

ASPIRE

ISSUE

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AUGUST

'26

*College of
Liberal Arts*



CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY
LONG BEACH

CALIFORNIA
STATE UNIVERSITY
LONG BEACH

Aspire is a publication of the
College of Liberal Arts at
California State University,
Long Beach.

PRESIDENT

Loren Blanchard

PROVOST

Karyn Scissum Gunn

DEAN

Donna J. Nicol

INTERIM ASSOCIATE DEANS

Chi-Ah Chun

Nancy Hall

ASPIRE TEAM

Minerva Chairez Ceballos

Marissa Garcia

Roselyn Ithiratansoonthorn

Sabella Moreno

Spencer Otte

Alessandro F. Russo

California State University,
Long Beach

1250 Bellflower Blvd.,
Long Beach, CA 90840-4601

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Dear Reader, _____

Welcome to the sixth annual issue of *Aspire*, the magazine that celebrates the people, honors, awards, and events happening here in the College of Liberal Arts.

I write this welcome as the College's new Dean, having stepped into the role this summer. It is an honor to lead a college of this size and reach, more than 27 departments, 300 tenure-line faculty, 500 lecturer faculty, and a student body pursuing over 27 majors and programs across the humanities, social sciences, and interdisciplinary disciplines.

As I begin this work, I want to share a vision I am calling Applied Liberal Arts. Our core values, critical thinking, global awareness, and civic engagement, should not live only in our mission statements. They should be visible everywhere our students and community encounter us: visible in our classrooms through praxis-based teaching, mentorship, and seminar-style learning; visible in our co-curricular events and programming; and visible in our work on and off campus as we partner with our neighbors to strengthen the communities we call home. Applied Liberal Arts is a commitment to making the value of what we do plain, not just to our students, but to the region we serve. I am fortunate to be building this vision alongside exceptional faculty, staff, and students.

One place you will see Applied Liberal Arts come to life this year is CLA Day, which we are revamping and expanding around the theme CLA: Your Passport to the Four Corners of the World. Students will be invited to *Explore. Connect. Discover Your World.* as they engage with our more than 27 majors and programs, a reminder that a liberal arts education is itself a passport, opening doors across disciplines, cultures, and careers.

In this issue, we also look back at a highly successful 2025-2026 academic year and recognize the faculty, students, and staff who received honors and awards over the past year. Throughout the year ahead, CLA departments and programs will continue to host the keynote speakers, roundtables, and conferences that bring disciplinary expertise to our campus and community. You can learn about upcoming events by visiting our CLA calendar website.

We hope to see you at The Beach in the year ahead!

DONNA J. NICOL

Dean, College of Liberal Arts

New Tenure-Track Faculty

ARESA ALLEN-ROCHESTER

Assistant Professor, Africana Studies

Dr. Aresa Allen-Rochester has been a lecturer in the Africana Studies department at CSULB since 2025. This fall, she joins the tenure track in the same department, teaching Introduction to Racial & Ethnic Studies, African Psychology, and Black Children in the Public School System.

Dr. Allen-Rochester holds a B.A. in Psychology and Africana Studies from San Diego State University, two master's degrees in education from CSU Dominguez Hills and an Ed.D. in Educational Leadership from Azusa Pacific University. Her research examines how African-centered educational philosophy and cultural frameworks inform leadership theory, culturally relevant pedagogy and systemic change in K-12 education.



DOMINIQUE SHANK

Assistant Professor, English

Dr. Dom Shank joins the English department this fall, where she is teaching American Literature, African American Literature, Black Diasporic Literature and Genres.

Dr. Shank holds a B.A. in English from the University of San Diego, and an M.A. and Ph.D. in English from UC Irvine. She comes to CSULB from UC San Diego. Her research examines the Black Gothic storytelling tradition in 19th- and 20th-century literature, the subject of her dissertation, "Black Gothic Genealogies in the Atlantic World." Her work has appeared in the Oxford Handbook of Black Horror Film.



SARA O'CONNOR

Assistant Professor, Geography

Dr. Sara O'Connor joins the tenure track in the Geography department this fall and continues to direct the GeoSpatial Analysis for Community Engagement (Geo-SpACE) Lab.

Her research examines how communities gain a voice in planning decisions, spanning civic activism in Kazakhstan, environmental justice in Long Beach and wildfire preparedness across Southern California.



TONI HAYS

Assistant Professor, Asian & Asian American Studies

Dr. Toni Hays has been a lecturer in the Asian & Asian American Studies department at CSULB since 2024. This fall, she joins the tenure track, teaching Composition and Comparative Ethnic Studies.

Dr. Hays holds an associate degree from Orange Coast College, a B.A. in English from UCLA and a Ph.D. in English from UC Irvine. Her research covers Asian American literature and culture, Filipinx American studies and Asian settler colonialism. Most recently she was a postdoctoral teaching fellow in American studies and ethnicity at USC.

CLARIZA RUIZ DE CASTILLA

Assistant Professor, Chicano(a) & Latino(a) Studies

Dr. Clariza Ruiz De Castilla has taught at CSULB since 2014, first as a visiting professor and then as a lecturer in the Communication Studies department. This fall, she joins the tenure track in Chicano(a) and Latino(a) Studies, teaching Introduction to Ethnic Studies, Racial and Ethnic Experience in the U.S., and Archival Quest: Reclaiming Latinx Rhetorics.

Dr. Ruiz De Castilla holds a B.A. in Speech Communications from the University of La Verne, an M.A. in Communication Studies from Cal State LA and a Ph.D. in Communication Studies, with an emphasis in Rhetoric and Language, from the University of Texas at Austin.



NAWON KANG

Assistant Professor, Economics

Dr. Nawon Kang joins the Economics department this fall, teaching Principles of Microeconomics and Microeconomic Theory. Dr. Kang holds a B.A. in Economics from Kyungpook National University in South Korea, an M.S. in Natural Resource Economics from the University of Tennessee and a Ph.D. in Agricultural Economics from Texas A&M University.

Her research covers environmental and agricultural economics, with a focus on water resources, drought and public infrastructure, and on how water infrastructure and institutions affect agriculture, local economies and communities. At CSULB, Dr. Kang plans to develop new research on water, drought and environmental issues in California and the West.



TODD HENNEMAN

Assistant Professor, Journalism & Public Relations

Todd Henneman has been a lecturer in the Journalism & Public Relations department at CSULB since 2010 and has served as the department's internship coordinator since 2023. This fall, he joins the tenure track in the same department.

Henneman holds a B.S. in Journalism from Northwestern University's Medill School of Journalism and an MBA from UCLA's Anderson School of Management. He worked as a journalist for more than two decades alongside his teaching, with staff positions at the San Francisco Chronicle, The Desert Sun and the North County Times and contributing work for Workforce magazine and The Advocate.



ROGER RENTERIA

Assistant Professor, Human Development

Dr. Roger Renteria joins the Human Development department this fall, where he is teaching Environmental Justice, Health, and Human Development and Quantitative Methods in Human Development.

Dr. Renteria holds a B.A. and M.A. in Sociology from the University of Texas at El Paso and a Ph.D. in Sociology from the University of Utah. His research examines environmental inequality, with a focus on labor and health.





KYLE BANICK

Associate Professor, Philosophy

Dr. Kyle Banick has been a lecturer in the Philosophy department at CSULB since 2019. This fall, he joins the tenure track, teaching Phenomenology, Symbolic Logic, and the History of Analytic Philosophy.

Dr. Banick holds a B.A. in Philosophy from Chapman University and an M.A. and Ph.D. in Philosophy from UC Irvine. His research covers phenomenology, philosophical logic and philosophy of mind, and has appeared in Synthese, Husserl Studies and the European Journal of Philosophy.



JOHN BECKER

Assistant Professor, Religious Studies

Dr. John Becker has been a full-time lecturer in the Religious Studies department at CSULB since 2023 and serves as the department's graduate advisor. This fall, he joins the tenure track, teaching Religious Quest for Meaning, Buddhism and Religions of East Asia.

Dr. Becker holds a B.A. and M.A. in History from Cal Poly Pomona and a Ph.D. in Religion, with a concentration in Comparative Theology and Philosophy, from Claremont School of Theology. His research covers process philosophy, comparative religion with attention to Mahayana Buddhism and Christianity, religion and ecology, and religious pluralism.

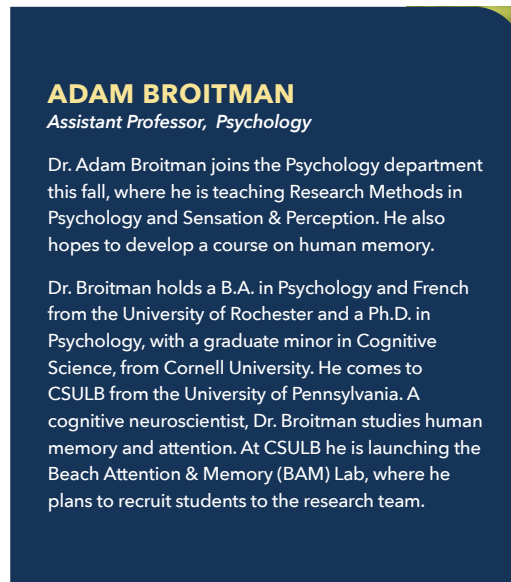


ANA SCHUGURENSKY

Assistant Professor, Political Science

Dr. Ana Schugurensky joins the Political Science department this fall, where she is teaching Introduction to American Government & Public Policy.

Dr. Schugurensky holds a B.A. in Liberal Arts from Soka University of America and an M.A. and Ph.D. in Political Science from UC Irvine. Her research examines theories of the policy process and shifts in public opinion, with a focus on how political elites use narrative to shape attitudes toward social policy. Her dissertation analyzed U.S. health care debates from 2008 to the present.



ADAM BROITMAN

Assistant Professor, Psychology

Dr. Adam Broitman joins the Psychology department this fall, where he is teaching Research Methods in Psychology and Sensation & Perception. He also hopes to develop a course on human memory.

Dr. Broitman holds a B.A. in Psychology and French from the University of Rochester and a Ph.D. in Psychology, with a graduate minor in Cognitive Science, from Cornell University. He comes to CSULB from the University of Pennsylvania. A cognitive neuroscientist, Dr. Broitman studies human memory and attention. At CSULB he is launching the Beach Attention & Memory (BAM) Lab, where he plans to recruit students to the research team.



KAVITHA KOSHY

Assistant Professor, Women's Gender & Sexuality

Dr. Kavitha Koshy has been a lecturer at CSULB since 2015 and has taught in the Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies, Sociology, International Studies, and University Honors programs. This fall, she joins the tenure track in the WGSS department.

Dr. Koshy holds a B.A. in History from Women's Christian College in Chennai, India; an M.A. in Social Work from the Tata Institute of Social Sciences in Mumbai; and an M.A. in Women's Studies and a Ph.D. in Sociology from Texas Woman's University. Her research addresses feminist movements in South Asia, transnational feminisms, and South Asian racialization, migration and diasporic formations.

NEW FULL-TIME LECTURERS

Anna J. Lim

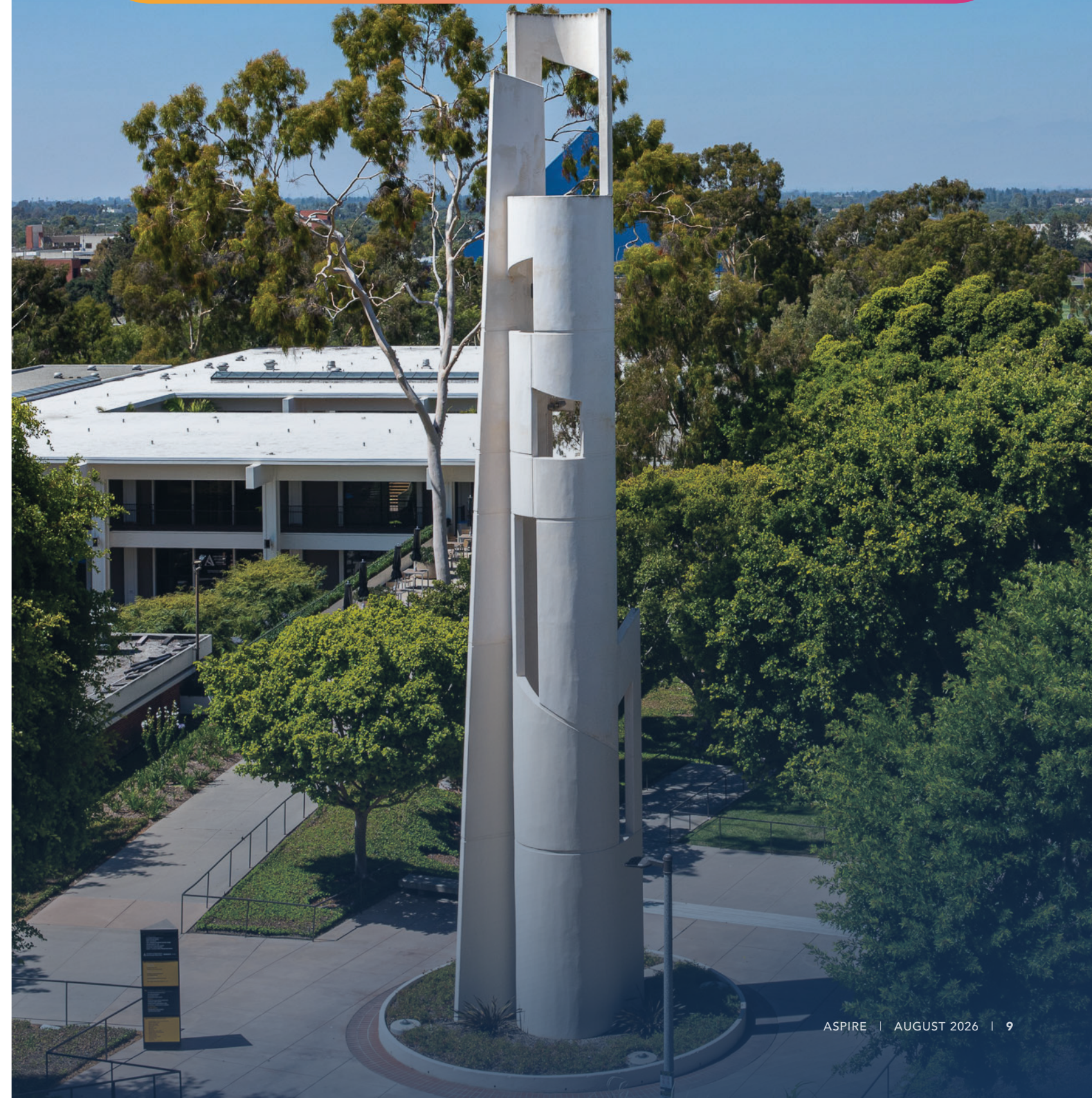
American Sign Language
Linguistics & Deaf Cultures

Elijah Smith

Communication Studies

Alex Bakke

Romance, German, Russian
Languages & Literature



Faculty Tenure & Promotion

Promoted to Associate Professor

REZENET MOGES-RIEDEL
American Sign Language Linguistics & Deaf Cultures

JEANELLE UY
Anthropology

DARIO VALLES
Chicano(a) & Latino(a) Studies

CRYSTAL LIE
Comparative World Literature & Classics

ISACAR BOLAÑOS
History

SAMIHA RAHMAN
Human Development

JESÚS AYALA
Journalism & Public Relations

TERESA PUENTE
Journalism & Public Relations

ANAND COMMISSIONG
Political Science

MATTHEW LESENYIE
Political Science

JANET MUÑIZ
Sociology

ROBERTO ORTIZ
Sociology

Promoted to Full Professor

M. KEITH CLAYBROOK, JR.
Africana Studies

JUSTIN GOMER
American Studies

DAVID HERNANDEZ
English

LAURA CEIA
Global Studies

CAITLIN FOURATT
Global Studies

BARBARA GROSSMAN-THOMPSON
Global Studies

CHRISTINE EL OUARDANI
Human Development

CHRISTOPHER KARADJOV
Journalism & Public Relations

MICHAEL AHLAND
Linguistics

MARICELA CORREA
Psychology

DANIEL HERRERA CEPERO
Romance, German, Russian Languages & Literature

STEVEN OSUNA
Sociology

STACY MACIAS
Women's Gender & Sexuality Studies

Faculty Milestones

New Department Chairs & Program Directors

M. KEITH CLAYBROOK, JR.
Chair, Africana Studies

GWEN SHAFFER
Chair, Journalism & Public Relations

KIM VU
Chair, Psychology

WAYNE WRIGHT
Chair, Romance, German, Russian Languages & Literatures

LAUREN HEIDBRINK
Interim Director of Research, College of Liberal Arts

KERRY WOODWARD
Faculty Advising Liaison, College of Liberal Arts

Faculty Retirements

MAULANA KARENGA
Africana Studies

JACK HOU
Economics

CHARLES PONCE DE LEON
History



Faculty Service Awards

20 years

Ronald Loewe
Professor, Anthropology

Kiyomi Chinen
Associate Professor, Asian & Asian American Studies

Rigoberto Rodriguez Villalpando
Associate Professor, Chicano(a) & Latino(a) Studies

Kelly Janke
Lecturer, Communication Studies

Ebony Utley
Professor, Communication Studies

William Mohr
Professor, English

Patricia Seyburn-Little
Professor, English

Laura Ceia
Professor & Department Chair, Global Studies

David Sheridan
Lecturer, History

Heloiza Herscovitz
Professor, Journalism & Public Relations

Christopher Knap
Lecturer, Journalism & Public Relations

Ali Igmen
Professor, History

Amy Rasmussen
Professor, Political Science

Patricia Amezcua
Lecturer, Romance, German, Russian Languages, & Literatures

Nele Hempel-Lamer
Professor, Romance, German, Russian Languages, & Literatures

Armando Mejia
Lecturer, Sociology

Oliver Wang
Professor, Sociology

25 years

Daniele Bolelli
Lecturer, American Indian Studies & History

Masako Douglas
Professor Emeritus, Asian & Asian American Studies

Barbara Kim
Professor & Department Chair, Asian & Asian American Studies

Ann Johnson
Professor, Communication Studies

Guy Yamashiro
Professor, Economics

Susan Carlile
Professor, English

Paul Tayyar
Lecturer, English

Jane Dabel
Professor, History

Jeffrey Lawler
Lecturer, History

Anna Haas
Professor, Political Science

Richard Haesly
Associate Professor, Political Science

Chi-Ah Chun
Professor, Psychology

Dan Chiappe
Professor, Psychology

Bonnie Gasior
Professor, Romance, German, Russian Languages, & Literatures

Markus Muller
Associate Professor, Romance, German, Russian Languages, & Literatures

Shira Tarrant
Professor, Women's, Gender, & Sexuality Studies

30 years

Aaron Cargile
Professor, Communication Studies

Teresa Wright
Professor, Political Science

Jennifer Reed
Professor, Women's, Gender, & Sexuality Studies

40 years

Elyse Blankley
Professor, English

Carole Campbell
Professor, Sociology

Thomas Strybel
Professor Emeritus, Psychology

60 years

Martin Fiebert
Professor Emeritus, Psychology

Staff Milestones

New Staff Hires

Emmory Odom
CLA Administration

Masha Esch
Economics

Gregory Diaz
Journalism & Public Relations

Melissa Segura
CLA Advising Center (ATLAS)

Christian Baca
English

Sadie Mucciario
Psychology

Staff Promotions

Sherie Muro
Political Science

Blanca Piguing
Psychology

Staff Service Awards

10 years

Doris Palomarez
CLA Administration

Jessica Dominguez
Psychology

15 years

Jason Harris
CLA Tech Services

20 years

Kimberly Davis
CLA Administration

25 years

Joyce Morfe
CLA Administration

Nesha Saucier
Journalism & Public Relations

30 years

Phyllis Simon
History



John & Phyllis Jung Awards

PART-TIME FACULTY AWARD

Jennifer Brooks
Comparative World Literature & Classics
Andrea Mays Griffith
Economics

FULL-TIME STAFF AWARD

Nesha Saucier
Journalism & Public Relations

In Memoriam

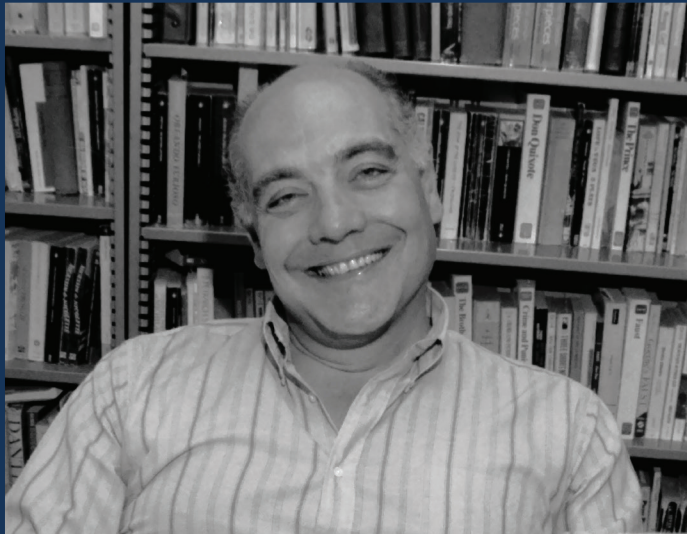


MOLLY DEBYSINGH
Professor Emeritus, Geography

Debsingh joined the Geography department in 1972 and taught there until her retirement in 2003, a span of 31 years and the majority of her professional career. Her research covered cultural and political geography, international development, and the regions of South and Southeast Asia and Latin America.

After retiring, she and her husband and former colleague, Richard Outwater, moved to Scottsdale, Arizona, where she lived for the remainder of her life. She is survived by two children and three grandchildren by marriage.

Colleagues remember Debysingh as a kind and gracious presence in the department, held in high esteem by faculty and students alike.



FRANK FATA
Former Associate Dean, College of Liberal Arts

The College of Liberal Arts community mourns the passing of Frank Fata, a former Professor of Comparative Literature and an Associate Dean in the College of Liberal Arts., who passed away on September 9th, after a courageous battle with cancer. Frank was 85 years old.

"Students in his classes admired and loved Frank for his teaching style, his empathy and warmth," said CSULB Professor Emerita of Spanish Claire Martin. Frank taught a wide array of courses, including "The Comic Spirit" and "Medieval Literature." He was appointed Department Chair in 1994 and became an Associate Dean in 1996. His legacy includes two scholarships he established for CSULB students: the Frank Fata Scholarship for Study Abroad and the Kristen J. Brown Scholarship for German.

Student Success in CLA

Outstanding Baccalaureates



MELANIE SANDOVAL
Anthropology, Chicano(a) & Latino(a) Studies



ALYSSA AGUDELO
Comparative World Literature & Classics, Sociology



DARYA JAFARINEJAD
English

Best Master's Thesis Award



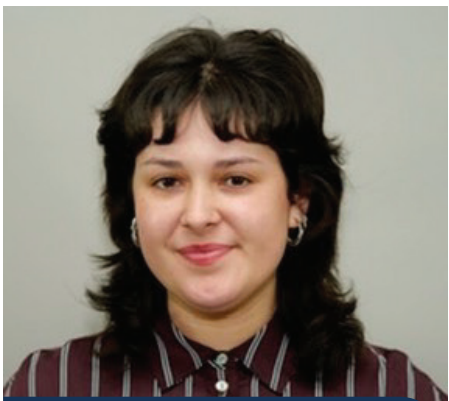
LISA NGUYEN
Anthropology
"Longing for Home: Navigating the Complexities of Homelessness in Little Saigon's Vietnamese Diaspora"
Supervisor: Dr. Steven Rousso-Schindler



DEBORAH L. SANCHEZ
Linguistics
"Indigenous Wellness, Resistance, and Language Reclamation in the Wake of Colonization and Settler Colonialism: A Šmuwič Case Study"
Supervisor: Dr. Itxaso Rodríguez-Ordóñez

2026 Dean's List

Masters Students, University Scholars, & Artists



OLIVIA ROMERO
Anthropology



JADE SAFFERY
English



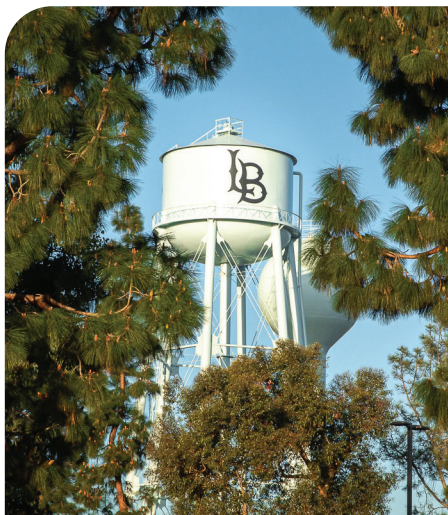
JOSUE VALIENTE
Linguistics Language & Culture, Graduate Certificate in TESOL



TATTEP RUANGPRAPAIKITSEREE
Political Science



ANNA FEJES
Psychological Research





In July, Dr. Donna J. Nicol became Dean of the College of Liberal Arts, stepping up from her post as the college's Associate Dean of Personnel and Curriculum. She is the first CLA alumnus to serve in this role.

She says her priorities as dean include improving the college's visibility through strategic communications and marketing and making liberal arts values and skills visible through curricular innovation and off-campus partnerships for internships and practicum courses.

"CLA is more than just the biggest college," she said. "We're the college that provides foundational skills and theories necessary to be a globally aware and productive citizen. Without a broad-based liberal arts education, students would be limited to one career field and would not have the ability to adapt as readily in an ever-changing job market or participate in our democracy."

Planned efforts include faculty working groups supported by small grants for research and teaching innovation, a faculty service tracking system, an annual symposium for lecturer faculty that blends workshops with a research conference, and a professional development "passport" for staff.

"The most important lesson I learned as an associate dean is that faculty, staff, and students want to be heard and have their experiences and expertise acknowledged and respected," Dean Nicol said. "Therefore, a good dean is one who listens, acknowledges gaps in their own knowledge, and works to remove barriers to student, faculty, and staff success."

Dean Nicol is one of several CSU graduates in her family. Her mother, Wanda Gough, began college at CSU Dominguez Hills in the 1970s but did not complete her

and earned a bachelor's degree in History from Dominguez Hills in 1997. She later earned a second B.A. in English Literature from Cal State Long Beach, the same year as Dr. Nicol earned her M.A. in History. Mother and daughter walked together in the same ceremony in 1999.

As Associate Dean, Dr. Nicol served on the lecturer evaluation policy taskforce and led lecturer faculty hiring and evaluation workshops for department chairs. She advocated for the Black Long Beach cluster hiring initiative, which has so far resulted in three tenure-track searches in Africana Studies, American Studies and English, and supported curricular changes including the STEM designation in economics and several new certificate programs including the Effective Mentoring Certificate in Communication Studies.

Before coming to CSULB, Dean Nicol was professor and chair of Africana Studies at CSU Dominguez Hills from 2017 to 2023, and spent a decade at CSU Fullerton, where in 2014 she became the first woman of color granted tenure in the Women and Gender Studies Department. She began her career teaching social studies and language arts for the Los Angeles Unified School District and spent several years in multicultural affairs and academic advising administration.



Her research centers on the history and politics of African American educational access. Her 2024 book, *Black Woman on Board: Claudia Hampton, the California State University, and the Fight to Save Affirmative Action*, received the Best Independent Book Award and was longlisted for the 2025 PEN America Open Book Award. She recently completed a narrative non-fiction book about her family across six generations, entitled *The Paradox of Privilege: Land and Conditional Freedom in a Black American Family*.

Dr. Nicol received her Master's Degree in Higher Education Administration and her doctorate in Educational Studies at The Ohio State University, her master's degree in U.S. History at CSULB and her bachelor's degree in History and African American Studies at CSU Fullerton. She is a third-generation history major.

DONNA J. NICOL

1995, B.A., *History & Africana Studies, CSU Fullerton*

1999, M.A., *History, CSU Long Beach*

2002, M.A., *Higher Education Administration, The Ohio State University*

2007, Ph.D., *Educational Studies, The Ohio State University*

The Beach Institute for Dialogue & Community (BIDC)



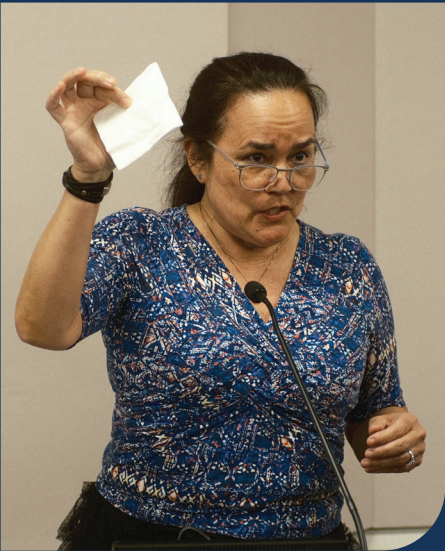
Launched in February 2026, The Beach Institute for Dialogue and Community (BIDC) is an independent, interdisciplinary academic unit housed within CLA dedicated to civic thought. It is directed by three senior faculty members: Dr. Kathryn Chew, professor of Comparative World Literature & Classics and Religious Studies; Dr. Richard Marcus, professor of Global Studies; and Dr. Sophia Pandya, professor of Religious Studies. The Institute has the support of the university president and the full executive cabinet.

It was organized to cultivate an environment in which diverse identities and ideologies can engage constructively, promoting empathy and respectful debate in support of the university's mission. The Institute's broader aim is to embed principles of pluralism in the curriculum and institutional practices of the university and the surrounding community, and to provide structured opportunities for dialogue and collaboration.

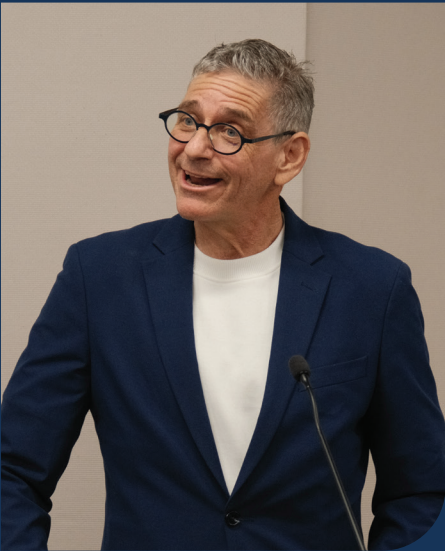
Programming includes seminars, public debates, workshops, training events, a speaker series and visiting fellowships, all organized around viewpoint diversity and open inquiry. Rather than simply reducing campus conflict, the Institute aims to support a culture of curiosity, mutual respect and freedom of expression, and

to help ensure that the university and the communities it reaches remain centers of democratic exchange.

The BIDC is open to students, faculty, staff, administrators and community partners, and welcomes collaborations. Those interested in working with the Institute can reach out through its involvement page.



DR. KATHRYN CHEW
Professor, Comparative World Literature & Classics, Religious Studies



DR. RICHARD MARCUS
Professor, Global Studies



DR. SOPHIA PANDYA
Professor, Religious Studies

The Claudine Radisich-Ajeti Labor Institute



DR. GARY HYTREK
Director, The Claudine Radisich-Ajeti Labor Institute

The Claudine Radisich-Ajeti Labor Institute, established through an endowment from the late Claudine Ajeti, will support research on labor and the changing economy in the Long Beach, South Bay, and Gateway Cities region.

Ajeti, a CSULB graduate, worked for the California Department of Social Services and later served as principal of adult education for the Los Angeles Unified School District. In the late 1970s, First Lady Rosalynn Carter recognized her leadership in California's Refugee Resettlement Program. She retired in 2010 and died in 2024 at 86.

The Institute will be housed in the Department of Geography in the College of Liberal Arts, with Dr. Gary Hytrek as its initial director. Planned activities include faculty research grants, stipends for student research and internships, a graduate fellowship, speakers and symposia, and grants for faculty to incorporate labor topics into existing courses.

Featured Alumni

'77 Alumni establishes scholarship for Political Science majors



ADRIAAN VAN DER CAPELLEN

1977, B.A., Political Science, CSU Long Beach

After graduating from CSULB in 1977, Adriaan van der Capellen found success in the legal field and then consulting. Now, he seeks to give back to The Beach and support a Political Science student following a path similar to his own.

Van der Capellen immigrated from the Netherlands when he was four years old, growing up in Pasadena and later Long Beach. He attended Woodrow Wilson High School, but attending CSULB wasn't an easy choice. After applying to UCs and a few schools on the East Coast, Van der Capellen first saw The Beach as a temporary choice.

"I was going to transfer after my second year at The Beach to UCLA. Now, you know what? Forget it." He credits the smaller campus, good vibes, and his involvement on campus for changing his perspective. "I learned a lot. I had really good professors across the board," he said.

Van der Capellen majored in Political Science with a minor in Economics, shifting his career goals from politician to lawyer during his studies. He became involved in Beach Crew, Academic Senate, and AIESEC (International Association of Students) where he landed an internship with the Dutch government. He also worked multiple jobs throughout his time at CSULB, including serving as a teaching assistant and an advisor for the graduate program in the School of Business.

"College came a little bit easier to me. It was still tough, don't get me wrong, but it wasn't that bad. But then I got to law school and what a rude awakening," said Van der Capellen.

After graduating, Van der Capellen went on to Loyola Law School for one year before leaving after becoming overwhelmed with the workload. He transitioned into a school counselor position at Poly High School before returning to law school on an accelerated part-time track.

"I had to start from scratch. And the second time around, it was a conviction," said Van der Capellen, "I knew I wanted to do it and finish it. That was the difference."

He went on to build a career in the legal field, working in insurance defense, serving as a prosecutor in Orange County, and later practicing criminal defense in federal cases. After a particularly demanding case that pushed him to go under the radar, Van der Capellen reassessed.

"After that, I thought, OK, I'm done. I've been published. I've tried cases and gotten everything I want from law. I'm finished."

Now, Van der Capellen works in technical sales consulting for a company that manufactures protective coatings after forming a connection with its owner during a trade infringement case. Nearly five decades after his time at CSULB, Van der Capellen returned to establish a scholarship for Political Science students planning on attending law school.

"It's to support a driven student with goals who can benefit from some financial assistance," said Van der Capellen. The scholarship reflects his own journey navigating the cost of higher education and finding direction along the way.

"It's my way of giving back because the beach was so, so good to me."



CLA by the Numbers

2025 - 2026 Academic Year

42,174
STUDENTS AT CSULB

9,514
STUDENTS IN CLA

2,896
GRADUATED WITH A
DEGREE IN CLA

185
CLA STUDENTS RECEIVED
SCHOLARSHIPS

\$373,550
AWARDED IN CLA
SCHOLARSHIPS

\$3,553,927
RAISED BY CLA FROM
354 DONORS



COLLEGE OF LIBERAL ARTS UNIVERSITY RELATIONS & DEVELOPMENT

At the College of Liberal Arts, we believe an applied liberal arts education prepares students to lead with purpose, think critically, and create meaningful change. Your support expands access to transformative experiences—including internships, community-engaged learning, undergraduate research, and professional skills development—that empower students to succeed in their careers and strengthen the communities they serve. Together, we are preparing the next generation of leaders to make a lasting impact in Long Beach, California, and beyond.

DEAN'S EXCELLENCE FUND

The Dean's Excellence Fund provides flexible support for the College's highest priorities, expanding student access to career readiness opportunities, experiential learning, scholarships, travel, and emerging initiatives that advance the College's vision for Applied Liberal Arts. Directed by the Dean, this fund helps ensure students have the experiences and resources they need to thrive. Scan the QR code to make your gift today.



If you have any questions about making a contribution, please feel free to reach out to Marissa Garcia, Senior Director of Development at Marissa.Garcia@csulb.edu.

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