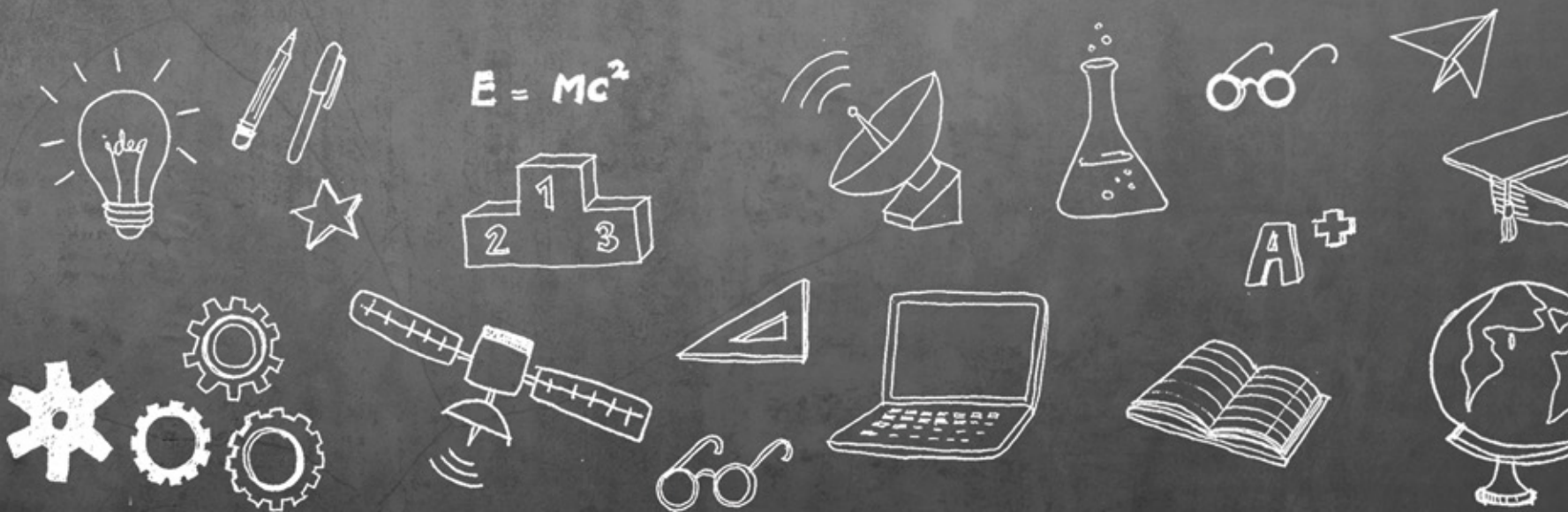
"It's an opportunity for kids to see real science in action, which often lacks in a classroom because of limited resources," Robertson said. "And they get to work with professors and people who have worked in STEM fields — just the wonder of how cool it is to work in a room filled with science equipment."

An added benefit of a HOST Labs field trip is exposing young students to a university campus.

"They get to see these college students who are often from their neighborhoods who are doing really interesting things," Robertson said. "They could find a mentor or get a vision of themselves there."

The program's impact reaches deep into East Bay communities. The university also has begun sharing its student-created lesson plans and materials, recently putting together a package for Children's Fairyland in Oakland, for example.

"HOST Labs has been a really good investment," LeDuc says. "And it will be a good investment in Concord as well." 





NATALIE FEULNER

# Mapping a Plant Genome







BY NATALIE FEULNER

**W**ITH NIMBLE FINGERS AND HYPER-FOCUSED ATTENTION, Cal State East Bay graduate student Alisa Mathewson uses tweezers to gently break off a piece of fungus from one petri dish and add it to another.

There it will bloom, creating an intricate floral design filling the bottom of the dish. In a few weeks, Mathewson will begin sequencing the fungus' DNA, mapping its genome down the genus. Data gathered will help her, and other scientists worldwide, begin creating a phylogenetic tree which will help determine if and how the fungus — which was harvested from the leaves of manzanita — can bolster the plant's immunity. The process is tedious. But the work is rewarding, carrying the potential to yield results scientists can only imagine.

Mathewson is a student working at Cal State East Bay's newest institute, the Green Biome Institute. The institute, which will be housed in the forthcoming Applied Sciences Center (see page 46 for more), was seed-funded through a gift from alumnus and Cal State East Bay Educational Foundation member Randy Davis (BS '02, Biological Science; MS '06, Biological Science) and his wife Pat, as part of the university's first comprehensive campaign, Rising in the East.

GBI is the first institute of its kind in the California State University and University of California systems.

Its goal?

To preserve the genetic diversity of plants in California, contribute to the discovery of new and useful biological processes that can improve human lives, and create publicly-available molecular profiles of endangered native California plants.

Researchers will ask: What if an endangered plant could help cure cancer, improve drought tolerance or survive poor soils? How do we protect and preserve it before it's gone?

"The world of endangered plants has long been ignored, and the GBI positions Cal State East Bay at the forefront of this critical and cutting-edge research," Davis said. ▶



## DNA SEQUENCING AT CSUEB

DNA sequencing is not new for Cal State East Bay. Beginning in 1996, advanced DNA sequencing has been taught at both the undergraduate and graduate level in the College of Science and since then, 300 students have graduated from the university's highly-competitive bio-tech program.

One of those graduates? Davis. During a career in the semiconductor industry, Davis saw his first DNA microarray (or DNA detection chip) while on a sales visit at Hewlett-Packard. It was the late 1990s, and HP was preparing to launch one of the very early DNA microarray scanners. Fast forward to 2014, Davis is the co-founder of Genia Technologies, which was purchased by Roche in 2014 for its innovative electronic DNA sequencing chip.

He hopes his gift and involvement with GBI will help students not unlike himself find where their passions intersect with the industry's need for diverse, skilled employees.

According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, California is projected to have nearly 10 percent of the nation's STEM jobs by 2022. Labor trends predict job growth in the health, biomedical and environmental industries by an average of 33 percent over a 10-year span.

Whether as biologists conserving and genetically preserving endangered plants that may hold the key to curing disease, or biochemists who discover formulas for more affordable medications, Cal State East Bay graduates have the potential to influence their communities and the world.

"The Bay Area has always been at the forefront of DNA sequencing, with the first automated DNA sequencer being developed in Foster City by Applied Biosystems in the late 1980s," said alumnus Kevin Corcoran (BS '86, Computer Science), vice president and general manager at Agilent Technologies. "Students are always looking for a sense of what they will be doing once they graduate and join the industry. The GBI will give them an opportunity to do meaningful research and provide relevant hands-on education using cutting-edge techniques for DNA sequencing and genetic analysis."

## SCIENCE THAT MAKES A DIFFERENCE

For Mathewson and many of the other GBI students and the faculty supporting them, finding purpose within the science they study is important. Yes, there is value to finding out if there are more efficient ways to grow edible plants for food, and yes, there is money in finding out whether another plant can cure cancer. But there is also the knowledge that by mapping a genome, researchers could be unlocking the key to preserving endangered native California plants.

"We know endophytes aid in plant immunity, we know they help the plant survive and increase its immunity, so I want to know how we can better understand this, especially for the manzanitas that are endangered," Mathewson said.

For Davis, aside from the science, he's excited Cal State East Bay students will now have a chance to find their place in the biotech world. A place where their interests align with industry needs and

## Meet the Plants

During the next several years, Cal State East Bay students and faculty will be mapping the following plants' genetic profiles:



*Arctostaphylos pallida* COURTESY OF WIKIMEDIA

*Prosartes parvifolia* (Siskiyou bells)\*\*

*Arctostaphylos pallida* (Oakland Hills, Alameda manzanita)\*\*

*Scoliopus bigelovii* (Fetid adder's tongue or slink pod)



*Calochortus raichei* COURTESY OF WIKIMEDIA

*Carex albida* (White sedge)

*Abronia alpina* (Ramshaw Meadows sand verbena)\*\*

*Calochortus raichei* (Cedar's mariposa lily)\*\*

*Fritillaria liliacea* (Fragrant fritillary)\*\*

*Lilium maritimum* (Coast bog lily)\*\*

*Arctostaphylos manzanita*\*\*

\*\* Endangered

have the potential to unlock solutions to the problems our world will face in the coming decades.

"It is a great thing to help people realize their dreams," Davis said. "There's nothing better than bringing a group of like-minded, curious people together to ask important questions. And, if you're lucky, these questions give students a chance to do hands-on research that has the potential to change lives."



# MEET THE PROFESSORS BEHIND THE GREEN BIOME INSTITUTE



**CHRIS BAYSDORFER**  
Professor of Biological Sciences

What type of classes do you teach?

First-year molecular biology and senior-level lab classes in molecular biology techniques and PCR/DNA sequencing.

What is your research area of focus?

Genome evolution in the Liliaceae (flowering plants within the lily family).

What will your involvement with GBI be?

Director of GBI and active researcher.

What are you most excited about for GBI?

This is an opportunity to apply advanced molecular techniques to answer important questions in evolutionary biology. This will also provide very high-level training for our students, both undergraduates, and graduates.

What do you want people to know about GBI?

Cal State East Bay is doing highly sophisticated research in plant biology, working with rare and endangered species.



**ANA ALMEIDA**  
Assistant Professor of Biological Sciences

What classes do you teach?

Mostly, I teach evolution, molecular biology and genomics, as well as graduate courses on science communication and foundations of scientific research.

What is your research area of focus?

My research focuses on plant development and evolution. I use molecular techniques to understand how developmental processes change over evolutionary time, and how these changes affect the form and function of plant structures, ultimately resulting in the diversity of forms we see in nature.

What will your involvement with GBI be?

My research group and I generate and analyze genomic, transcriptomic, epigenetic and microbiome data for endangered plant species. At the moment, we have been mostly focusing on several species of manzanitas endemic to California.

What are you most excited about for GBI?

I'm most excited about the amazing opportunities for mentoring students in cutting-edge molecular techniques and data analysis. I strongly believe these skills will greatly improve students' competitiveness in the job market once they graduate.

What do you think people need to know about GBI or the research you do?

I think GBI embodies a unique opportunity for combining excellence in research and teaching at Cal State East Bay while at the same time helping gather important information about California's endangered plant species. It is a win-win-win initiative of education, research and environmental conservation.



**BRIAN A. PERRY**  
Associate Professor of Biological Sciences  
Chair of Biological Sciences Department

What classes do you teach?

Fungal biology, fungal diversity, plant biology, population biology, evolution, and phylogenetic methods

What is your research area of focus?

My research program focuses on fungal systematics, evolution and diversity.

What will your involvement with GBI be?

I am currently one of the associate directors of the institute. My students and I will be studying the fungal microbiomes that are associated with our target plant species. All plants harbor fungi within their leaves and other tissues, known as endophytes. My students will be documenting the composition and dynamics of endophyte communities within the leaves and other plant tissues. Additionally, we will eventually be looking at the fungal communities present in the soil that interact with the plant roots.

What are you most excited about for GBI?

For me, the most exciting thing about the GBI is that we are providing our students with unparalleled opportunities to work as a team to both document and understand "whole-plant" biology using some of the most current, cutting-edge technologies in molecular biology. To my knowledge, no other group of researchers with diverse backgrounds, training, and areas of specialization are working together with students in such a holistic approach to understanding plant biology. The GBI researchers are truly working from the ground up and from the inside out to understand our target plants and their ecological interactions.

What do you think people need to know about GBI or the research you do?

I really want people to understand the importance of the work our students are doing. Our target plant species are all considered rare, threatened or endangered. The data and results that our students generate have the potential to truly change the management and conservation approaches we take to managing and conserving these organisms.





JACK EASTGATE



# BECOMING DR. YANG

CAL STATE EAST BAY HONORS ALUMNUS, AUTHOR, ILLUSTRATOR  
GENE LUEN YANG (MS '03, EDUCATION)

BY DAN FOST

**G**ENE LUEN YANG ALWAYS FELT he let his parents down. Sure, he earned a bachelor's degree from UC Berkeley and a master's from Cal State East Bay. But while he toiled away writing comic books and graphic novels, his younger brother became a doctor.

"He's always been the academic achiever," Yang said. "I tried. It didn't work."

Now Yang, 46, can call himself "doctor" if he chooses. Earlier this year, Cal State East Bay bestowed an honorary doctorate on Yang, adding to a long list of accolades for its distinguished alumnus.

Yang has already won a MacArthur "Genius" grant, was named the Library of Congress' fifth National Ambassador for Young People's Literature, and has twice been a National Book Award finalist. His landmark graphic novel "American Born Chinese" won the Printz and Eisner awards and was named to NPR's Top 100 Best Comics and Graphic Novels list.

He may still reach greater heights. Yang was one of the few chosen to help reboot the greatest American superhero of all, Superman. He's already done 10 issues of monthly Superman for DC Comics, including a new character, "New Super-Man," in which he said "a Chinese kid in Shanghai inherits some of Clark Kent's powers and

becomes the Superman of China."

This fall, his book "Superman Smashes the Klan" comes out, in which he retells a story first told on radio in 1946 about Superman protecting an Asian American family from the Ku Klux Klan.

Yang said that growing up as a child of immigrants "colors almost everything I do, even if it's not explicitly about that." That, in part, explains his fascination with Superman.

"What draws me to the character is, he's actually an immigrant, from outer space," Yang said.

## DRAGON HOOPS

Yang will also branch out into nonfiction with the 2020 publication of his book, "Dragon Hoops," which tells the true story of the outstanding 2014-15 basketball team from Bishop O'Dowd High School in Oakland, where he taught. The Dragons' stars included Ivan Rabb, now on the NBA's Memphis Grizzlies, and Paris Austin, now playing for Cal.

"The team had 14 players — one was white, one was Punjabi, one was an exchange student from China, and the rest were African American," Yang said. "I felt like the team was all these different people, all united in one goal." ►



Yang was born in Alameda and raised in the South Bay, and while he loved the area's diversity, he was not a basketball fan.

"I came to it late," he said, first with his son's youth leagues, then with the epic O'Dowd team. "When I looked into the history, I saw that basketball began as an outsider sport. They were the ones who could not afford to maintain a field. All you needed was a hoop and a ball and concrete."

That was something Yang could relate to. Much of his work deals with themes of the outsider, the immigrant, the desire to belong.

His mother was born in mainland China, his father in Taiwan, and they met at San José State University, where both were in graduate school. His mother wanted to be a teacher.

"The college counselor told her that was a bad idea because of her accent," Yang said. So she learned computer coding and had a long career as a programmer for Santa Clara County. His father was an electrical engineer and worked for tech companies in Silicon Valley.

## CLASHES WITH DAD

"My dad and I definitely butted heads all the way through my childhood over what I was going to do as an adult," Yang said.

Yang had fallen in love with comics at a young age, and his father worried.

"How I was going to feed myself? He knew how hard it was to sustain a family in America, especially in Silicon Valley," he said.

To appease his father, Yang majored in computer science at Cal (but minored in creative writing). He worked as a programmer for a few years, but ultimately decided to become a teacher.

"I was always interested in education," Yang said. He taught in church youth groups, and said that since high school, he considered a career in education.

In 2003, he earned an online master's at Cal State East Bay, focusing both on how to incorporate comic art into a classroom setting, and on learning in an online environment. As an online student, he wasn't on campus much, but he frequently stopped at the library on his way from Bishop O'Dowd to his home in Fremont.

"In that library, I was able to locate an issue of the Journal of Educational Sociology from the 1940s, where the whole issue was about using comics in the classroom," Yang said.

That movement ultimately petered out, he said, but "now we're in the golden age of using comics in classroom."

## LIVING THE DREAM

While teaching, Yang kept drawing, and in 2006, he published his first graphic novel, "American Born Chinese." The ambitious book masterfully weaves three distinct story lines — a Chinese folktale about a hubristic monkey king, a Chinese boy struggling with his outsider status, and an apparently white teenager, tormented during visits from a cousin who blatantly represents many Chinese stereotypes. The story lines come together in a surprising way, poignantly grappling with that feeling of wanting to assimilate.

The book was a critical smash, winning all sorts of honors. Yang kept teaching, and kept drawing and writing. He has written a series of graphic novels called "Secret Coders," and another series based on the Nickelodeon cartoon "Avatar: The Last Airbender," among many others.

He lives in San Jose with his wife, Theresa Yang — a former teacher who founded a nonprofit called Literacy for Youth — and their four children, a 15-year-old boy and three girls, ages 12, 9 and 7.

## MORE HONORS AND ACCOLADES

For years, Yang worked out of coffee shops and at a desk in the corner of his bedroom.

But then one day in 2016, on his way to the coffee shop to draw, he got the phone call that changed his life: He had been named a MacArthur Fellow. The prestigious program, commonly called a "Genius" grant, gave him \$625,000, no strings attached.

"It was a complete shock when they called me," he said. "It freaked me out."

All kidding aside, what the grant really did was allow Yang to flip the equation. Now he can write and draw full-time, and he still teaches part-time, at Hamline University in Minnesota, mostly online.

And then, earlier this year, Cal State East Bay President Leroy Morishita — whose children were Yang's students at Bishop O'Dowd — bestowed the alumnus with an honorary doctorate.

Yang's father came to the ceremony.

"He was really happy," Yang said. "He said it was one of the best days of his life."

For an encore, one must wonder: In this day and age, when superhero movies fill screens of all sizes, can a Yang screenplay be far behind?


Don't bet on it.

"You have a lot more control in comics than in movies, and you can be more intimate because of that," Yang said. "I'm a comics guy." **EE**

## ILLUSTRATOR PROFILE

**JACK EASTGATE** is a Fijian-born multidisciplinary creative based in Oakland, CA. His work is a reflection of his upbringing in the lush, culturally diverse Pacific islands merged with the creative urban environment of the Bay Area. Eastgate completed his B.A. in Graphic Design at Cal State East Bay in 2011, and currently works at Square Peg, an environmental graphic design firm in Downtown Oakland. Learn more about Eastgate at [www.eastrandstudios.com](http://www.eastrandstudios.com)



Gene Luen Yang (center) receives an honorary degree certificate from Cal State East Bay president Leroy M. Morishita (right) and university Provost Edward Inch.  GARVIN TSO



## CAL STATE EAST BAY FACULTY, STUDENTS SPEND MONTH IN OKINAWA CAPTURING ORAL HISTORIES

BY NATALIE FEULNER

**W**HEN CAL STATE EAST BAY STUDENTS Ailing Cheng and Sean Jacob Torralba stepped off a plane in Okinawa, it felt at once familiar and far away.

Over the coming weeks, they would settle in, becoming accustomed to the muggy air and no longer surprised by the KFC on the corner that looked just like the chain restaurant in the U.S. (except for the rice on the menu in lieu of macaroni and cheese).

The pair, along with mentor and assistant professor Anita Chang, spent four weeks this summer in Okinawa as part of the Okinawa Memories Initiative. Their mission? To find, collect and share the stories of native Okinawans.

"This is something I have been working on for the past two summers, and it's a project that is evolving every year," Chang said.

Started by Alan Christy, professor of history at UC Santa Cruz and now involving almost 30 students and faculty from various California universities, OMI is inspired by a collection of photos taken in Okinawa by U.S. Army Captain Charles Eugene Gail from 1952-53.

A dentist who also had studied with world-renowned photographer Ansel Adams, Gail created images that depict the story of everyday Okinawa post-World War II.

Torralba and Cheng, along with several other students, found ways to use Gail's photos to provide context to the images and the people in them. ▶

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A woman at an Ogimi-Shioya community center retelling her history as the images in front of her reminded her of younger years. Shot on Canon AE-1 Program. ◼ PHOTOS COURTESY OF AILING CHENG AND SEAN JACOB TORRALBA









"[Gail's photos] are unique because civilians during this period were not allowed to have cameras, and if they did, they had to register it and weren't allowed to use it," Chang said.

## A COMPLICATED HISTORY

June 20, 2019

*"At the Himeyuri Museum — it's insane watching the elderly especially — react and wander throughout this museum these were high schoolers — dreams and aspirations, they had epithets growing up ... and to halt that all in their eyes — exposed to war, saying sorry to their friend as they went out to bury her ... nobody deserves to suffer through the repercussions of war. These young women deserved to fulfill their right to live for themselves in happiness and peace."*

— Sean Jacob Torralba

Well-known for being home to the majority of the world's centenarians, Okinawa is a prefecture of Japan with its own distinct languages and culture and encompasses two-thirds of the Ryukyu



Islands in a chain that's more than 620 miles long.

"Okinawans occupy a really complex position with Japan ... it's interesting because there is definitely discourse around indigeneity happening," Chang said, relating it to the national discourse in the U.S. taking place around race and indigenous identity.

Or in the words of Torralba: "Okinawa is to Japan as Hawaii is to the U.S."

June 26, 2019

*At the Okinawan Prefectural Museum, there's a timid elderly woman half my height with a scalp of greying, thinning hair. She inquisitively investigates the artifacts on display. She peeks her head over exhibit barriers to observe then she reads museum placards. I assume she's a security guard because she wears all-black. There's a poetry in such a visual scene. It says a lot about community history and cultural identity (+ pride) of one's heritage in presentation.*

— Sean Jacob Torralba



Before becoming a prefecture in the late 1870s, Okinawa was a semi-independent kingdom influenced by both Japan and China. At the time, the Ryukyuan dialect was divided into five groups: Kunigami, Miyako, Okinawan, Yaeyama and Yonaguni. However, according to the Japan Times, beginning in the 20th century, children were punished if they spoke in a dialect.

Add to that American military rule from 1945-1972 following the last major battle of World War II, and much of the Okinawan language and history is in danger of disappearing altogether.

"There's this notion of vanishing history," Chang said. "War is so much about obliteration and loss ... but it's also about the remnants and what remains, what happened in that place."

And the push-and-pull is still going on. Earlier this year, despite a majority of voters opposing the plan, Japan announced it would relocate the U.S. Marines' Futenma air base. Many Okinawans

(Top right) The busy streets of Urasoe, on the walk back to Urasoe City Hall a few blocks away. Shot on Canon AE-1 Program. (Bottom left) A double exposure of a monument perched on volcanic rock islet near Kudaka island, indicating the point of the universe's conception according to indigenous Okinawan cosmology. Shot using a Rolleicord.

PHOTOS COURTESY OF AILING CHENG AND SEAN JACOB TORRALBA





would prefer to see the base removed from the island altogether.

"It was interesting to meet the people at the protesting camp who are trying to delay the construction the military is trying to do," Cheng said. "People have this perception that Okinawans don't like Americans, but it's not that. They have an issue with the military, no matter who it is. They're trying to promote peace."

## REAL-WORLD LEARNING

June 24, 2019

*After speaking with university Okinawan students, always pivot back to your intention. People find a way of aggressively turning back to what gives them comfort and what makes sense without giving a second thought to how different people live their life for themselves ... especially if it's a foreign country. — Sean Jacob Torralba*

Cheng and Torralba are both fifth-year students in Cal State East Bay's communications department.

For Cheng, it was her first time out of the country, and for Torralba, it was his third time to Japan but his first trip to Okinawa. Both students said the hands-on experience they gained — both in using their journalism skills and having to navigate a new culture and country — is something they won't forget.

"What's interesting about visiting an occupied territory is it kind of feels like a place you already know," Torralba said. "The streets and cities were designed by the American military ... so in some parts you feel like you're in Los Angeles and in other areas you feel like you're in Japan."

For Chang, it was those discoveries she was excited to see her students have.

"This is an internship that's really meant for them to apply the skills they've learned, but also to gain new skills and to be in an environment where they're interacting with the people of Okinawa, but also their peers," she said. "In addition to the journalism skills they are learning, they are also having to get along with people of different backgrounds, speaking different languages, it's a cross-cultural collaboration."

Torralba is still trying to sort through his time in Okinawa and how it will color where he goes post-graduation. Cheng's experience has reignited her desire to pursue photojournalism, particularly projects that center on the idea of identity.

"Being in a different country was a huge experience on its own, but also being able to apply what I've learned thus far in my school career," she said. "I've always been curious about what it means to be proud of your identity, and this trip really solidified that for me ... [and] pushed me toward where I want to be." ■

# A Marketplace for






 ce

# Businesses

Cal State East Bay alumnus launches Tresle, an online platform for businesses and the people looking to buy them

BY ILENE LELCHUK

**J**OEL KEYLOR, 25, IS BARELY TWO YEARS out of Cal State East Bay and four years into running his own business.

That's right. This recent graduate was plotting and planning to launch an innovative company while still studying for midterms, navigating college life and finishing his degree.

Keylor's secret to start-up success?

"People think that starting a business is inherently risky and dangerous, but a lot of times it's about jumping in the deep end and just starting," said Keylor, founder of Tresle, an online marketplace for selling and buying private businesses.

But he wasn't without support. While building Tresle, Keylor took advantage of mentorship from professors in the College of Business and Economics and from connections he made with accomplished alumni, including Jack Acosta (BS '75, Business Administration; MBA '78), a retired software and computer network executive and a trustee of the Cal State East Bay Educational Foundation.

Such connections were instrumental in Keylor's early success, and he already is planning to pay it forward.

In fact, Keylor recently sat down for a live Q&A for the Col-

lege of Business and Economics' "Dean's Network" series with Dean George Low, to share insights about his path to success.

"Joel is unique to the series as a very young alumnus," Dean Low said, explaining that previous featured series guests were seasoned CEOs. "Students can relate to him on a very different level because he was a student here just a short time ago. They can see not only that 'I can be successful in 20 or 30 years, but I can do it while I'm still a student like Joel did.'"

Keylor, who grew up in Canada and lives in Vancouver, arrived on the Cal State East Bay campus as an 18-year-old biology major on a golf scholarship.

He was recruited by other universities, including some Division 1 opportunities, but he chose Cal State East Bay because he wanted a small campus experience with more opportunities to interact with the faculty and focus on real-world applications.

When he visited the campus and saw its proximity to San Francisco and Silicon Valley, he also realized the area had great potential for post-graduate opportunities.

Shortly after starting classes, Keylor switched from biology to business and never looked back.

Business acumen simply came more naturally to him, which he credits in part to his family of entrepreneurs. Keylor's father and now business partner, Darren Keylor, has more than 30 years of software development, finance and digital advertising experience, and has almost always worked for himself.

The idea behind Tresle in part came from Joel Keylor talking to his father and other veteran business owners about their experiences selling companies. ▶





**“Starting is better than only thinking about what might go wrong. You want to do your research and go about it in a tactical matter, of course, but a lot of people don’t want to take that leap and can get in their own way.”**

“I started doing research and realized that a lot of businesses are really set to change hands in a big way,” Keylor said. “The average retirement age is 53. There are 10,000 Americans turning 65 every single day. And \$10 trillion worth of Baby Boomer business assets will be passed down or sold by 2025.”

He also learned that, for small and medium business owners, selling a company through a broker can be costly (up-front listing fees, retainers, and 10-15 percent commission rates). To save money, some sellers use online listing sites instead of hiring a broker, but Keylor said they can run into problems like no or little sales support, no privacy, and no vetting of potential buyers.

“These are huge barriers of entry,” Keylor said. “So how do we provide a solution that’s not archaic, and doesn’t have high upfront listing fees?”

While Keylor developed solutions, his Pioneers golf coach Alan Sue introduced him to Acosta, a big team supporter and accomplished business leader.

Acosta said he was impressed by more than Keylor’s golf skills — which included helping secure CSUEB’s first-ever berth to a NCAA Division II National Championship for Men’s Golf. Keylor’s economics knowledge and drive also stood out.

“What I found most inspiring from my point of view was the fact that here was a relatively young man, mature for his age, who wanted to start a business. If I could be of help, I would try to do that,” Acosta said.

Acosta helped Keylor meet potential investors, which led to rais-

ing capital and attracting impressive backers to Trestle’s board, including Ray Tierney, former CEO of Bloomberg Tradebook. Tierney ranked first in Institutional Investor’s 2016 Trading Technology 40 and spent 15 years as a trader at Morgan Stanley.

Tresle was incorporated in 2015 and officially launched in 2016-17, the year Keylor graduated from Cal State East Bay.

Tresle — named for a trestle bridge — aims to bring sellers and potential buyers together in a confidential online marketplace. With Tresle’s subscription-based listing service, only verified buyers get to see the listings. The platform helps both parties start conversations, send relevant documents, negotiate terms, and finalize transactions.


Today, about 1,300 sellers are registered on the platform, along with more than 35,000 potential buyers, Keylor said.


Tresle has a growing staff of six (soon to be eight) that includes software developers, marketing analysts and a customer service team.

Keylor’s advice to the university’s 3,000 College of Business and Economics students who might be interested in following in his footsteps?

Don’t let fear stop you.

“Starting is better than only thinking about what might go wrong. You want to do your research and go about it in a tactical matter, of course, but a lot of people don’t want to take that leap and can get in their own way,” Keylor said.

“You don’t have to be the first person to think of an idea. Just the first to implement it.” 

Joel Keylor (right) speaks to attendees at a Dean’s Network event earlier this fall with College of Business and Economics Dean George Low (left.) 









DISTINGUISHED

# Alumni

## AWARDS

G A L A 2 0 1 9

BY NATALIE FEULNER PHOTOGRAPHY GARVIN TSO

**E**ARLIER THIS FALL, hundreds of Cal State East Bay students, faculty, staff and alumni took part in a weekend of celebratory events, including the university's annual Distinguished Alumni Gala.

The Distinguished Alumni Award is the highest honor bestowed by the university and is given to an alumna/us from each of Cal State East Bay's four colleges. The award has been given since 1985 to alumni who have made remarkable contributions in the areas of community or public service, or professional or personal excellence; demonstrate a commitment to the values of the university; contribute to scholarship, lifelong learning, and civic engagement; assume positions of ethical leadership within regional and/or professional communities; and provide exemplary service to, or in support of, the university.

At this year's gala, President Leroy M. Morishita honored alumni Karen Oliver (BA '74, Art), James Hannan (BS '89, Business Administration), Sara Toyloy (BS '87, Biological Science), and Ken Kahrs (BS '73, Recreation.) Learn more about how these alumni are making a difference in their professions and the world in the following pages. ▶



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EBTODAY.COM/STORIES/RISE-ING-IN-THE-EAST



# KENNETH KAHRS

BS '73, RECREATION

Ken Kahrs is a people person.

The retired executive vice president of human resources at Universal Studios has an easy smile and knows seemingly everyone on the backlot, from the security guards in the parking garage to employees having lunch at the on-site grill.

"When I was in college, I wasn't studying to go into human resources, but the part that connected for me ... was working with people, it was the spot where I felt most comfortable and where my skillsets lay," Kahrs said.

As a student at then-Cal State Hayward, Kahrs was studying recreation. But a case study-style class about leadership and management put him in the "fast lane" toward a career in human resources, eventually overseeing everything from the hiring and training of 20,000 employees to company-wide diversity programming.

"Every day is a new day," Kahrs said. "Normally, you have a certain predictability about a job, but in human resources, you know that during the day there will be things that happen that you couldn't have anticipated and I like that."

First an executive at various organizations, including the Cerebral Palsy Center in Oakland and Lockheed Missiles and Space Company in Sunnyvale, Kahrs said moving into the entertainment industry was a sort of byproduct of his career trajectory. Part networking, part taking his own advice to "just say yes."

"I sort of fell into it," he said. "I had an early mentor who I'd worked for in recreation who'd moved over to entertainment, and he offered me a job at Viacom (a mass-media conglomerate). Once I got into it, I really loved it [because] it melded the skills I had in human resources with an industry I found fascinating, fun and interesting."

In his role at Universal, Kahrs often traveled around the world, and said he always loved talking to everyone about how his work at Universal connected to them.


"I loved the idea that I could be in Osaka, Japan, getting a cab ride and ask what someone's favorite movie was, and it could spark an entire conversation," he said. "That's one of the great benefits of entertainment, it transcends a certain culture, even a certain country, and has this global appeal."

Now five years into retirement, Kahrs said he feels proud of the career he built, particularly his work around increasing diversity at arguably one of the biggest names in the entertainment industry.

"Really starting in the '80s I was in a position to impact the diversity of the company I was in through hiring practices, programs and training," he said. "And I was able to carry that through and see not only the initial phases but the long-term impact of those efforts at a company that embraces diversity."

He says there's still work to do around diversity and inclusion in the entertainment world, but he's hopeful.

"We all know and hear a lot about diversity in Hollywood and the challenges of inclusion in an industry that's quite frankly dominated by white males, but the good news is it's getting a lot of attention and there is increasing diversity at all levels, but the challenges ahead are immense."

As for what's next? For now, Kahrs is enjoying retirement, spending time with his grandsons, golfing, and yes, still enjoying plenty of movies and television. 

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# SARA WILLIAMS TOYLOY

BS '87, BIOLOGICAL SCIENCE

Sara Toyloy has always enjoyed a challenge. In fact, it was a challenge from a cousin at age 15 that led her to attend then-Cal State Hayward.

After graduating from high school early, Toyloy was given a trip by her older cousins Joan and Ernest Simien from her island home, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, a small island in the Caribbean to visit them in Fremont, California. It was during that trip that her cousins took her up to the university's Hayward campus to admire the bay view and asked her whether she'd ever want to attend school there.

Not long after, with approval from the university's president because of her young age of 15, Toyloy enrolled in classes.

"It was absolutely frightening those first few days, walking around a huge campus," she recalled.

Now the president of new therapies and chief regulatory officer of Elixir Medical Corporation, Toyloy oversees the clinical, regulatory and quality teams. In short, ensuring the devices Elixir creates — drug-eluting stents for heart attack patients — are approved as quickly as possible for use nationally and around the world.

It's a challenge that suits her just fine.

Although Toyloy started out as a research scientist after graduating, she transferred into the regulatory affairs department, where she quickly gained a reputation for finding success where others previously hadn't and started getting assigned the "disaster projects."

After learning through many difficult assignments, Toyloy landed one of her greatest successes: a device that received U.S. Federal Drug Administration approval in 113 days, which at the time was a record for the industry.

The work is intrinsically satisfying too, although Toyloy admits it can take stepping back from the day-to-day sometimes to see that.

"In reality, everything that we do on a daily basis, also has a great impact on human life, not just in the U.S. but around the world," she said. "Heart disease is still the number one cause of death, but slowly and surely, we're reducing that year over year."

Her tenacity and drive, which helps push devices through the FDA regulations and other global approvals, started long before she ever took a job in the industry. And comes with a healthy sense of duty.

"Looking at the opportunities I was given to come to the U.S., and attend university ... I felt I needed to earn my opportunity and make good on that, not only in graduation but also in every opportunity that I have since had in my career," Toyloy said when asked what drives her.


As a student, that meant taking classes such as the history of jazz that would help her not just in school, but as a student of life.

"I would write to all my friends back home and tell them what I was learning," Toyloy said. "[Cal State East Bay] gave me a well-rounded foundation, not only in my subject matter, but as a human being."

One class, in particular, an organic chemistry course with Leroy Chauffe was particularly poignant. After receiving a 93 on an exam and realizing someone she regularly competed with in class received a 94, Toyloy went to Chauffe's office to contest the grade. But instead, he asked her a question that she still references today.

"He said, 'why are you here trying to get a 94 instead of being happy with your 93, which is your highest score yet? Stop and take a minute to enjoy what is good,'" Toyloy recalled.

And it's a reminder she said current students should hear as well.

"Never underestimate your capabilities," she said. "You should be very proud of the education you are receiving at Cal State East Bay. It is a strong, solid foundation, and it can allow you to compete at the highest level in all career choices." 



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AWARDS  
GALA 2019





# KAREN OLIVER

BA '74, ART

Karen Oliver knows a thing or two about the power of beauty.

After graduating from then-Cal State Hayward, Oliver dreamt of going into fashion and opening a fine designer sportswear boutique with a prestigious cosmetics line in San Francisco. But she needed money to get started.

So as a self-described “precocious 20-something-year-old,” she called high-end skincare company Erno Laszlo to see if she could get the brand onboard with her concept. However, Laszlo disrupted her business plans with a different opportunity, a job at I. Magnin in San Francisco selling their cosmetics. Not long after, Oliver was promoted to the position of the store’s assistant department manager, followed by a promotion to cosmetics buyer. It was then she realized she loved the industry and discovered what beauty meant to customers.

“Makeup can really empower someone in terms of helping to build their self-esteem,” Oliver said. “Beauty is powerful. It’s not just lipsticks; beauty has real potential to make people feel better about themselves, and I’ve been fortunate to have seen it happen many, many times throughout my career.”

From Erno Laszlo, Oliver went on to hold executive positions at prestigious brands, including Christian Dior, Lancôme, Helena Rubinstein (L’Oréal) and Shiseido. These days she is the founder and CEO of Karen Oliver and Associates, a trusted boutique public relations agency in New York City.

Since opening in 2004, KO&A is especially known for putting premier European beauty brands little known in the US, such as Eau Thermale Avène and Klorane, front and center with the American media.

As for Oliver, she has been highlighted by numerous media outlets, including “Coveteur.com” and “FabOverFifty.com,” not only for her impeccable style but also for her ingenuity and drive.

Her advice to young people? “Work hard, say yes to opportunities when they arise, and stay motivated.”


“If you let fear paralyze you, you’re never going to recognize that there’s an opportunity in front of you,” Oliver said. “Being fearless and walking through the door of opportunity that comes to you is a big part of being successful.”

It’s a lesson Oliver learned in part during her time at then-Cal State Hayward, where she’d often find herself spending long days in the art studios, tapping into a side of herself she’d explored as a child, but never considered for a career.

“Because of my exposure [to art], and my great classes at East Bay, it was imprinted on my spirit and soul that I could go through my life looking at it through a lens of art and creativity,” she said.

And since then, she has let art and her passion for living a creative, authentic life be her guide.

“I think you have to be true to your own self; it can’t just be a job is a job, and a salary is a salary,” Oliver said. “In the end, you have to look back on your life and say, ‘Was I fulfilled, did I make a difference, did I do it my way,’ as Frank Sinatra would say. And if you can say that and you can look in the mirror and like yourself, I think that’s success.”

“For me, there’s also more to living an authentic life than being successful in business. I’ve always been a strong believer in the importance of showing my gratitude for all my blessings, giving back and paying it forward. To quote one of my role models, the iconic actress and great humanitarian Audrey Hepburn, ‘As you grow older, you will discover that you have two hands — one for helping yourself, the other for helping others.’ It’s always been a core part of my personal philosophy to go through life reaching out with both hands.” 





# JAMES HANNAN

BS '89, BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION

Jim Hannan is motivated by helping others improve their lives.

As the executive vice president of Koch Industries and CEO of Koch Enterprises, what that looks like day-to-day may change.

At times, it means spending time with the Atlanta Police Foundation, helping the city, businesses and the police work together to keep the city safer. Other days, it's talking to young people at Koch about leveraging their individual gifts and what they are passionate about into doing work that creates value for customers, the company and society and helps them become more fully self-actualized.

"The thing I've really enjoyed ... about being a leader is bringing diverse groups of people together on teams where their individual strengths and weaknesses are complimentary such that weaknesses of one are made up for by the strengths of others," Hannan said.

Coming out of high school, he didn't quite know what he wanted to pursue as a career. But after just one accounting class at then-Cal State Hayward, Hannan discovered an intersection of his talents and interests.

"I took my first accounting class, and everything clicked, and it felt really like 'this is what I was meant to do,'" he said. "I took a diverse set of classes — management, economics — all of which set the foundation ultimately for the career I've had to date. I guess I found my calling there."

These days, that means being a leader at one of the largest private companies in the U.S., with more than 120,000 employees located in 60 countries. At his office at Georgia Pacific, which supplies all sorts of consumer products, from Quilted Northern toilet paper to Dixie plates and cups, as well as packaging and building materials, Hannan reflected on how his company is tapping into his desire to make a difference.

"We are helping people improve their lives every day by doing the little things that make a difference, he said. "I've always been motivated by trying to make people's lives better, and we judge our performance [at Koch Industries] through the value we create by doing that."

Outside work, Hannan spends as much time as possible with his wife Susan, his three daughters, and his niece, who also lives with the family in Atlanta. They keep him going, he said, and are an essential part of his success.

"That partnership that exists with your spouse and family is what makes all of this possible," Hannan said. "I owe each of them a huge debt of gratitude for that, and they've also kept me honest and real along the way." ■



# CLASS NOTES

## ALUMNI BOARD

The Cal State East Bay Alumni Association facilitates a lifelong connection between the university and alumni. We engage students, our alumni of tomorrow, by building relationships and passing on the culture of service and philanthropy. Together with our campus partners, we keep community stakeholders informed, involved and inspired about the university and our alumni successes. Meet this year's Alumni Association Board of Directors:



**LISA BOOKER** (B.S. '84, Business Administration) is a logistics coordinator in the procurement services department at Cal State East Bay. Booker has been on the Alumni Board for almost four years and has volunteered at several alumni and university events.



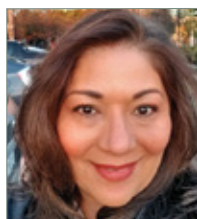
**JOE BYRNE** (B.A. '94, Liberal Studies) is currently the regional chief technology officer for AppDynamics, a software company owned by Cisco Systems. He originally came to Cal State East Bay from San Diego to finish his liberal studies degree with the intent of being a grade school teacher. But after meeting his wife at the Concord campus, he decided to pursue a career in technology.



**JENNIFER CASE** (B.A. '08, Human Development; MPA '10) is the former president of the Cal State East Bay Alumni Board. Jennifer is experienced in team building, project management and management roles. Jennifer and her husband are a part of the Presbytery of The Well Christian Community Church in Livermore, where she serves as a licensed minister. Jennifer worked in the insurance industry for over 21 years prior to entering the ministry on a full-time basis.



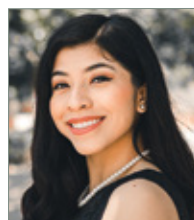
**MICHAEL CESENA** (M.S. '16, Kinesiology) is currently the events manager for Associated Students Incorporated at Cal State East Bay and enjoys being engaged with students and on-campus activities.



**IRENE GONZALES** (B.S. '90, Business Administration) began her career at Pacific Bell as a "dial O" operator while working to complete her undergraduate degree at then-Cal State Hayward. She went on to develop a 20-plus year career in human resources in various industries. Irene joined the Cal State East Bay Alumni Association Board of Directors in 2017 and began serving as secretary in 2018.



**RONALD D. GARCIA** (B.A. '69, English) completed two master's degrees and a doctorate in education and psychology at Stanford after graduating from Cal State East Bay. His career has focused on preparing culturally and linguistically diverse health professionals at Stanford School of Medicine, and he was a pioneer in establishing the physician assistant profession in California. Today, he is the director of the Center of Excellence in Diversity in Medical Education and assistant dean for Minority Affairs.



**MARILYN GRACIA** (B.S. '17, Hospitality, Recreation and Tourism) spent a few years working in event planning and recreation programming before moving into civil workers compensation and corporate law. She currently works for Assured Relocation as a Security Deposits coordinator.



**JOE GURA** (B.A., '02, Mass Communication) is the treasurer of the Cal State East Bay Alumni Board of Directors. After starting his career in sports and news broadcasting, Joe gravitated toward the technology field more than a decade ago. Today, he helps lead worldwide product marketing strategy for enterprise support products at Microsoft Corporation

in Redmond, Washington. An inaugural honoree of the Cal State East Bay "40 Under 40" awards in 2017.

**ASEHLI HOWE** (B.A. '16, International Studies; Spanish) is a social justice educator and entrepreneur on a mission to create supportive communities that end cycles of trauma. She recently spoke on one of Cal State East Bay's Women on the Rise panels and is currently the CEO and co-founder of Survivor Alliance, the Project Manager of the Kintsugi Project, and a substitute teacher for San Lorenzo USD.



**TYEHIMBA JELANI** (B.S. '04, Business Administration) has been employed with the City of Oakland for 15 years. Currently, he is the help desk supervisor in the information technology department. In 2011, he co-founded LIFE Courses, Inc., an Oakland-based nonprofit focused on providing financial education and entrepreneurship workshops to middle school students and their parents.



**ALLEN KWAN** (B.A. '04, Mass Communication) is the senior vice president, head of West region sales for Swiss Re Corporate Solutions and the new Cal State East Bay Alumni Association Board President. His passion for inclusion led him to co-found two networking groups: the Pacific Northwest Chapter of the Insurance Industry Charitable Foundation and the San Francisco Chapter of Emerging Insurance Professionals.





**JENNIFER LANE** (B.S. '07, Business Administration; M.S. '10, Hospitality) is a highly-driven, performance-focused marketing professional who currently runs the sponsorships and events department at TriNet. During her 12 years at TriNet, Lane has managed the field marketing, client marketing, channel marketing, creative services and marketing operations.



**HEATHER REYES** (B.A. '05, Communication) is a communications executive who has filled communications director roles in various organizations and sectors. Her work has earned multiple awards and she frequently shares her strategic insights as a consultant. Reyes enthusiastically brings her leadership in brand development and public relations to the 2019-20 alumni board.



**KEVIN LIAO** (M.S. '13, Computer Science) After practicing law for several years, Kevin decided on a career change and obtained a master's degree in computer science from Cal State East Bay while working during the day. He is now happy creating software in the financial technology industry.



**MICHELLE RIPPY** (B.S., '02, Forensic Science) has worked in law enforcement and investigations for more than 15 years. In 2006, Michelle returned to Cal State East Bay as a lecturer in the Criminal Justice department and earned a tenure-track position in 2016. Michelle is excited to work with undergraduate students at CSUEB and create first-generation student programs to assist with persistence and graduation.



**HARUMI MURATA** (MPA '16) is a passionate public policy administrator who has been serving in global public institutions for more than 10 years. At Cal State East Bay, she found inspiration for community engagement, participatory research, and service-learning through the Ending Hunger and Homelessness project. Harumi currently serves as a program analyst at UCSF and VA Medical Center in San Francisco.



**AMANDEEP SINGH** (MBA '18) is a business operations and transformation expert with 15 years of experience in the automotive and semiconductor industries. He specializes in helping organizations achieve top-line growth and bottom-line profitability by leveraging pricing and sales strategies driven by deep analytics. As the current director of pricing and analytics at GlobalFoundries, he works with cross-functional leadership team to define the strategic vision for the company.

## FOREVER PIONEER

This is where we celebrate life's moments from fellow Pioneers with the university community. Do you have career news, accomplishments, fond memories or life changes to share? We'd love to hear from you! Submit your class note online at [csueastbay.edu/alumni](https://csueastbay.edu/alumni).



**ANDREW YUNKER** (B.S. '15; M.S. '17, Computer Science) is a lecturer at Cal State East Bay, where he develops pillars of success for incoming first-year students, including the creation of software which aids in increasing retention of second-year students. Andrew also started his own business restoring computing technology and developed software technology for students; giving probabilities, projections and calculations for courses that effectively increase student success in them. Recently Andrew was named to Cal State East Bay's 40 Under 40 list.

## 1960s

**MAHMOUD AL-KHAFAJI** (B.S. '68, Mathematics) graduated with a Ph.D. in mathematics from New Mexico State University in 1976. He taught at the University of Kansas for two years and at the University of Missouri for three years, and at Eastern Michigan University for 26 years. He also taught at three other institutions for shorter periods. He retired from EMU in January 2010.



**RICHARD LEO ENOS** (B.A. '69, Speech & Drama) recently retired (on the anniversary of the 50th anniversary of his college graduation) after 46 years as a professor. In 2009, Richard was named a Piper Professor for the State of Texas. He also holds the Lillian Radford Chair of Rhetoric and Composition at Texas Christian University and received the "Chancellor's Award for Distinguished Achievement as a Creative Teacher and Scholar" in 2008.

## CAL STATE EAST BAY ALUMNI ASSOCIATION IMPORTANT PRIVACY CHOICE — Restrict Information Sharing With Affinity Partners

You have the right to control whether we share your name, address and email address with our affinity partners (companies that the Alumni Association partners with to offer products and services to alumni). You can update your privacy choice status by doing one of the following:

Complete an online form at [csueastbay.edu/alumni](https://csueastbay.edu/alumni)

Call toll-free: (866) 414-8136

Email us at [alumni@csueastbay.edu](mailto:alumni@csueastbay.edu) with your current contact information and "privacy choice" in the subject line.

**WOMEN ON THE RISE: PIONEERS TRANSFORMING COMMUNITIES**

Women on the Rise alumni events recognize successful Pioneer alumnae and provide opportunities for Pioneer women to share their inspirational career stories, discuss the unique benefits and challenges of being a woman in the workforce, and connect with each other for support and networking.



**EILEEN ADVINCULA** (B.S. '12, Criminal Justice Administration) attended law school and graduated from Monterey College of Law. Learning to rise above difficult circumstances, she harbored the fierce desire to advocate for the indigent and founded Legal Links in early 2019. Eileen boasts an extensive legal background with experience in business formation, mergers and acquisitions, intellectual property, patent prosecution, immigration and employment disputes. Eileen is also a published editor in the field of law and technology, and an inspirational leader in the community and abroad.



**MAHOGANY CHARLTON-ROLAND** (MPA '07) spent her formative years in Sacramento, but fell in love with the Bay Area while studying at Saint Mary's College of California, where she received her bachelor's degree. She then went on to obtain her MPA from Cal State East Bay and earned a nonprofit certification from Golden Gate University. Mahogany has spent the last nine years working passionately in the social impact sector. As executive director of Wardrobe for Opportunity, Mahogany is dedicated to the organization's mission of providing low-income Bay Area residents the tools and resources they need to achieve economic mobility.



**CHANTERRIA MCGILBRA** (B.A. '99, Sociology) is founder of Prancing Ponies Foundation 501(c)3, Rally and Car Show, which 'Creates Women Leaders One Girl at a Time' through Leadership Acceleration Academies for third-year STEM girls and high school girls. The Foundation is supported by the first All Woman Car Show during Monterey Car Week and the first all-female Ferrari rally in the world.



**ASEHLI HOWE** (B.A. '16, International Studies; Spanish) is a social justice educator and entrepreneur on a mission to create supportive communities that end cycles of trauma. She is currently the CEO and co-founder of Survivor Alliance, the project manager of the Kintsugi Photography Project, the youngest board member of the Alumni Association, and a substitute teacher for San Lorenzo Unified School District. In addition, she volunteers as a rape crisis counselor with San Francisco Women Against Rape, and is a mentor with Girlventures.



**VERONICA VAZQUEZ** (B.A. '04, Human Development & MSW '07) was born and raised in Delano, California, and returned to Kern County after completing her master's degree to pursue a profession in social work. Veronica has worked for the Kern County Department of Human Services for over 11 years as a Child Protective Services Social Worker. She is a third-generation Huelguista, Activista! and advocates for worker's rights and the community.

**1970s**

**MIKE COX** (B.A. '72, History) is a retired teacher from Fremont Unified School District. He taught 37 years at Robertson Continuation High School, which was very enjoyable and fulfilling. He worked with great students throughout his career.

**1980s**

**DAN FONTES** (B.A. '82, Art) is one of Cal State East Bay's best-known muralists, whose colorful work appears on many public and private spaces in the East Bay and beyond. Tired of the visual clichés and vocabulary born in the crucible of the 1960s activism era of mural making, Fontes is aligned with the principles, but seeks his own expression. His murals encompass a desire to promote the humanities and showcase diversity, to share his deep interest in history, especially of the Bay Area, and to inspire environmental awareness.

**BRENDA NOLEN** (B.S. '85, Criminal Justice Administration) is the Santa Cruz Beach Boardwalk's new director of safety & security. Nolen has worked in public and private security for 25 years. Before joining the Santa Cruz Beach Boardwalk, Nolen served as a police officer for both the San Jose Police Department and Monterey Regional Airport.

**MICHAEL J BLONDINO** (B.A. '89, Recreation) is Carmichael Recreation and Park District's new park administrator. He oversees 21 staffers, 13 parks and numerous facilities. Blondino previously supervised recreation for several Bay Area cities.



**GREG RALEIGH** (B.A. '89, Mass Communication) is a nutrition, health and fitness expert with 25 years of experience educating and training students, athletes, politicians, business executives and employees. He was recently appointed as



commissioner in 2018 to the Mayor's Council on Physical Fitness and Nutrition to develop programs to reduce obesity.

## 1990s

**TRACY MCMULLEN** ('93, Single Subject Teaching Credential) recently published a book, "Haunthenticity: Musical Replay and the Fear of the Real," with Wesleyan University Press.



**HELENA JACK** (B.A. '94, Music; '02, Single Subject Teaching Credential) is the beloved and respected band teacher and creator of the award-winning Oakland Eastside All-Star Ensemble. After more than 20 years teaching music in the Oakland Unified School District, Jack hung up her conductor's baton in June and retired from full-time teaching.

**LEE HENDERSON** (B.S. '95, Business Administration) is an assurance partner and central region growth markets leader for Ernst & Young where he has worked since graduating. He worked in the firm's San Jose office before moving to the New York office, and then London and more recently relocated from London. In 2010 he relocated to Chicago.

## 2000s

**DAVID HAGERTY** (M.S. '01, Special Education) is the disability support services manager for Diablo Valley College. Upon completing his degree at Cal State East Bay, he took a job teaching math and English to students with disabilities at Sacramento City College. After 14 years there, he returned to the East Bay to manage the Disability Support Services office at Diablo Valley College.



**TAMIKA THOMAS** (B.A. '01, English) recently had her second novel, "Never Too Soon," published under her nom de plume, Tamika Christy. Her first novel, "Anytime Soon," was published in 2013.



**HORACIO FRANCO** (B.S. '02, Criminal Justice Administration) is the founder of H&R Plumbing and Drain Cleaning in El Sobrante, California. Franco got into plumbing quite accidentally, but then started a plumbing company of his own. His ability to adapt has made his career into another example of the rise of a businessman from humble beginnings on the strength of hard work, determination, courage — and a willingness to try new things.



**DAWN MONIQUE WILLIAMS** (B.A. '03, Theatre) has joined Aurora Theatre Company as its first associate artistic director. Williams will make her Aurora directing debut with "Bull in a China Shop" this fall.



**MATTHEW HART** (M.A. '04, English Literature) has been promoted to principal at Granada

High School. Hart has served Livermore Valley Joint Unified School District students for 20 years in the district, both as a teacher and an administrator. For the past four years, he has been a vice principal — three of those years at GHS. Prior to that, he taught English at GHS for 16 years. Hart was the English Department chair for six years, the Western Association of Schools and Colleges' self-study coordinator, the supervisor for facilities, and GHS's state testing coordinator.



**JOE O. NGUYEN** (M.A. '05, Educational Leadership) is the new principal for Pleasanton Middle School. Previously, Nguyen was a principal in the Castro Valley Unified School District and worked as a middle school teacher before moving into administrative positions.



**DAN DESMIDT** (MPA '06) spent more than three decades working in law enforcement and retired earlier this year. DeSmidt spent his entire career working for the Belmont Police Department, including the past seven years as police chief. A graduate of Carlmont High School in Belmont, DeSmidt was first hired by the police department in 1987 as a community service officer.

**HASHIM JANI** (B.S. '07, Criminal Justice Administration) has joined Silicon Legal Strategy as a paralegal in the company's San Francisco office. Hashim assists the Silicon Legal team and clients with incorporations, private equity and debt financing, equity plan administration, mergers and acquisitions and general corporate governance matters. Prior to joining Silicon Legal, Hashim

worked as a paralegal at Arm, Inc., assisting with global subsidiary compliance and M&A, and Wilson Sonsini Goodrich & Rosati, P.C.

**MEL STANFILL** (M.A. '08, Media and Cultural Studies) recently published "Exploiting Fandom: How the Media Industry Seeks to Manipulate Fans" with the University of Iowa Press.

## 2010s



**MARTIN SMURA** (MBA '12) took the helm as the new CEO of the Kempinski Group on July 1. He most recently was executive chairman of the board of the Dorint Hotel Group, and also held other relevant board mandates. He had a seat on the board of Azimut Hotels, Russia's largest hotel group, and was chairman of the board of directors of Adlon Holding. He spent 15 years with InterContinental Hotels Group, spending time as director of operations in Eastern and Western Europe.



**KENNETH DESHON FARR II** (B.A. '14, Liberal Studies) a former student at St. David School in Richmond, has become the school's principal. Farr II first stepped foot on the St. David School campus in 1997, when he started kindergarten. On May 21 he was offered and accepted the position as the school's principal.



**DAVID MARTIN** (B.S. '16, Computer Science) has been selected to serve as interim superintendent/president of Monterey Peninsula College. Martin previously served as MPC vice president of administrative services, as chief financial officer and as the interim vice chancellor of finance and administration at City College of San Francisco. Martin started his career in higher education with a regional public accounting firm, providing operational, financial and compliance consulting services to numerous community colleges throughout California.



**JULIAN MEDINA** (B.S. '16, Computer Science) is a junior engineer for Bay Area Rapid Transit. Medina's current assignment includes working on the project to

expand BART to Milpitas and Berryessa/North San Jose.

**JOLIE BASKETT** (B.A. '17, Art-Multimedia Design) is a graphic designer for Ruffalo Noel Levitz. Cal State East Bay taught her everything she wanted to know and so much more about design technology. This helped her land a position she wanted — aiding nonprofits through her art.

**MICHELLE FLETCHER** (B.S. '17, Health Sciences) is currently an MPH candidate at the Rollins School of Public Health at Emory University. She is studying global health with a concentration in community health and development. Since graduation she moved to Atlanta and worked on several research projects focusing on HIV prevention for women living in the Southeast.



**AVNEET KAUR** (M.S. '19, Health Care Administration) was recently appointed CEO of the Calaveras County Chamber of Commerce.

## UPCOMING ALUMNI EVENTS:

### PIONEER HIKES | SPRING 2020

Join our director of alumni engagement and alumni staff for seven scheduled explorations of the East Bay Regional Parks District as we work together to complete the East Bay Regional Parks 2020 Trail Challenge by reaching marathon distance! Hikes increase in difficulty and are tentatively scheduled for Saturday mornings on 1/4, 1/18, 2/8, 2/29, 3/7, 3/21, and 4/4.

### PIONEER WINE EXPERIENCE | FEB. 8, 2020

Make this year's Valentine's Day extra special by learning about food and wine pairings with a special emphasis on dessert wines and chocolate.

### CAREERBOOST | FEB. 22, 2020

Looking to start or change your career? Boost your search by attending career workshops, one-on-one advice sessions with career and industry hiring professionals and networking with fellow Pioneer job seekers.

[csueastbay.edu/alumni/events](https://csueastbay.edu/alumni/events)

### UPCOMING VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES:

#### CAREERBOOST WORKSHOP PRESENTERS FEB. 22, 2020

10 a.m.-12 p.m. | Hayward Campus  
Email: [travis.nelson@csueastbay.edu](mailto:travis.nelson@csueastbay.edu)

#### CAREERBOOST RESUME REVIEWERS & MOCK INTERVIEWERS FEB. 22, 2020

12-2 p.m. | Hayward Campus

[csueastbay.edu/volunteer](https://csueastbay.edu/volunteer)

# 4 reasons to STAY CONNECTED

## 1 Career Support

Continued support to Pioneer graduates through alumni career events, and campus career & professional development resources.

## 2 Discounts & Resources

Access to select university facilities and discounts on insurance, entertainment, student performances and more.

## 3 Networking

Connect with more than 130,000 Pioneer alumni, a majority whom live and work in the Bay Area.

## 4 Volunteer Opportunities

Share your career experience and industry insight with students and fellow alumni or volunteer as an alumni ambassador at campus and community events.

CAL STATE  
EAST BAY  
ALUMNI

**Update your contact  
information today!**

[csueastbay.edu/alumni](https://csueastbay.edu/alumni)

**Get Social With Us!**





# Your Campus. Your Stories.



**In a remote military base in Kuwait**, United States Air Force Technical Sgt. Ricardo Garcia is busy laboring in a desert where temperatures commonly reach up to 120 degrees Fahrenheit during the summer months.

There, he manages and assists in the loading and unloading of an average of 15 inbound and outbound cargo military aircraft 12 hours a day, six days a week. From noon to midnight, he lifts heavy shipments of food, medical supplies, vehicles, weapons, ammunition and baggage into airplanes destined for U.S. soldiers in “global hot spots” such as Syria and Afghanistan. The grueling work leaves him exhausted and with little time to do anything else.

“It’s a tough job, but this is what I do,” Garcia said. “I’m away from my family during the holidays too, and it’s part of the compromise of my job.”

— Read the rest of this story and others like it at [ebtoday.com](http://ebtoday.com)

EBToday.com



# BUILDING A PURPOSE-DRIVEN SPACE FOR STEM




The number of science, technology and mathematics (STEM) majors at Cal State East Bay has increased by more than 50 percent since 2010, making the College of Science the fastest growing and largest college on campus. This is particularly important given that California has the greatest growth of all states in the STEM workforce, and yet more than 2 million of those jobs go unfilled. In addition, California is facing a severe shortage of STEM trained teachers due to smaller class sizes and a drop in teacher credential enrollment.

The forthcoming Applied Sciences Center is designed to help meet these needs.

Our commitment to student and faculty research collaborations — which is a high-impact practice that influences academic success — is preparing our students to enter their respective fields immediately after graduation, making our graduates highly valued throughout the STEM and allied health workforces.

The Applied Sciences Center will provide a purpose-designed space to foster student and faculty collaborations. Its 20,000 square feet will feature state-of-the-art, interdisciplinary areas for student and faculty research projects, innovation space to explore new methods and technologies, and well-equipped labs to support more students working on research projects with their professors. The center will also support in-service K-12 teachers — as well as develop its own pre-service teachers to be skilled STEM teachers — by engaging them in high-impact practice labs and curriculum at Cal State East Bay.


The university has raised 24.1 of the \$30 million needed for this building, and continues fundraising for this project in a special campaign. Invest in science education that will impact the entire region with a gift or by including Cal State East Bay in your estate plans. Please contact Holly Stanco at [holly.stanco@csueastbay.edu](mailto:holly.stanco@csueastbay.edu) or (510) 885-3183.

Learn more at [www.csueastbay.edu/csci/applied-sciences-center](http://www.csueastbay.edu/csci/applied-sciences-center). 





# PARTING SHOT

Assistant Professor of Psychology Brian Gonçalves and student Whitney Gonzales conduct a study about the effects of context on someone's ability to recognize faces. In the psychology lab at Cal State East Bay, students have a chance to conduct studies that measure brain waves in response to visual stimuli such as the faces and scenery that flash on a monitor in front of the subject.  GARVIN TSO





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# Rising in the East

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THE CAMPAIGN FOR CAL STATE EAST BAY

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