

FRESNO@STATE[®]

MAGAZINE

FALL/WINTER 2022

Eyeing a New Partnership

See how Fresno State faculty and students partnered with the Fresno Chaffee Zoo on the new Kingdoms of Asia exhibition



Deep Roots. Bright Futures.

FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK

My connection and commitment to our Valley span most of my life. For over 40 years, I have been inspired by the Central Valley's diversity, cultural depth and richness, and I am honored to call this community my home.

Over the many years I taught our students, I saw firsthand that earning a degree from Fresno State is transformational for our graduates, their families and our entire community. Fresno State graduates elevate every industry in our region. Over 75% of our K-12 teachers in the region hold degrees from our Kremen School of Education and Human Development. Indeed, as students are the future of our Valley, they are the leaders we all need. And their success is grounded on the commitment that Fresno State alumni manifest in the classroom.

As you read this issue's cover story, you will see this commitment to excellence exemplified by our diverse partnership with the Fresno Chaffee

Zoo. Our faculty and students are directly impacting the exciting new exhibition, Kingdoms of Asia, and so much more. From horticulture, water technology and testing, culturally accurate representations of dynamic cultures across the globe, and construction management, Fresno State's partnership has lifted up a regional gem, and we are so lucky to have such a fantastic zoo for our community to enjoy.

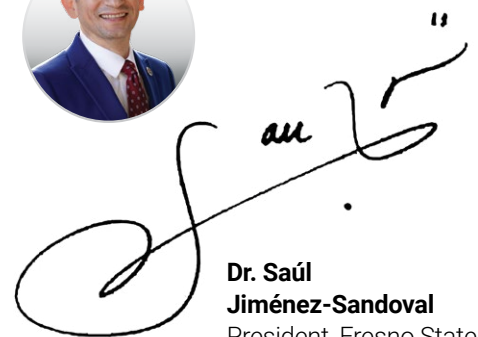
I can confidently state that every major economic, social, artistic and local institution in the region is sustained by the distinction of our alumni. We are more than 275,000 living alumni strong, and the fact that 80% of our graduates live and work right here in the Valley is a testament to how Fresno State directly drives opportunity, social mobility and regional growth.

As we embark on a new strategic plan, I am excited to hear your ideas for our university. In the coming months, we

will engage our campus and community in developing a strategic plan that will provide guidance as we chart our path forward. I look forward to sharing more with you in the coming year about all of the exciting things Fresno State will accomplish as we look ahead.

Given our deep roots, you can see how our future is bright.

Go 'Dogs!



**Dr. Saúl
Jiménez-Sandoval**
President, Fresno State



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Cover: Art history professor Dr. W. Saam Noonsuk served as a cultural adviser for the Fresno Chaffee Zoo's new Kingdoms of Asia exhibition, opening in February 2023.

Left: Fresno State students get a behind-the-scenes look at construction of the new tiger enclosure at the Fresno Chaffee Zoo's Kingdoms of Asia exhibition. The Southeast Asian jungle habitat was based on the expertise of advisers such as Fresno State art history professor Dr. W. Saam Noonsuk (second from left).

Photos by Cary Edmondson

FALL/WINTER 2022

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Fresno State serves the richly diverse region of Central California. We are proud to have the U.S. Department of Education designate our University as both a Hispanic-Serving Institution and an Asian American and Native American Pacific Islander-Serving Institution.

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Homecoming Par-Tae

Photo by Cary Edmondson ('03)

Las Vegas Raiders wide receiver Davante Adams returned to Fresno on Oct. 15, as his No. 15 jersey was retired on homecoming at Valley Children's Stadium.

Perhaps the best receiver in the NFL, "Tae" Adams has amassed 8,779 yards and 80 touchdowns in eight-plus seasons since being drafted in the second round by the Green Bay Packers. This is the five-time Pro Bowler's first season with the Raiders, where he teamed up with his former college quarterback, Derek Carr, who surprised him on the sideline as his jersey was retired.

Adams was greeted by a sellout crowd as the Bulldogs beat rival San Jose State 17-10. Upon arriving on the field with his family, Adams walked over to the stands to take photos and sign autographs for dozens of joyous fans.

In a recent Raiders press conference, Adams called Fresno State "the best university in the world."

"It's about the community and the camaraderie between people that you've never even met before," Adams says. "It's a certain sense of comfort that I have with them, and I've enjoyed that since the beginning. That's something that let me know that I came to the right place, as soon as I got here. The overwhelming love that I get from the fans and the city, it's just amazing."

Adams was a two-time All-American at Fresno State in 2012-13, after redshirting during the 2011 season. In just two seasons, Adams set 14 Mountain West records and 11 Fresno State records, including 38 career touchdown receptions.

Adams becomes the ninth Fresno State football alumnus to have his jersey retired, joining No. 4 Derek Carr (2009-13), No. 8 David Carr (1997-2001), No. 9 Kevin Sweeney (1983-86), No. 12 Trent Dilfer (1991-93), No. 14 Vince Petrucci (1976-78), No. 21 Dale Messer (1958-60), No. 22 Lorenzo Neal (1989-92) and No. 83 Henry Ellard (1979-82).





See video online
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◀ Chemistry professor Dr. Santanu Maitra (center; holding papers) received a \$557,014 grant from the National Institutes of Health for research in the discovery of Alzheimer's disease drugs.

Here is a look at some notable grants and contracts from the past year:

- \$5 million from the California Energy Commission to Helle Petersen of the Water, Energy and Technology Center for The BlueTechValley: Central Valley Regional Innovation Cluster. The initiative aims to spur entrepreneurship in the areas of water and energy management.
- \$1.8 million from the U.S. Department of Agriculture to Dr. Carmen Licon in the Jordan College of Agricultural Sciences and Technology, to create a "Pacific Coast Coalition" in support of dairy businesses in California, Oregon and Washington in the development, production, marketing and distribution of dairy products.
- \$576,114 from the NASA Jet Propulsion Laboratory to Dr. Peter Kinman in the Lyles College of Engineering to support communication networks for spacecraft missions.
- \$557,014 from the National Institutes of Health to chemistry professor Dr. Santanu Maitra for research in the discovery of Alzheimer's disease drugs.
- \$1.5 million contract from the California Department of Public Health to Donna DeRoo, assistant director for the Central California Center for Health and Human Services. The project, San Joaquin Valley Public Health Consortium Equitable Response and Recovery, will analyze racial/ethnic health equity issues in the San Joaquin Valley.

Ramping Up Research

Research and innovation continue to grow at Fresno State. For the fourth consecutive year, the University received a record amount in research grants and contracts to fund projects across campus: from Alzheimer's research to energy innovations, from public health needs to the support of dairy businesses.



418 GRANTS
\$54.7 MILLION

Fresno State received 418 grants or contracts for a total of \$54.7 million during the 2021-22 academic year. That's a 13.4% increase in funding over the previous year, when the total was \$48.2 million.

"The phenomenal growth and success of research grants on our campus reflect the synergy between faculty, staff, administrators and our grant managers in the Office of Research and Sponsored Programs," says Dr. Joy Goto, interim dean of the Division of Research and Graduate Studies. "The sustainability of Fresno State research relies on a comprehensively supported plan at all levels of pre-awards, post-awards and facility resources. This growth and sustainability benefit our graduate and undergraduate students, along with the community, the region and beyond."

Ingredients to Transform the Economy

California's vast Central Valley has long been globally recognized for its distinctive agricultural economy, one that produces hundreds of commodities valued at billions of dollars every year. The five-county region puts food on the nation's tables, growing more than half its fruits and nuts and one-third its vegetables.

Still, the Valley is a slow-growth economy with many residents living below the poverty line, experiencing food hardship and racial inequity in an area with some of the biggest air and water challenges in the nation.

Changing these conditions is the focus of the Fresno-Merced Future of Food Innovation Coalition, or F3, which was recently awarded \$65.1 million in federal funding. F3 was the largest grant awarded under the \$1 billion Build Back Better Regional Challenge, funded by President Joe Biden's American

Rescue Plan and administered by the Commerce Department's Economic Development Administration.

It is also the largest federal grant ever awarded to the Central Valley. The EDA received 529 applications from all 50 states and five territories, with 21 coalitions selected from 60 finalists.

Fresno State is one of almost two dozen coalition partners and will play a key role in the initiative that aims to rebuild the regional economy, promote inclusive and equitable recovery and create good paying jobs in "industries of the future, such as clean energy, next-generation manufacturing and biotechnology."

"We have world-leading institutions, we have university partners, we have community college partners, we have industry at the table, we have small farms at the table, we have workers at the table," says Ashley Swearengin, former Fresno mayor and president and CEO of the Central Valley Community Foundation.

"In my 25 years of doing community and economic development work, I never thought we would get to this

moment, the moment where we have all the ingredients to transform our economy."

F3 operates under the Fresno DRIVE initiative (Developing the Region's Inclusive and Vibrant Economy), a 10-year community investment plan.

Over the next four years, F3 aims to attract \$250 million in private investment and create and/or fill more than 10,000 quality jobs.

The flagship project is the Innovation Center for Research and Entrepreneurship in Ag Food Technology and Engineering (iCREATE), which is where Fresno State will focus its resources.

"iCREATE is a vision to foster research and development of new products and services meant to support industry and help farmers innovate," says Dr. Ram Nunna, dean of the Lyles College of Engineering at Fresno State. "iCREATE aims to integrate the Central Valley's ag and food manufacturing resources and commercialize climate-smart food and agricultural technology."

— Charles Radke



THE CENTRAL VALLEY GROWS MORE THAN **HALF OF THE NATION'S FRUITS AND NUTS AND **ONE-THIRD** OF ITS VEGETABLES**



A Mentor Inspires

When Samantha Patricia Navarro was a senior in high school, there wasn't much talk around the house about her going to college. Her parents, who worked in the cherry and almond orchards in and around Modesto, were surprised when she brought it up.

"They had planned on me working and helping out with the bills," Navarro said. And why not? That's what they had done, much earlier in their lives, in fact. Navarro's father made it through sixth grade before he quit school to earn money; her mother dropped out of high school to work.

"It was kind of an understanding that my parents wouldn't be able to give me much guidance," Navarro says. "I had to step up and seek out information and look for a mentor."

She was in junior high when she first met Aaron Sanchez, a guidance counselor and tutor in her school's TRiO program, a federal student services outreach designed to identify and provide services for individuals from disadvantaged backgrounds. Sanchez, Navarro said, supported her with advice and tutoring all the way through her graduation from Modesto Junior College.



"Aaron was my mentor for years," Navarro says. "I saw how he helped me, and I knew I wanted to do that, too."

Now, Navarro is a second-year graduate student at Fresno State, where she majors in experimental psychology and maintains a 4.0 graduate-level GPA. Her research on human judgment will soon be published in an academic journal.

She was also one of 23 students chosen by the California State University (one from each campus) to receive the 2022 CSU Trustees' Award for Outstanding Achievement, the CSU system's highest recognition of student

achievement. As Fresno State's awardee, she is the Trustee Emeritus Peter Mehas Scholar.

After graduating in spring 2023, Navarro plans to pursue a doctorate in cognitive psychology and become a professor in the CSU system so she can support underrepresented students in higher education.

And though it took them a while to say it, Navarro's parents have recently told her how proud they are. "They can see how important [education] is now," Navarro says.

— Charles Radke

AROUND THE FOUNTAIN

75% of Valley Teachers

With the second-largest educator preparation program in the California State University system, Fresno State prepares three out of every four teachers in the San Joaquin Valley. And now, Fresno State is the first in the CSU system to earn recognition from a new national accrediting body, the Association for Advancing Quality in Educator Preparation.

Ms. World America



Fresno State alumna Chantea (Fleming) McIntyre, a former Bulldogs women's basketball standout, was crowned Ms. World America in August after four days of competition in Miami. The small business owner, yoga instructor and mother is married to Mike McIntyre, a former Bulldogs men's basketball player.

Juan Felipe Herrera Elementary



The community gathered at Juan Felipe Herrera Elementary School on Church and Willow avenues in Southeast Fresno to dedicate the new dual immersion school bearing the name of the U.S. poet laureate emeritus. Herrera is a Fresno State professor emeritus and coordinator for the Laureate Lab Visual Wordist Studio at the campus library.

Introducing the Meyers Champions Circle



The Marvin and Tish Meyers Champions Circle launched in July as a philanthropic giving society designed to maximize resources for Bulldogs student-athletes and improve the landscape of Fresno State athletics.

The Meyers Champions Circle is designed to honor donors whose major gift commitments are directed toward capital projects, scholarship endowments or sport-specific funds for excellence.

Marvin and Tish Meyers' generosity will continue to impact generations of Bulldogs. Before Marvin's passing in 2019, he and Tish were instrumental in the creation of the Meyers Family Sports Medicine Center, and they contributed to numerous other projects.

"The Meyers family's example continues to articulate the impact that philanthropy has on our student-athletes," says Terry Tumey, Fresno State's director of athletics. "The strength of a united Red Wave can propel us toward our goals to raise the necessary funds to ensure our athletics success in the Mountain West and nationally. This initiative will help us honor and recognize those who make the commitments to position the 'Dogs for sustained success."

Membership in the Meyers Champions Circle requires a major gift of at least \$25,000 or more over a five-year period (for example \$5,000 annually for five years). To become a Bulldog Foundation member or learn more about the Meyers Champions Circle, call 559.278.7160 or visit bulldogfoundation.org.

— Stephen Trembley

Happy 30th Craig School

Fresno State celebrated the 30th anniversary in September of the major gift that named the Craig School of Business in 1992.

Sid Craig, the president and CEO of Jenny Craig International, pledged \$10 million to Fresno State for the School of Business and Administrative Sciences. In recognition of the donation, the school was renamed the Sid Craig School of Business.



Jenny and Sid Craig

Sid Craig was born in 1932 in Vancouver, British Columbia. He graduated from Alhambra High School in June 1950 and then attended Mt. San Antonio College in Pomona for two years. He transferred to Fresno State in the fall of 1952 to major in business and psychology.

He helped pay his way by teaching ballroom dancing in the evenings at an Arthur Murray dance studio. He went on to acquire five Arthur Murray franchises. In 1970, he sold his franchises and bought a half interest in Body Contour Inc. Figure Salons.

A bright young lady by the name of Genevieve "Jenny" Bourcq received a job at Body Contour in Louisiana. Over the years their business relationship led to marriage in 1979. This couple eventually built a multi-million dollar company by the name of Jenny Craig International.

Closing the Digital Divide

Thanks to a partnership with Apple in an effort to close the digital divide and remove barriers to student success, Fresno State distributed iPads and Apple Smart Keyboards to incoming freshmen and transfer students at the beginning of the fall semester. Devices are loaned to students at no cost and are returned once the students graduate.

Improving Living Conditions

As both Fresno State and Fresno Housing are committed to improving the living conditions of Valley residents, Fresno State President Saúl Jiménez-Sandoval and Fresno Housing CEO Tyrone Roderick Williams signed a memorandum of understanding to strengthen opportunities for academic and programmatic cooperation through education, affordable housing and community empowerment. Since 1940, Fresno Housing has worked to increase the availability of quality housing for low-income families in the area.



A Picture-perfect Example of Philanthropy

When Derek Carr and Davante Adams were Fresno State student-athletes, they spent three hours one day signing autographs and talking to students at the Diamond Learning Center in Clovis.

At the end of the visit, the football stars, who are now teammates for the Las Vegas Raiders, posed for a group photo that still hangs in the center. When the Diamond Learning Center students see the NFL stars on television today, they still remember what it felt like to have the athletes spend time with them, says owner and founder Jami Hamel-De La Cerda.

The center serves adult learners with intellectual disabilities who range in age from 18 to 67 and is an internship site for Fresno State students.

Hamel-De La Cerda is a longtime supporter of Fresno State, from the internships she offers to gifts she has given to support the club bowling team that brought her from Vancouver, British Columbia home to the university where she earned a bachelor's degree in anthropology.

This past year, she gave a \$100,000 gift to start four scholarship endowments through the Bulldog Foundation, each in honor of someone or something close to her heart.

"I like that it's truly going to help another person be all they can be and maybe more than they thought they can be," says Hamel-De La Cerda, a Fresno State alumna and adjunct professor in special education. "In the same way, it allows me the opportunity to embrace the important people in my life."

The scholarships will be made in honor of Hamel-De La Cerda's mother, whom she lost to suicide at a young age; her three sons, one of whom has Down syndrome; the Diamond Learning Center; and in honor of Jeffery Roberson, a past Fresno State track athlete who showed kindness to her when she came to Fresno State.

2021-22 ACADEMIC YEAR

\$21.7_M
ACADEMICS

\$6.5_M
ATHLETICS

Through thoughtful donors like Hamel-De La Cerda, gifts to the University during the 2021-22 academic year totaled about \$28.2 million — \$21.7 million for academics and \$6.5 million for athletics.



▲ Jami Hamel-De La Cerda (back-center; pictured with her sons Isaiah, right; Samuel, left; and Elijah, front) is the owner and founder of Diamond Learning Center in Clovis, serving adult learners with intellectual disabilities. This past year, she gave \$100,000 to start four scholarship endowments through the Bulldog Foundation.

Gifts were made to all areas of the University this past year, helping to enhance student success. Here's a look at some of the noteworthy gifts from the past year:

- \$1 million from the late Dr. Virginia Stammer Eaton to establish the Dr. Virginia Stammer Eaton Chair in Genetics and Molecular Biology in the College of Science and Mathematics.
- \$50,000 from James Parker, III to the Institute for Family Business and Micro-Internship Program in the Craig School of Business.
- \$25,000 from Edison International to the Lyles College of Engineering for Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) education.
- \$50,000 from The James Irvine Foundation to the President's Circle for Excellence, an annual leadership giving program that recognizes dedicated donors who support the mission and vision of the university through unrestricted annual gifts of \$1,000 or more.
- \$35,000 from the James McClatchy Foundation to the Institute for Media and Public Trust.

— BoNhia Lee

Two of Fresno State's eight schools and colleges are celebrating major milestones this year — the 100th anniversary of agriculture and engineering courses being offered on campus.

Jordan College of Agricultural Sciences and Technology



Celebrating its 100th anniversary as an official agricultural academic program, courses were taught on campus even earlier going back to 1914. Emphasis in specialized courses back then was similar to today and included agricultural education, animal husbandry, farm equipment and crop, orchard and vegetable production.

The first of nine deans (Eugene Egan) was hired in 1947 with a group of nine faculty who have left indelible marks still felt on campus today. The campus farm lab, now known as the Fresno State Farm, moved to its current location in 1954 from its former location at the Hammer Air Force Field (which was acquired in 1947-48, and now is home to the Fresno Yosemite International Airport and National Guard base).

In 1997, Fresno State opened the nation's first commercially-bonded winery on a college campus.

In 2009, Fresno State received the largest cash gift in university history, a \$29.4 million investment on behalf of the Jordan family: Hanabul "Bud" Jordan, his wife, Dee, and his brother, Lowell. The Jordan College of Agricultural Sciences and Technology was named in their honor.

In 2013, the new, 4,800-square-foot Rue and Gwen Gibson Farm Market opened on campus, featuring student-produced goods like fruit, vegetables, nuts, wine, meat and dairy products.

In 2016, the 30,000 square-foot Jordan Agricultural Research Center opened on campus featuring research laboratories, flexible space and meeting rooms for students and faculty to conduct advanced studies on agriculture, food and water.

Today, the Jordan College houses the departments of agricultural business, animal sciences and agricultural education, food science and nutrition, industrial technology, plant science and viticulture and enology.

— Geoff Thurner

Lyles College of Engineering



Engineering education first began at Fresno State in 1922, when professor Herbert Wheaton was hired to begin instruction in civil engineering. The program started with 35 students and a smattering of equipment.

The 1990s saw the completion of a new 52,217- square-foot building representing a major milestone of accomplishment for the College of Engineering. The College presently has over 100,000 square feet of classrooms, teaching and research laboratories.



In 2008, the College of Engineering took a major step forward in educating more students in the Central Valley for careers in engineering and construction management thanks to a \$10 million gift from Dr. William Lyles, president and CEO of Lyles Diversified Inc., along with his family and company. The Lyles family are long time supporters of Fresno State and the family name also graces the Lyles Center for Innovation and Entrepreneurship, which leverages resources from the community to assist innovators and entrepreneurs in the development of their ideas into businesses.

Today, the Lyles College houses the departments of architectural studies, civil engineering, electrical and computer engineering, construction management, geomatics engineering and mechanical engineering.

— Yesenia Fuentes



Weaving Futures Together

An artful investiture signifies a new era

By Victoria Cisneros ('19, '21)



Fresno State President Saúl Jiménez-Sandoval asked a group of printmaking students, including Bobby Brown (pictured) to create original artwork that would become mementos for his investiture. Brown thought about the children at Williams Elementary where he works and developed a piece that shows kids drawing their dreams with magic chalk.

With deep roots in the Valley and a life mission to uplift the region and beyond through higher education, Dr. Saúl Jiménez-Sandoval emphasized his presidency as a communal tapestry in which “every thread matters” during his official investiture as the university’s ninth president.

Fresno State hosted the investiture on Sept. 9 at the Save Mart Center, with hundreds of alumni, friends, students, faculty, staff and other CSU dignitaries in attendance. According to tradition, an investiture is defined as the “formal ceremony of conferring the authority and symbols of high office.” It is held during the new president’s first year in office, or at the conclusion of the first year.

During the ceremony, Interim California State University Chancellor Joeline Koester presented Jiménez-Sandoval with his presidential medallion. The medallion, which is unique to each university president, was developed and designed by art students

José López Rodríguez and Tarynn Abrahamson-Tvo to ultimately reflect the hard work, dedication and innovation that define our flourishing Central Valley.

Jiménez-Sandoval came to the Central Valley from Mexico when he was 10 years old, and helped on his family’s farm. His commitment to the region and higher education form part of his mission to promote the region’s economic and cultural ascendancy. He first joined Fresno State as a faculty member in 2000. Over two decades of service, he has served as a professor of Spanish and Portuguese, coordinator of the Spanish master of arts degree, chair of the Department of Modern and Classical Languages and Literatures, interim associate dean of the College of Arts and Humanities, dean of the College of Arts and Humanities, and provost and vice president for academic affairs.

“President Jiménez-Sandoval’s deep and longstanding connection to Fresno State and the Central Valley

“What I saw in the students producing these works was a consciousness of history, a consciousness of how it is that we have woven together this tapestry of each other and how we are fully present in the moment and all of its potential for what the future holds. I couldn’t be more pleased with the fact that it’s the student work that’s the core of the symbols of the presidency that I’m embarking on.”



DR. SAÚL JIMÉNEZ-SANDOVAL
President,
Fresno State

community it serves is surpassed only by his unwavering commitment to the University's talented, diverse and driven students," Koester says.

Engraved in History

In spring 2022, Jiménez-Sandoval charged a group of printmaking students, including Tarynn Abrahamson-Two and second-year graduate student Bobby Brown, to create original artwork that would become mementos for his investiture.

"I wanted the community to become aware of the great artists, the great creativity that our students represent," Jiménez-Sandoval says. "I felt that it was important to showcase the most important reason why the University exists ... so that students can become the best versions of themselves in this process of education. And all of the designs collectively represent the power of education."

With the direction from the president to create a piece that embodied the Valley's vibrant histories of people coming together and the power of

Fresno State to advance our region, Brown recalled the children at Williams Elementary in Fresno, where he works as a noontime assistant. He thought of the power of art to unite us as one and the promise of a fruitful future nourished by our collective hopes and dreams.

"I got stuck on 'come together' and I thought about the children at my school and how it was for me growing up and how things just work together when you're doing artwork," he says. "It was showing kids drawing their dreams, and they're drawing with magic chalk. And I did the tree upside down so their dreams are filling [it in] and the tree is growing."

For Jiménez-Sandoval, seeing students infuse their own experiences and perspectives into their work while at the same time acknowledging the power of the past has reaffirmed his vision for the future and the pivotal role that Fresno State plays in advancing the region, state and world.

"What I saw in the students producing these works was a consciousness

of history, a consciousness of how it is that we have woven together this tapestry of each other and how we are fully present in the moment and all of its potential for what the future holds," Jiménez-Sandoval says. "I couldn't be more pleased with the fact that it's the student work that's the core of the symbols of the presidency that I'm embarking on."

For Brown, this opportunity has taught him more about both himself and his place as a Bulldog. Like all Fresno State students, his experience is one of the many individual threads that create the entire image of the university.

"I didn't think I did anything here that would engrave me into Fresno State — that makes me part of it," Brown says. "But I now know that I'm part of the history of this school forever."



— Victoria Cisneros ('19, '21) is a marketing strategist in University Brand Strategy and Marketing at Fresno State.



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► Fresno State hosted the investiture of University President Saúl Jiménez-Sandoval on Sept. 9 at the Save Mart Center, with hundreds of alumni, friends, students, faculty, staff and other CSU dignitaries in attendance. The investiture is the university's "formal ceremony of conferring the authority and symbols of high office."





Now **Open!**

Explore the new
Resnick Student Union

By Lisa Bell ('95)



Cary Edmondson

LYNDA AND STEWART RESNICK STUDENT UNION



▲
Fresno State President Saúl Jiménez-Sandoval was joined by students, donors and community members to celebrate the opening of the Lynda and Stewart Resnick Student Union on Oct. 4. In March 2018, students voted to construct a new student union to accommodate a growing student body. Lynda and Stewart Resnick, co-owners of The Wonderful Company, pledged \$10 million to help make it a reality.

Fresno State officially opened the new, state-of-the-art Lynda and Stewart Resnick Student Union on Oct. 4 in the heart of campus, just south of the Kennel Bookstore.

In March 2018, Fresno State students voted to construct a new student union to welcome and accommodate a growing student body on campus. As longtime supporters of Fresno State's mission to support the San Joaquin Valley's brightest young minds, philanthropists Lynda and Stewart Resnick, co-owners of The Wonderful Company, pledged \$10 million to make this new facility a reality.

"This new space is one that's been sorely needed for many years as our campus population outgrew the capacity of the original student union," says Fresno State President Saúl Jiménez-Sandoval. "Together with the Resnicks, this partnership represents a shared commitment to empower students to use their passions to ignite change in our community, and beyond, for years to come."

Designed to enrich the student experience, the Resnick Student Union serves as a place where students can

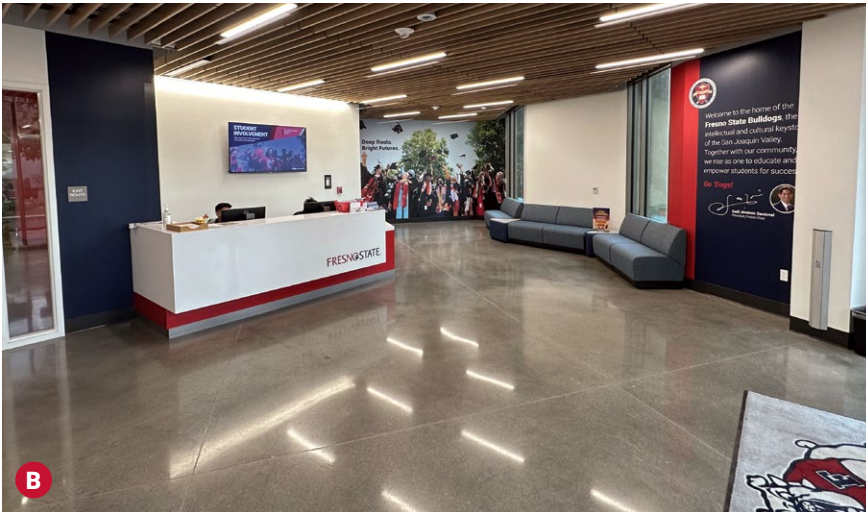
feel a greater sense of belonging and fulfill the dream of a college education as a pathway to entering the workforce. This interdisciplinary hub provides inclusive and inspiring experiences for students, alumni, community members, faculty and staff, and cultivates an enduring connection to the institution, Jiménez-Sandoval says.

The 84,000-square-foot LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) equivalent, three-story building offers spectacular views overlooking iconic campus locations, such as the Memorial Court Fountain, Clock Tower and Water Tower. A broad red ribbon that spans all three floors is meant to symbolize a student's growth trajectory at Fresno State.

Several spaces throughout the building have been named for generous philanthropic gifts – including the Bank of America Bulldog Welcome Center, Leon S. Peters Event Plaza, The Ruiz and the Wonderful Scholar Center. Additional dining options at the Resnick Student Union are slated to open in spring 2023.

Take a look at the photos for a taste of what's inside.





A The first-floor lobby area includes a grand wooden staircase with modern seating and a retractable projection viewing screen. Guests will be greeted with natural light from the large windows atop the building, as well as lounge areas, dining options and more.

B The Bank of America Bulldog Welcome Center on the first floor offers tours for prospective students and families, as well as information for students and guests. The center was named in honor of a \$250,000 gift from Bank of America.

C The Wonderful Scholar Center, located on the third floor, is a dedicated gathering space where nearly 300 Wonderful scholarship recipients currently enrolled at Fresno State will receive tutoring and advising support from college-success coaches.

D Paying homage to the amphitheater once located here, the Leon S. Peters Event Plaza includes scenic amphitheater-style seating and flexible outdoor space between the Speech Arts and Music buildings. The space connects to an indoor conference space, The Ruiz (named for donor Ruiz Foods) that can accommodate up to 1,200 people.





The 'Unseen Data' of Lives Transformed

How measuring the university's impact goes beyond the rankings

By Charles Radke ('96)

How do you measure the impact of a university? With many in academia and the media scrutinizing the validity of popular college rankings systems, it's a fair question, one that has surfaced quite a bit of late.

The debate comes on the heels of Columbia University's tumble from No. 2 on U.S. News & World Report's list of best universities in America to No. 18 after the school admitted to providing false information to boost its ranking.

Since the news broke in September, journalists and academics alike have called rankings systems into question, with some going so far as to call them inaccurate or misleading. The truth, they say, is that schools are far too complex to be reduced to a single number.

At Fresno State, rankings are just part of the picture that demonstrates the university's value to students and to the region — and the university has had some rankings to be proud of recently.

Fresno State ranked No. 36 in Washington Monthly's 2022 National University Rankings of colleges and universities that best serve the country in the areas of social mobility, research and public service. Washington Monthly is known for basing its ranking on universities' contributions to public good rather than solely on prestige and wealth.

This is the seventh straight year Fresno State has been the highest-ranked campus in the California State University system, and the university ranks alongside notable Pac 12 Conference institutions including No. 1 Stanford, No. 9 University of California, Berkeley, No. 19 Washington and No. 21 UCLA.

Beyond the Rankings

Fresno State's impact on the Valley:

Approx.

2,500

employees

Nearly

25,000

students



In 2018-19, Fresno State-related activity supported*:

11,142

jobs

\$438.9_M

in labor income

\$1.3_B

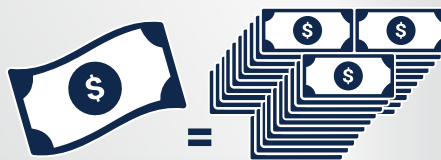
in industry activity

Contributed

\$81.2_M

in state and local
tax revenue

Every \$1 invested
in the CSU system
provides a return
of almost \$30 in jobs
and economic growth



Who we serve

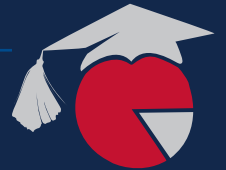
*(Fresno State
students):*

87.9%

are from the
Central Valley

80%

of our students live
and work in the Valley
after graduation



66.2%

first-generation
college students

65%

are Pell Grant recipients

*(from low- and medium
income households)*

78% of our students receive
grants or scholarship aid

64% of our students receive
a tuition paying award

U.S. News ranked Fresno State No. 30 for social mobility, recognizing how well the university graduates students who come from low- to medium-income households.

Dr. Xuanning Fu, Fresno State's provost and vice president for Academic Affairs, says college rankings are just one piece of the puzzle when it comes to measuring a university's value.

"Rankings can be fun to look at, and serve as a pride point for alumni and friends, but there are many other factors to consider that are not included in the rankings when students and their families are choosing a university," Fu says. "Each student's situation, needs and goals are unique, so it's important to consider things like support services, campus life and opportunities for involvement and other resources that may be important to the student. At Fresno State, there are many, many examples of alumni who have achieved incredible things and become leaders in our region and beyond — and that shows the true value of a Fresno State degree."

Fresno State alumnus Hank Gutierrez, who in 2021 became Dr. Hank Gutierrez, pays little mind to college rankings. Numbers, he said, cannot possibly tell the whole story. Rather, the true measure of a university, in his estimation, is how it elevates students to heights once thought unfathomable, providing them the skills necessary to be competitive in the workforce so they can live better lives than their parents.

That's Gutierrez's story, after all. He calls it the "unseen data" of lives transformed.

Gutierrez grew up in poverty with his single mother, who worked long hours at a factory producing foam meat trays for grocery stores. An only child, he was raised in part by his grandparents, since his father was incarcerated. His first memory of his dad, in fact, was seeing him at the Tehachapi State Prison.

His primary school years are a blur, with Hank having attended five different



Cary Edmondson



Dr. Hank Gutierrez, deputy superintendent for the Fresno County Superintendent of Schools, holds three degrees and a teaching credential from Fresno State, including a Doctoral in Educational Leadership.

"I know what Fresno State did for me and what Fresno State can do for that little boy or girl growing up in poverty in Mendota, or Parlier or Fowler."

DR. HANK GUTIERREZ

Deputy Superintendent,
Fresno County
Superintendent of Schools



“Each student’s situation, needs and goals are unique ... At Fresno State, there are many, many examples of alumni who have achieved incredible things and become leaders in our region and beyond — and that shows the true value of a Fresno State degree.”



DR. XUANNING FU

Provost and Vice President
for Academic Affairs,
Fresno State

schools from kindergarten through fourth grade. By the third grade, young Hank had still not learned how to read; he was immersed in pull-out programs where he’d spend time away from his classmates with a tutor.

“I struggled all the way until my sophomore year in high school,” he says. “Most nights, I just lay awake feeling humbled and paralyzed by my lived experiences.”

It was a high school art teacher who finally recognized in Gutierrez something others missed. “You’re not great in math or English,” that teacher said, “but you’re the best artist I’ve seen.”

“It was the first time in my life that a teacher believed in me,” he says. “That’s when things started to snowball for me in terms of self-belief.”

He graduated from Fowler High School in spring 1988, though he’d be the first to tell you that his transcripts weren’t glorious; he had a 2.6 GPA.

A counselor told him that despite his marginal grades, Fresno State had a path for him, one that involved a Summer Bridge and the Educational Opportunity Program that would provide him with admission, academic and financial support services.

“Without Fresno State,” he says, “I may have stayed in Fowler and worked at the local gas station.”

Fresno State allowed him, for the first time in his life, to connect with his heritage and culture. Among his other fine professors, Gutierrez studied under Fowler native and U.S. Poet Laureate Emeritus Juan Felipe Herrera.

“Talk about enlightenment!” Gutierrez says.

Today, Dr. Hank Gutierrez holds three degrees and a teaching credential from Fresno State, having completed his doctorate in Educational Leadership in 2021, the year he was awarded the Dean’s Medal. He is the deputy superintendent for the Fresno County Superintendent of Schools, and he is writing a book about the convergence of leadership and culturally responsive teaching, which includes some of those same lived experiences that used to cause him sleepless nights.

“I know I can bring new possibilities to this community,” he says. “I know what Fresno State did for me and what Fresno State can do for that little boy or girl growing up in poverty in Mendota, or Parlier or Fowler.”

Fresno State, Gutierrez says, has been his ticket to liberation. And there is no ranking system in the world, he said, that can put a number on that.



— Charles Radke ('96) is a dissertation and thesis consultant in the Division of Research and Graduate Studies at Fresno State.

**Deep
Roots.
Bright
Futures.**



Dr. W. Saam Noonsuk, an art history professor at Fresno State with a background in anthropology, served as a cultural adviser for the Fresno Chaffee Zoo, helping to inform the design of its new Kingdoms of Asia exhibition that opens in February.

Eyeing a New Partnership

See how Fresno State faculty and students partnered with the Fresno Chaffee Zoo on the new Kingdoms of Asia exhibition

By Eddie Hughes ('05)
Photos by Cary Edmondson ('03)

Gazing up at the intricate rockwork beneath the remnants of an ancient Cambodian temple, a group of students follows its professor through the entryway as if it's a portal into another time and place. The dense jungle landscape has reclaimed the temple, with trees sprouting high atop the structure and roots as thick as boa constrictors seemingly squeezing the stone façade into submission. As birds chirp and siamang apes sing nearby, the group scans the horizon, wary of predators. Just a few feet away is a gently flowing stream, known as a popular watering hole for Malayan tigers, and home to the Sunda gharial, a large crocodilian species. What an adventure this is going to be.

This Southeast Asian jungle habitat is only miles away from the Fresno State campus. It's part of the new Kingdoms of Asia exhibition at the Fresno Chaffee Zoo.

"It's beyond words, it's so impressive," says Dr. W. Saam Noonsuk, an art history professor at Fresno State who served as a cultural adviser for the new exhibition and now looks forward to sharing the experience with his students. "It looks real. It's quite authentic. This project will be transformative for my students because they don't have these types of temples around Fresno."

Similar in scope to the zoo's popular African Adventure exhibition that opened in 2015, Kingdoms of Asia is scheduled to open to the public in February 2023. In addition to tigers, orangutans and Sunda gharial, it will include sloth bears, Asian small-

clawed otters and a new habitat for the Komodo dragon.

The impressive surroundings, inspired by Southeast Asian temples such as Bayon and Ta Prohm from 12th and 13th century Cambodia, are all part of the experience envisioned by Fresno Chaffee Zoo leadership. The detailed rockwork is similar to the scenic design one might expect of a Disneyland attraction, transitioning visitors into another era.

"It looks beautiful," Noonsuk says. "There are big trees, there are roots intertwined into the ruins, and it looks like the place was reclaimed by nature."

To make sure the Kingdoms of Asia exhibition was authentic and respectful to the cultures represented, advisory groups were formed with subject-matter experts like Noonsuk who used their expertise and met with members of the

Southeast Asian community to bring the project to life in an honorable way.

Noonsuk, who is originally from Thailand, earned his Ph.D. in history of art, archaeology and visual studies from Cornell University.

Inspired by the Bayon Temple in Cambodia, Noonsuk advised the group on the significance of four faces atop the structure serving as the entrance to the exhibition. The faces represent a deity looking over the people to the north, east, south and west.

Noonsuk helped influence intricate details of the design, from the circular shape of the temple's pillars, to the rockwork depicting songbirds and serpents that were often considered sacred in Southeast Asian cultures.

Coincidentally, when Noonsuk arrived at Fresno State in 2018, he was asked



"We're helping to create the next generation of environmental stewards, of conservation heroes. Whether they're a biologist or not, they could be a baker or a ballet dancer, but they're going to care about wildlife and its ability to thrive in our world and that's what will make the difference in conservation. People and wildlife thrive together."



JON FORREST DOHLIN
CEO, Fresno Chaffee Zoo



◀ Fresno State professor Dr. W. Saam Noonsuk leads some of his students through the new Kingdoms of Asia exhibition at the Fresno Chaffee Zoo for the first time, sharing the meaning behind details of the rockwork structure as it relates to Southeast Asian history and culture.

to teach a class titled, “Kingdoms of Monsoon Asia.” A year later, he was contacted by the Fresno Chaffee Zoo’s former chief mission officer, Dean Watanabe, to consult on the Kingdoms of Asia exhibition.

“My Southeast Asian background, knowledge and training helped them to have more accurate and appropriate expression within the exhibition,” Noonsuk says. “They asked me to feel free to share with them because they wanted to get it done right. They want to be culturally sensitive to the people.”

California is home to about 1 million Southeast Asian American residents, more than any other state in the U.S. One of the unique aspects of the exhibition is that it’s intended to educate and inform zoo visitors about the cultures of Southeast Asia, many of which have large representation in Fresno County.

“This exhibition is a really good example of what we are trying to do more and more, which is deepen our engagement, not only from the inspired experience about animals, but to tell people stories about the population here in the Central Valley,” says Fresno Chaffee Zoo CEO Jon Forrest Dohlin. “This is a great opportunity to tell a story about a place

where humans and wildlife have lived in overlapping mosaics for millennia, but also about the Central Valley.”

Dohlin, an alumnus of California State University, Humboldt, became CEO at the zoo in February 2021 after previously serving as the director of the Wildlife Conservation Society’s New York Aquarium. He is uniquely positioned to lead the zoo’s multi-phased master plan with his background in architecture – he holds a master’s degree from Parsons School of Design in New York.

Kingdoms of Asia is an example of the exponential growth at Fresno Chaffee Zoo that is rare at other zoos nationally. And Dohlin is excited to soon announce additional projects as part of the master plan, including a reimagined and more modern entrance, parking garages, a California exhibition connecting the beaches to the redwoods and – to take things beyond the water’s edge – an aquarium.


A major emphasis for all of these projects will be giving animals the space they need to thrive. Decades ago, what was once an acceptable amount of space for various animal habitats is no longer considered a best practice, he says. And Dohlin wants the community

to be part of that conversation about conservation and wildlife research – with messaging and other education components becoming commonplace at the zoo.

“We’re helping to create the next generation of environmental stewards, of conservation heroes,” Dohlin says. “Whether they’re a biologist or not, they could be a baker or a ballet dancer, but they’re going to care about wildlife and its ability to thrive in our world and that’s what will make the difference in conservation. People and wildlife thrive together.”

The Fresno Chaffee Zoo’s growth, Dohlin says, is a direct result of the support of the local community. The voters of Fresno County voted overwhelmingly in support of Measure Z three times – in 2004, 2013 and 2022 – for a one-tenth of 1% sales tax. The result? Fresno now has a zoo that rivals some of the best in the West, if not the nation. It has been completely transformed into one of the major destinations in Fresno, drawing people from all over the region and boosting the local economy.

It’s a prime example of how community support can spark transformational growth that benefits the entire region for generations.

A woman with long dark hair, wearing a pink hard hat and a blue and white vertically striped long-sleeved shirt, is leaning against a large, weathered stone pillar. She is smiling at the camera. The background shows more stone pillars and some construction equipment, suggesting a construction site or a historical site under restoration.

“So far, I haven’t met a project manager who is a woman. Leading the way for other women to do that is something I really want to do. I want to teach and inspire women to join the construction industry.”

PATTRISIA CASAS

Senior construction management student

◀ Fresno State student Pattrisia Casas is pursuing a career in construction management as a way to feel connected to her father, who works in construction in Mexico. She spends three days per week interning at the Fresno Chaffee Zoo and calls it “one of those jobs you dream of waking up to.”

Building Connections

In February, Fresno State and the Fresno Chaffee Zoo signed a memorandum of understanding to formalize a partnership that has existed in various areas for years.

In addition to Noonsuk's and other professors' work as advisers or consultants on zoo projects, there are also students from the College of Science and Mathematics who frequently test the zoo's water filtration systems and analyze samples in the lab; there are students from the Jordan College of Agricultural Sciences and Technology who help plant the zoo's gardens and farm areas; there are psychology faculty and students helping to make the zoo more inclusive for visitors with special needs and much more.

Pattrisia Casas is a senior construction management student in the Lyles College of Engineering at Fresno State. This past summer, she saw an announcement on campus that the zoo was looking for a project management intern. She applied, was called in for the interview and started on the job in July.

Casas works three days a week at the zoo and has fallen in love with its mission and her team. "It's one of those jobs you dream of waking up to," Casas says. "It doesn't really feel like a job."

While she notes how unique it is that "the lion is right there next to my car when I drive in," her real inspiration is someone much farther away — her father.

Casas' father worked in construction throughout her childhood, and some of her fondest childhood memories are helping him out with projects at work. But when she was in high school in Wasco, just north of Bakersfield, her father was deported to Mexico.

It left a void in Casas' life until she figured out a way to feel linked to him again.

"I just felt out of touch, not connected, so I took a construction class at a vocational school," Casas says. "It was really hands on, and I loved it — I fell in love with it."

Her dad is still doing construction in Mexico, building mobile homes, and she visits him whenever she gets the opportunity.

In May, Casas will become the first member of her family to earn a college degree. She is the oldest sibling, with three younger brothers.

"My mom got pregnant when she was young," Casas says. "All she's ever wanted from me was to do better and that came with a lot of pressure. She's overjoyed that I'm going to graduate."

She expects her mother, stepfather and brothers will all be watching — and she says maybe her youngest brother will even follow in her footsteps and go to college himself.

"I'm pretty sure they're going to cry, just as I am," Casas says. "You plan something and it's just amazing when you achieve it, which is why I love construction so much. You see the process and completion and it's just amazing to say, 'I did that.'"

After college, her goal is to become a project manager. "So far, I haven't met a project manager who is a woman," Casas says. "Leading the way for other women to do that is something I really want to do. I want to teach and inspire women to join the construction industry."

Casas says as a freshman at Fresno State, there were just two other female students in her classes, but as a senior now she is seeing many more.

At the zoo, Casas is inspired by project coordinator Jodi-Ann Farias, a Fresno State alumna, and project manager Jesse Santiago. She says they each have trusted her with responsibility and continuously give her feedback as she works on the new Kingdoms of Asia exhibition as well as other projects.

Though her internship started as simply a requirement for graduation, it has opened her eyes to a potential career path.

"I really want to stay at the zoo, because I've learned so much and the people are amazing," Casas says. "They work as a team, and I always feel included."



► Construction management student Pattrisia Casas is set to become the first member of her family to earn a college degree.

A Welcoming Environment

Creating an inclusive experience is important to the Fresno Chaffee Zoo. Fresno State psychology professor Marianne Jackson and her graduate students have been working with the zoo for the past four years to provide staff training about autism and individuals who might have difficulty with some aspects of the zoo such as waiting in lines and experiencing crowds and noise.

"If you're a parent of a child with autism, you pay to get in, and you want to get your money's worth," says Jackson, the coordinator of Fresno State's Applied Behavior Analysis master's program.

The group partnered with Pal Experiences and Valley Children's Healthcare to provide resources such as headphone zones and sensory backpacks. When individuals with autism arrived at the zoo, they could access more simplified maps and check out backpacks that include headphones for when noise is overstimulating, fidget toys and more. They also worked with the zoo to incorporate signage for entering headphone zones and identifying quiet places.

Though the pandemic presented challenges for sourcing materials, Jackson hopes these changes continue into the future.

The Fresno Chaffee Zoo also hosted a special event for families with autism to experience the zoo together in personalized ways. The event sold out immediately with an allotment of about 300 tickets.

"We set up stations that let kids experience areas of the zoo, touching things that feel like sting rays, animal bones and skulls, microscopes to see insects up close," Jackson says. "There was a no-contact bird show. It gave kids and their families opportunities to get used to aspects of the zoo in a more controlled way."



For Fresno State students, projects like this are an important part of the curriculum that emphasizes service-learning. Fresno State students, faculty and staff have volunteered for more than 1 million hours of service to the community for 12 consecutive years, and many classes on campus now have a service-learning component.

All the work done by Jackson's grad students was volunteer based.

"This is their community in Fresno, so they want to be a part of it," Jackson says. "This gives them interest in elevating community projects beyond just doing your job and going home."

A Children visiting the Fresno Chaffee Zoo practice for the interactive giraffe feeding in a way that allows them to gain comfort with the process and learn what to expect.

B Children and families get a closer look at insects and bugs through microscopes.

C Before visiting Stingray Bay, where children can touch stingrays in the water, this station allows the Fresno Chaffee Zoo guests to learn the rules and simulate the experience to ensure everyone's safety and enjoyment.



Fresno Chaffee Zoo Fresno State

A Partnership at a Glance

- In February 2022, Fresno State and the Fresno Chaffee Zoo signed a memorandum of understanding to formalize a partnership that has existed in various areas for years. (Page 25)
- Dr. Saam Noonsuk, an art history professor with a background in anthropology, served as a cultural adviser for the Fresno Chaffee Zoo's new Kingdoms of Asia exhibition, set to open in February 2023. (Page 22)
- Inspired to pursue a career in construction management to feel connected to her father, student Pattrisia Casas is interning at the zoo and aims to inspire other women in the industry. (Page 25)
- Psychology professor Marianne Jackson and students worked with the zoo to provide training, resources and specialized events to maximize the zoo experience for guests who might have difficulty with some aspects of the zoo such as waiting in lines and experiencing crowds and noise. (Page 26)
- Chemistry professor Eric Person helped design and implement undergraduate and graduate courses in which students gain experience conducting water filtration research — collecting water samples at the zoo and then analyzing them at the offsite APPL Lab. (Page 29)



“We set up stations that let kids experience areas of the zoo, touching things that feel like sting rays, animal bones and skulls, microscopes to see insects up close. There was a no-contact bird show. It gave kids and their families opportunities to get used to aspects of the zoo in a more controlled way.”

MARIANNE JACKSON

Psychology professor



Elizabeth Davis



“The students are working in a commercial lab, doing professional-level testing. Every semester, we have students get hired straight out of that class.”



ERIC PERSON

Professor,
Fresno State



► Students Claudia Ramirez (left) and Christopher Gulbronsen are part of a service-learning course led by Dr. Eric Person in which students test and analyze water samples from the Fresno Chaffee Zoo to help ensure safe water filtration.

Hands-on Science

Fresno State professor Eric Person helped design two chemistry courses that incorporate hands-on water research at the Fresno Chaffee Zoo into the curriculum.

One of them, an intro chemistry course, includes about 500 students and 20 sections per semester, and is designed to introduce Fresno State's diverse student body to STEM (science, technology, engineering and math) courses by drawing an emotional response and connection to the zoo — a place more than 95% of students in the class are familiar with.

The other is a senior-level service-learning course in which students visit the zoo four times per semester to conduct important water filtration research. Students learn how to collect water samples, label them and then take them to an offsite lab — the Agriculture and Priority Pollutants Laboratory in Clovis — for analysis. Some tests must be performed within 48 hours of collection.

"The students are working in a commercial lab, doing professional-level testing," Person says. "Every semester, we have students get hired straight out of that class."

In early October, Person's class was on standby waiting to hear when water was added to the new Kingdoms of Asia exhibition so they could test it before animals are introduced this winter.

In addition to testing for "simple things" like salinity and pH stability, Person says he has a list of over 100 compounds students will be testing for at Kingdoms of Asia. "We'll test for leeching of metals like calcium, magnesium, sodium and for corrosion issues," Person says, "then they start building up a biological filter and testing for ammonia, nitrogen and nitrates."

One of the students working on the project this semester is Claudia Ramirez, who is in her second semester of the master's program after graduating with her bachelor's degree in fall 2021.

Ramirez, a first-generation graduate from Central West High in Fresno, aspires to eventually earn her

doctoral degree in neuroscience and go into neuroscience research. She was interested in the class to gain experience in a real-world lab setting. She's getting that insight at the zoo.

"We went through a different entrance. I saw buildings I had never seen before," Ramirez says. "I didn't know we had filtration systems that close to the enclosures that were hidden from us. There's a whole 'nother world behind the zoo that you don't think of."

Person says there is no other class curriculum like this in the 23-campus California State University system.

"People do testing of rivers. I don't know of anyone that has a collaboration with the zoo," Person says. "It's really a special thing about our zoo and their interest in outreach and collaboration. It's not just my class, there's a lot going on."



— Eddie Hughes ('05) is senior editor for Fresno State Magazine.



Visit fresnostate.edu/magazine to see more.



New Name. New Era. Same Tradition.

Bulldogs usher in a new era at newly named
Valley Children's Stadium

By Eddie Hughes ('05)

The California State University Board of Trustees approved the renaming of Bulldog Stadium to Valley Children's Stadium on July 13, solidifying an expanded partnership between Fresno State and Valley Children's Healthcare that will underscore a shared commitment to education and health.

With the vibrant new stadium signage illuminating the night sky, the Bulldogs played their first game at Valley Children's Stadium on Sept. 1, a 35-7 win over Cal Poly.

As part of an expansive partnership that includes renaming of the stadium, Valley Children's pledged \$1 million per year for 10 years from its marketing budget that will help the health care network



Ryan Watamura

increase its visibility and attract the best physicians, employees and private support. The partnership will also strengthen scholarship opportunities for local students, including those pursuing degrees in health, and it will set the foundation for future improvements to enhance the stadium.

The stadium has stood as a Central Valley landmark since it was built in 1980. With 40,727 seats, two of the first three games of the 2022 season were sellouts.

Fresno State is 188-62-2 all-time at the stadium, a winning percentage of nearly 75% — which ranks in the top 25 of all Football Bowl Subdivision programs nationally. Since the turn of the century, the Bulldogs are 90-38

at home, including four undefeated home records.

Some of the many memorable moments at the stadium include the first-ever Mountain West championship game in 2013, when Derek Carr and Davante Adams led the Bulldogs to a win over Utah State with temperatures dropping near 30 degrees, and a 2001 win over No. 10 Oregon State — led by David Carr — when the Red Wave rushed the field and tore down the south goal posts in celebratory fashion.

Both of the Carrs' families have turned to Valley Children's to provide care to their own children, and both serve as ambassadors for the healthcare network.

"For Valley Children's, our partnership with Fresno State aligns with our commitment to ensure our kids have every chance to learn, grow and live their healthiest lives possible," says Todd Suntrapak, Valley Children's Healthcare president and CEO.



"The health and well-being of our children depend on organizations like Fresno State and Valley Children's to invest in their future and to create new opportunities for them."



99

JUDGE

AMERICAN LEAGUE MVP AWARD

AMERICAN LEAGUE RECORD 62 HOME RUNS



131 RBI

111 WALKS

90 EXTRA BASE HITS

133 RUNS SCORED

.311 BATTING AVERAGE

'CHASE CLOSED'

Aaron Judge is the new American League home run king

By Eddie Hughes ('05)

For 61 years, Roger Maris held the all-time American League single-season record of 61 home runs. Now, that record belongs to Aaron Judge, the Fresno State alumnus and New York Yankees superstar who hit his 62nd home run on Oct. 4, the day before the regular season ended.

It came in the top of the first inning, with Judge hitting in the leadoff spot at Globe Life Field against Texas Rangers pitcher Jesus Tinoco. After looking at a ball and a strike, Judge hit the third pitch of the game 391 feet into the left field seats. The Yankees' dugout emptied with players and coaches jumping around like Little Leaguers and celebrating with the new home run king as he crossed home plate.

Judge's parents, Wayne and Patty — both Fresno State alumni themselves, and retired teachers — were in the stands behind home plate celebrating the culmination of a historical home run chase.

As the official Major League Baseball Twitter account so aptly worded it: "CHASE CLOSED!"

"I never tried to focus on the number, I never tried to focus on doing it. I just go out there and play my game and if I'm good enough and God-willing, it'll happen," says Judge in the postgame press conference. "I think having that type of faith helped me out through this whole process."

On his way to history, Judge surpassed Babe Ruth's 1927 total of 60 home runs and Maris' 1961 total of 61.

Though Barry Bonds, Mark McGwire and Sammy Sosa have each finished with higher home run totals in a season, those marks are scarred by questions of performing-enhancing substances. Some, such as Roger Maris, Jr., are considering Judge's record to be the purest.

"Aaron Judge is the new CLEAN HOME RUN KING!!" Maris Jr. tweeted on Oct. 4.

The former Bulldog had an all-around season for the ages, earning the American League MVP award. He was the league leader in home runs, RBI (131), walks (111), extra base hits (90), runs scored (133) and a slew of advanced metrics, and was second in batting average (.311).

Judge is the second Fresno State alumnus in Major League Baseball to win a league MVP award — Terry Pendleton was named National League MVP for the Atlanta Braves in 1991.

Originally from Linden, Judge starred for the Bulldogs from 2011-13. He earned first-team all-conference honors all three seasons, and was a Louisville Slugger Freshman All-American in 2011. In 2012, he won the TD Ameritrade College Home Run Derby in Omaha. After his junior season, he was drafted in the first round (32nd overall) by the Yankees.

Known for his infectious smile and stature (6-foot-7), Judge made his Major League debut in 2016, hitting a home run in his first at-bat. He went on to break the all-time rookie record — previously held by Mark McGwire — with 52 home runs in 2017, his first full season in the bigs.





► Fresno State alumnus Aaron Judge hits his 62nd home run of the season, breaking Roger Maris' 61-year-old American League record.



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Here in the heart of California, traditions link us.
They make us who we are.

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Bulldogs

BULLDOG SPIRIT

Worth the Weight

The new Morse Wittwer Sports Performance Center opened on campus in September, creating new opportunities and technology for Fresno State student-athletes to train on the east side of Cedar Avenue.

The dynamic new 6,000-square-foot center is named in honor of Chris and Michelle Morse and Ken and Kristi Wittwer, who donated \$500,000 for the project. They are being recognized as the first members of the Marvin and Tish Meyers Champions Circle, an exclusive philanthropic giving society designed to improve the landscape of Fresno State athletics.

The center is located in the North Gym — just steps away from the primary practice facility for men's and women's basketball and volleyball. Softball, water polo, swimming and diving and track and field also have more convenient access to a training facility.

Previously, all 18 sports programs shared the Ricchiuti Strength and Conditioning Center on the west side of Cedar Avenue near Valley Children's Stadium. Now, both spaces can be utilized to facilitate the growing demand with about 450 student-athletes.

The Morse Wittwer Sports Performance Center features unique, customized Bulldogs branding floor to ceiling, with 12 platforms and iPads and technology at each station to track metrics such as barbell speed for various exercises.

"We have always believed in the value of investing in our great university," Chris Morse says. "Just as Fresno State serves our region and beyond, our Bulldog student-athletes play a significant role as well. They not only bring our community together to celebrate Fresno State, but their impact and contributions as future leaders is invaluable."



Cary Edmondson

Ken Wittwer (top left) and Chris Morse (top right) spoke at an event introducing the university's new Morse Wittwer Sports Performance Center in the North Gym. The new 6,000-square-foot center creates new opportunities for Fresno State student-athletes to train on campus, an added convenience for programs like men's and women's basketball, volleyball, softball, water polo, swimming and diving and track and field — which all practice on the east side of Cedar Avenue.





FLAT FLIP FLIES STRAIGHT

Fresno State alumnus builds career on disc golf

By Charles Radke ('96)

Photos by Cary Edmondson ('03)

Ask George Sappenfield to talk about the evolution of the Frisbee and he'll talk about pie tins. That's right: pie tins, the original Frisbees, before the Frisbee was actually a thing. Seems the delivery drivers from Mother Frisbie's (with an "i") Pie Company in Bridgeport, Connecticut, used to pass the time between stops by flipping pie tins to one another, Frisbee style.

"There was a lot of playing catch with pie tins," Sappenfield says.

Since the tins were imprinted on the bottom with the words "Frisbie's Pie Company," those drivers used to say they were "playing Frisbie."

Toymaker Wham-O came along in the late 1950s and changed the name to Frisbee (with an "e") "to avoid any legal troubles," Sappenfield says, and the Frisbee as we know it today was born.

Sappenfield, a 1967 Fresno State graduate and assistant professor from 1972-78 (he taught a one-unit class on Frisbee), built his life and career on the product. More specifically, he built his career on Frisbee disc golf, the sport he helped invent at Fresno's Quigley Playground on a Saturday in 1965.

At the time, Sappenfield was a recreation administration major whose part-time job it was to plan activities at area parks and play Frisbee or kickball or any number of "park-like games" to keep the kids entertained.

A professor challenged Sappenfield and his classmates to use the entire playground, "all the land and equipment there," otherwise it was a waste of taxpayer money.

This idea stuck with Sappenfield, and one afternoon while playing "ball golf" with friends at Fresno's Riverside Golf Course, he was struck with an idea.

"I saw this vision in front of me of a vertical Hula Hoop with a Frisbee flying through it," he says.

The next morning, a Saturday, he went to work at Quigley Playground. He lashed wooden posts to Hula Hoops, pounded the posts into the ground so the Hula Hoops were vertical, and lo-and-behold, in a matter of minutes, he had a four-hole disc golf course. The kids loved flipping the Frisbee through the floating "holes" he'd created.

Until that Saturday in 1965, "no one had ever played actual Frisbee golf on a non-existing object course," he says. "Of course, the sport is very sophisticated now."

It's so sophisticated, in fact, that Frisbee golf discs today, much like golf clubs, have different functions. There's distance drivers, fairway drivers, mid-range discs and putters, he says. Gone is the Hula Hoop, replaced by the chain basket or "pole hole" (invented in 1976) that now "catches" the flying discs (invented in the 1980s).

There's a throwing technique: flat flip flies straight, the directions printed on the underside of the original Frisbee. There's a governing body, the Professional Disc Golf Association (PDGA), with over 200,000 members. There's a Disc Golf Hall of Fame, into which Sappenfield was elected in 2018. And there are more than 13,000 certified disc golf courses all over the world, including one in Yadkinville, North Carolina near his current home — named for Sappenfield himself.

In fact, there's a disc golf course on every continent, including Antarctica. "I don't know that I'd want to play that one," he says.

All of this from a rudimentary course put up at Quigley Playground in Fresno on a Saturday in 1965.

Sappenfield's roots in Fresno run deep. He was born in Lindsay, and his family moved to Fresno when George was just 5 months old. He grew up attending Fremont Elementary, Hamilton Junior High and Fresno High School.

◀ *Alumnus George Sappenfield built his career on Frisbee disc golf, the sport he helped invent at Fresno's Quigley Playground in 1965.*



One of his best friends growing up was Tom Seaver, with whom he played baseball in the neighborhood streets, in youth leagues and on school teams. As teens, they also played Frisbee, but Seaver didn't care for it.

"We were friends our entire lives," Sappenfield says. One of the highlights of Sappenfield's life was attending Seaver's Hall of Fame induction ceremony in 1992.

After his college days at Fresno State, Sappenfield went on to get a master's degree, then a doctorate in commercial recreation, which he called "the business side of fun." Over the years, Sappenfield has worked for Wham-O, Fresno State and as a professor at East Carolina University.

One of the things he is proudest of, however, was his time with the Special Olympics. Working with Eunice Kennedy Shriver, who hired him as her western states liaison, Sappenfield got Frisbee disc sanctioned as an official Special Olympics sport.

"Disc golf is such an enjoyment for me," Sappenfield says. "I didn't start out thinking I was going to create this game that was going to be worldwide. So it does my heart a lot of good to watch people enjoy it."

Sappenfield is now retired and spends his time volunteering and playing disc golf, of course, in and around his home in Jonesville, North Carolina.



▲ A 1967 Fresno State graduate, George Sappenfield was an assistant professor at the university from 1972-78, teaching a one-unit class on Frisbee. Sappenfield was elected into the Disc Golf Hall of Fame in 2018. There are now more than 13,000 certified disc golf courses in the world, including one named for him in Yadkinville, North Carolina near his current home.

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CLASS NOTES

'For thee, our hopes and memories'

1950s

George O. Sappenfield was mentioned in a Mount Vernon News article on his pioneering role in disc golf. (See story on Page 36.)

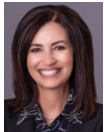
1970s

Scott W. Bell (1979) is now American Riviera Bank's small business loan development officer for the Central Coast.

Dr. Robert Mikell (1972) presented a seminar at Satchmo SummerFest: "Peter Davis, the First Music Master of Louis Armstrong."

Tim O'Doherty (1978) and Sandra "Sam" O'Doherty own O'Doherty's Irish Grille in Spokane, Washington.

1980s



Michele Cantwell-Copher (1989, '94) is now Fresno County superintendent of schools.

Miguel A. Castellanos (1988) relinquished duties as the commanding general of the 84th Training Command, located in Fort Knox, Kentucky, on Aug. 12.

Roger I. Lane (1984, '87), an internal medicine physician, leads Cottage Primary Care in Santa Ynez Valley. He has been practicing in the area since 1998.

Kurt Peacock, a certified arborist and owner of Peacock Consulting, was the guest speaker at the Fallbrook Garden Club general meeting in September.



Ronald Ramirez (1987) is dean of the College of Business Administration at California State University, San Marcos.



Ruth E. Taylor-Piliae (1980), a professor in the College of Nursing at the University of Arizona and interim director of the doctoral

program, is recognized internationally as a nurse scientist and mind-body exercise interventionist. She is trained in cardiovascular epidemiology and clinical trials.

1990s

Steve Albanese (1996) is now Pittsburg, CA police chief.

Mark Beringer (1991) is the director of winemaking at Phantom Creek Estates in Oliver, British Columbia.



Ketti Davis (1996) is now district superintendent for Central Unified School District.

Lori Gambero (1994) is now assistant principal at Ramon C. Cortines School of Visual and Performing Arts in Los Angeles.

Tanisha Huddleston, a former Bulldogs basketball standout, is co-owner of HER Body Bar in northeast Fresno, which offers non-invasive body sculpting services.

Keith Jones (1994) is now chief financial officer of Adeia, an intellectual property licensing business.

Sonia Lopez (1997) is co-director of DPR Construction's Bay Area region. She has more than 25 years of experience, and was a speaker at Groundbreaking Women In Construction 2022.

Robert A. Nevárez (1990) is now Avenal interim police chief.

Nancy Patrick (1997) retired from teaching in Fresno Unified School District after 20 years of service.

Todd Pigott (1994) operates the only certified real estate investment trust in the Central Valley, and his business is pushing to expand services from 10 states to 15.

Jaime Reborn (1997) has released his inaugural film, "Write It Black."

Stacy Rianda (1992) is now co-CEO for the Ventura County Fair.

Allison Trahan (1992) is senior producer and occasional host for Oregon Public Broadcasting's daily talk show, "Think Out Loud."

John Zanoni (1996) is now Fresno County sheriff-elect.

2000s

Rosa (Guevara) Areguin (2004) started Bash Supply, a party rental business supplying inflatables, decor, tables and chairs in Dinuba, Reedley and surrounding communities.



Anthony Cody (2004) received the 2022 Whiting Award, given annually to writers with promise of great work to come and a prize of \$50,000.

Courtney Caron (2009), an attorney and former Miss Fresno, is a partner in The Artist Tree, Fresno's first cannabis dispensary that features the work of local artists.



Robert Pimentel (2006, '18) is now president of Fresno City College.

2000s *continued*

Darren Rose (2002, '10) is now executive director for the Madera County Economic Development Corp.



Joshua Ruiz (2002) is now senior project manager for Fuscoe Engineering, Inc. in Irvine.

Carlos Santos (2003) appears alongside Mexican super comedian Eugenio Derbez in the Hulu movie "The Valet."



Cody Smith (2005) is the varsity baseball coach at Pioneer Valley High School in Santa Maria.

Sevag Tateosian (2004) and his wife Susie are the new owners of Facelagic Spa in Clovis.

2010s

Jasmine Marshall Armstrong (2010) is a writing instructor, poet and nonfiction writer living in the Central Valley. She recently had a piece published in "America the Jesuit Review."



Pablo Cabrera Arreola (2019, '22) is now assistant superintendent for Harris Construction Co., Inc.

Jose Gonzalez (2015, '21) is vice principal at Mendota Elementary School.



Susanna González (2015) is a multimedia reporter for Noticiero Telemundo California, which airs on Telemundo 33 in Sacramento.

Connor Matteson (2019) is a producer for CBS 47 in Fresno. He helped launch a new 4 p.m. newscast.

Moses R. Menchaca (2015) was promoted to the rank of captain with the U.S. Marine Corps and serves as base adjutant for Marine Corps Installation National Capital Region - Marine Corps Base Quantico.

Karen Paolinelli (2014), Madera Community Hospital CEO, was inducted into the Central San Joaquin Valley Nursing Hall of Fame.



Cresencio Rodriguez-Delgado (2019) is a correspondent for "PBS NewsHour," reporting out of Fresno. He was previously the director of communications for the Leadership Counsel for Justice and Accountability.

Matt Soderstrom (2018) earned a professional engineer license from the California Board for Professional Engineers, Land Surveyors and Geologists.

Patrick B. Tachella (2014) has been the owner and operator of the North Fork Napa Auto Parts since purchasing the longstanding business in May.



Jahz Tello (2014) is a video production assistant with GV Wire, a news website run by Granville Homes.

2020s

Brooke Chau (2022) landed an on-air position with KGUN ABC 9 News in Tucson, Arizona.

Jasmine Flores (2022) is the leadership development coordinator for California Future Farmers of America in Galt.

Andrew Kachel, a junior infielder and two-time All-Mountain West selection, was drafted by the San Francisco Giants in the 16th round (496th overall) of the Major League Baseball Draft. He hit .302 and tied for the team lead with 11 home runs.

Robyn McCarthy (2021) signed with Indy Eleven, a team in the new USL W League team, a women's pre-professional soccer league.

40 under 40

Each year, BusinessLeaders.TV recognizes 40 outstanding business professionals under age 40 in Central California who have demonstrated strong work ethic, and are leaders in their fields. Fresno State is proud to recognize alumni who were part of the 2021 class.

Class of 2021:

David Bacci (2010), Hospital Council of Northern and Central California.

Gilbert Felix (2012), Partnership for Public Service.

Melissa Fries (2008), Pitman Farms.

Ashley Jacobsen (2003), Moss Adams.

Hannah Johnson (2018), Central Valley Community Foundation.

Keryn Nicholson (2009), Nicholson Hat Co.

Julia Pena (2004), SPAN Construction & Engineering, Inc.

Sal Lucatero, Bitwise Industries.

Nicole Rivera (2012), Aspen Public Schools.

Ashley Webster Rudolph (2005), The Business Journal.



Mia Moreno (2021) is now a business adviser at The Garabedian Group, a certified public accounting firm.

Zach Morgan, a junior catcher and first-team All-Mountain West selection, was drafted by the San Francisco Giants in the seventh round (226th overall) of the Major League Baseball Draft.

Rajan Nagra (2022) is a real estate agent for Schuil & Associates, Inc, a Valley agricultural real estate firm.

Karen Pelayo Palmer (2020) is being recognized by the National Honor Society for First-Generation College Students.

Orlando Robinson, a first-team All-Mountain West basketball player as a junior, signed with Miami Heat as an undrafted free agent. As a Bulldog, he became one of just two players in NCAA history to accumulate 700 points, 300 rebounds and 100 assists in a single season.

Alex Scott (2022) is a reporter for Clovis Roundup and researcher for The Business Journal.

Adam Ricardo Solis (2022) is a reporter for the Clovis Roundup.

Steve Suarez (2022) was featured in the Salinas Valley Tribune for his aspirations to apply to medical school and become a neurosurgeon.

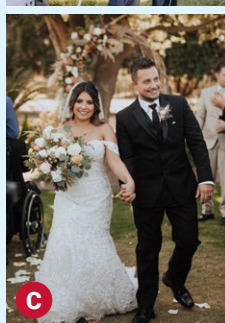
Megan Rupe (2014), CBS47 morning anchor.

Josh Sherfield (2006), Quiring General.

Victor Thao (2008, '14), Bank of America.

Jacob Villagomez (2015), Office of State Senator Melissa Hurtado.

Blake Zante (2018), Office of State Senator Andreas Borgeas.



ALUMNI CONNECTIONS



Bulldog Born, Bulldog Wed

A Kristen Battles (2012) and **Eric Battles** (2012) welcomed their daughter, Emilia Mary Battles, on July 22.

B Connor Calaway (2015, '20) and **Robert Scott** (2011) were married on May 7, 2022 at the Fresno Chaffee Zoo.

C Michael Anthony DiNuzzo (2013) married **Marissa Pina** (2022) on Sept. 25 in Kingsburg.

D Lindsey (Newcomb) Distefano (2008) and Zack Distefano welcomed their daughter, Linnea Dwyann Distefano on Sept. 6.

E Jacey Domoto (2005, '16) and Jordan Yano-Goss welcomed their second child, Koen Koji Yano-Goss, on April 7. Also pictured is brother Lincoln Kai Yano-Goss.

F Shannon (Sisk) MacAdam (2007) and **Taylor MacAdam** (2007) welcomed their son, Luke Landon MacAdam on May 24.

G Jessica Piffero (2009) and **Benjamin Piffero** (2010) welcomed their daughter, Mia Jane Piffero, on Sept. 8.

H Walter Trembley and Cheryl (Ripley) Trembley (1972) celebrated their 50th anniversary on Sept. 16 in Fresno.



IN MEMORIAM

Joel Jay Allender (1955),
July 30, Bellevue, ID.

Victoria Jean Anderson
(1999), June 29, Fresno.

Harold Walter Bergler
(1991), March 9,
Pinecrest.

**Robert Franklin
Blecker** (1967), July 13,
Scottsdale, AZ.

Oscar Ramon Casarreal,
Aug. 26, Firebaugh.

Michael Crager (1975),
April 14, Fernandina
Beach, FL.

Lee Danker (1984),
July 22, Lake Owen, WI.

John Lee Easby (1978),
June 14, Carson City, NV.

Deborah Gauss (1975),
Oct. 27, Los Alamitos.

Joseph "Joe" Gragg
(1968), June 21,
Hannibal, MO.

Joan Munk Gunn (1983),
Sept. 13, Sandy, UT.

Jack Hannah (1957),
July 31, Fresno.

Lance Hairabedian
(1987), Oct. 20, Fresno.

Dennis M. Kalebjian
(1976), July 23, Fresno.

Brian Carl Lindgren
(1974), Sept. 7,
Casper, WY.

Nick Masich (1962),
July 13, Fresno.

Ashton McKiearnan
(2005), June 19, Fresno.

Lucille Miley (1951),
August, Camarillo.

**Albert Sidney Newton,
Jr.**, (1974) Aug. 26,
Fresno.

Henry Nishimoto (1965),
April 4, Fresno.

James Page (1990),
March 29, Fresno.

Emmy Lou Papagni
(1943), May 8, Palo Alto.

Monte Robert Prieto
(2002), May 26, Fresno.

**Beatrice "Bee" Emeline
Raimondo Collier** (1941),
Oct. 23, 2021, Fresno.

**Dr. Gerald "Jerry"
Rosander** (1952),
Sept. 14, San Diego.

Carol J. Putler (1953),
Aug. 2, Modesto.

Teresina Marie Smith
(1950), June 12, Fresno.

Dan O. Stone (1968),
July 18, 2021,
Cameron Park.

FACULTY/STAFF

Steve Adisasmito-Smith,
July 10, Fresno.

Adela Santana-Mullooly,
Oct. 2, Clovis.

John McDermott,
June 15, Fresno.

**Dr. Richard D.
Nordstrom**,
Aug. 12, Fresno.

FRIENDS

**Floyd Melvin "Fritz"
Ihde**, July 12, Clovis.

Earl and Beverly Knobloch

Understanding the Power of Philanthropy

The Knoblochs were proud Freshnans. Both were educators and worked for Fresno Unified School District for over 35 years. They also shared many passions; including antiques, travel, community involvement, and giving back to their alma mater, Fresno State.

The Knoblochs have long supported agricultural education at Fresno State. Beverly's sister, Joyce Gibson, bequeathed \$2 million to the Jordan College of Agricultural Sciences and Technology to support the Rue and Gwen Gibson Farm Market and the equine program. In 2012, the Knoblochs gave to further support the Gibson Farm Market, which is named in honor of Joyce and Beverly's parents.



Two years later, the Knoblochs established the Jordan Agricultural Research Center's instrument/robotics laboratory. The space, which was named in honor of the Knoblochs, is used by students and faculty to develop and test the next generation of sensors for real-world applications.

"Agriculture is the heart and soul of the San Joaquin Valley and with the establishment of the research center, other disciplines such as engineering, science and math, as well as business, can work together to make agriculture a shining star," Beverly Knobloch said.

Now, even after their passing, Earl and Beverly's legacy of support to Fresno State continues.

The Knoblochs included the Ag One Foundation in their estate plans with an unrestricted gift to support the Jordan College. Such a gift is especially vital to advance the college's highest needs and grow educational opportunities.

For more information on planned giving opportunities, contact Caty Perez, associate vice president of development at 559.278.3132 or catyp@csufresno.edu.

"Agriculture is the heart and soul of the San Joaquin Valley and with the establishment of the research center, other disciplines such as engineering, science and math as well as business can work together to make agriculture a shining star."

BEVERLY KNOBLOCH



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After seven years as Fresno State's live mascot, Victor E. Bulldog III is preparing to pass the collar. Victor E. Bulldog IV was introduced in November, and will be trained by his predecessor before a ceremonial passing of the collar in spring 2023.



**Warm wishes
to our generous
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friends, from
the newest
'Dog on campus!**

Sincerely,
Victor E. Bulldog IV

