



SCIENCE STORIES FROM CAL STATE EAST BAY



DEAN CARMEN BUSTOS-WORK'S MESSAGE

Hello and warm wishes from Cal State East Bay!

I'm Carmen Bustos-Works, the new Dean of the College of Science, and I'm thrilled to have joined this beautiful Hayward campus in August. As a proud alumna of the CSU system, with undergraduate degrees in Chemistry and Psychology from San Francisco State and a Ph.D. from UC Santa Barbara, I feel right at home leading this vibrant community of scientists, engineers, mathematicians, scholars, and innovators.

There's an exciting spirit of growth and collaboration across the university. The new College of Health, which now houses Nursing and Public Health, is working closely with us to create clear pathways for students into California's rapidly expanding health and bio-technology sectors. We also recently welcomed Environmental Studies and Geography into the College of Science as part of this reorganization and are developing creative programming around sustainable urban agriculture.



**CARMEN BUSTOS-WORKS
DEAN, COLLEGE OF SCIENCE**

Within the College of Science, we're advancing initiatives in **AI, drone technologies, Civil Engineering, and Data Science**, alongside hands-on research and discovery in our **Braddock Center for Science and Innovation**. Our academic departments span **Biological Sciences, Chemistry & Biochemistry, Computer Science, Earth, Environmental, & Sustainability Sciences, Engineering, Mathematics, Physics, Psychology, and Statistics & Data Science**, fields that continue to evolve and inspire.

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Dean's Message

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We're also strengthening our **First-Year Experience** through the innovative **STEM LAB**, while supporting our many commuter and transfer students and our thriving graduate programs. Cal State East Bay remains a leader in **online education**, expanding access and flexibility for learners across the region.

I invite you to reconnect with your College, come to campus, join me for coffee or a walk, and see firsthand how our students and faculty are shaping the future of science and innovation in the Bay Area and beyond. You can also reach me by email or Zoom anytime; I'd love to hear from you.

Warm regards,

Carmen Bustos-Works, Ph.D.

Dean, College of Science



Left to right: Nayeli Perez, Cameron Hay, **Stephanie Zaleski**, and Prianka Jodge

FACULTY SPOTLIGHT

STEPHANIE ZALESKI, PH.D.
ASSISTANT PROFESSOR,
DEPARTMENT OF CHEMISTRY &
BIOCHEMISTRY

Research Interests:

The College of Science is thrilled to spotlight one of our dynamic assistant professors. Professor Zaleski's research interests are a crossover between analytical, physical, and materials chemistry with expertise in vibrational spectroscopy techniques. They use different wavelengths of light to measure the unique "fingerprint" of a molecule to gain insight about the different vibrational motions of a molecule and answer questions related to art conservation.

Dr. Zaleski has two focus areas of research in which vibrational spectroscopy is applied. First is the use of surface-enhanced Raman spectroscopy (SERS) to amplify vibrational signal for single molecule fingerprinting and uses this to learn about polyphenols (antioxidants) which can signal how plants respond to external stressors such as changes in temperature and water. A goal of this project is to potentially alter the affinity of different polyphenols for the nanoparticle surface to better understand how to increase signal to noise ratio and allow for analysis of complex mixtures.

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Faculty Spotlight

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A second project in Dr. Zaleski's lab is focused on applications to chemical characterization of materials used in works of art. Their group has ongoing collaborations with fine art conservators at Bay Area museums, including the Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco and SFMOMA. Through scientific analysis, conservators seek to better understand aspects of an artist's practice, identify degradation products and mechanisms, and inform decisions about conservation treatments. This research work also gives their research students at CSUEB a unique opportunity to apply their chemistry knowledge to better understand works of art. Through this work they hope to develop better conservation treatments.

Fun facts about Professor Zaleski:

- Professor Zaleski has been practicing aerial arts (silks, hammock, and static trapeze) as a hobby for almost 10 years. This hobby was picked up in graduate school as a fun way to exercise, and she was hooked immediately.
- A favorite research project of hers was characterizing different yellow pigments used in Japanese woodblock prints in the mid-1800s during postdoctoral research at the Metropolitan Museum of Art. Dr. Zaleski analyzed original woodblock prints by Katsushika Hokusai, who is best known for his woodblock print design "The Great Wave off Kanagawa".

STUDENT SPOTLIGHT

SABRIA HINTON,
PURSUING A B.S. IN PHYSICS

**Building Her Own Blueprint:
Sabria Hinton's Path in Engineering**

Sabria Hinton has built her academic journey on determination, creativity, and purpose. Now pursuing a B.S. in Physics at Cal State East Bay, where she will graduate in Spring 2026, Sabria has turned her early curiosity for how things work into a passion for engineering innovation, designing, coding, and building drones from the ground up.

What began as independent exploration has evolved into focused research on hybrid solar-thermal UAVs designed for long-endurance environmental missions. Through this work, Sabria has

Student Spotlight

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developed not only technical expertise but also a belief that engineering's greatest impact lies in collaboration, persistence, and community.

At CSUEB, she has founded a robotics club, participated in national lab internships, and mentored fellow students interested in STEM. Her commitment to creating access and opportunity reflects her view that innovation is most powerful when it inspires others.

Looking ahead, Sabria hopes to establish a research lab dedicated to drone and robotics design for real-world challenges. Her guiding principle remains constant: resilience is more than perseverance, it's the art of building the future when no one hands you the blueprint.

IMPORTANT DATES

- December 2 - Giving Tuesday
- Dec 24-Jan 1 - Winter Break*
- Jan 19 - Martin Luther King Jr. Holiday*
- Jan 20 - First Day of Spring Semester
- Mar 4 - East Bay Giving Day
- Mar 31 - Cesar Chavez Holiday*
- Mar 30-Apr 3 - Spring Break
- April 18 - Honors Convocation
- May 16 - CSCI Commencement

*Campus Closed

STAFF SPOTLIGHT

**JANET SNYDER, COORDINATOR
CSCI ADVISING CENTER**

Meet Janet Snyder, our College of Science Advising Coordinator, who has been helping students find their way at CSUEB for more than a decade.

Janet joined the Advising Center as the coordinator this past July. She first joined Cal State East Bay in 2012, working at the Institute for STEM Education, before moving to the Department of Mathematics and Computer Science (then still a single department). There, she advised undergraduate students, processed graduate admissions, and supported enrollment and student services from 2015 to 2025.

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[PROFESSOR NAME](#)

Staff Spotlight

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Before coming to CSUEB, Janet spent 20 years in the School of Education at the University of San Francisco, where she held a variety of administrative and graduate student support roles. Her passion for higher education began with her own experience at the University of Missouri, where a caring advisor helped her see the impact of strong guidance and encouragement.

In her current role, Janet leads the Advising Center's student support staff, provides training, and ensures compliance with university policies and best practices. She enjoys collaborating with faculty and staff to create a welcoming space where students feel supported and confident in their academic goals. Janet loves knowing that, as an advisor, she's helping students reach their dreams of earning a college degree—and she deeply values the kindness and care of the faculty and staff she works with every day.

Outside of work, Janet and her husband, Jeff, have been married for 31 years. They share their home with two cats and enjoy wine tasting in Paso Robles, traveling (often with Janet's family), Giants baseball, and binge-watching old TV series.



STAY CONNECTED, SHARE YOUR STORY, AND SHAPE THE FUTURE!

Who was *your* favorite professor? What was your major? We want to hear from you! Take our quick [alumni poll](#) and tell us what made your Cal State East Bay experience unforgettable.

We're also collecting [success stories](#) from our incredible alumni community—where has your path taken you since graduation? Fill out our short form to share your story, inspire current students, and be featured in a future spotlight!

Your support makes it all possible. Please consider giving to one of our College of Science priorities:

- The **Dean's Innovation Fund**, fueling student and faculty research.
- The **STEM LAB**, empowering first-year students in hands-on discovery.
- **Clubs and Scholarships**, opening doors for future scientists.
- The **Campus Garden** and **Community Building Events**, connecting students, alumni, and neighbors.

Every gift—no matter the size—helps us grow the next generation of innovators, problem-solvers, and changemakers.