

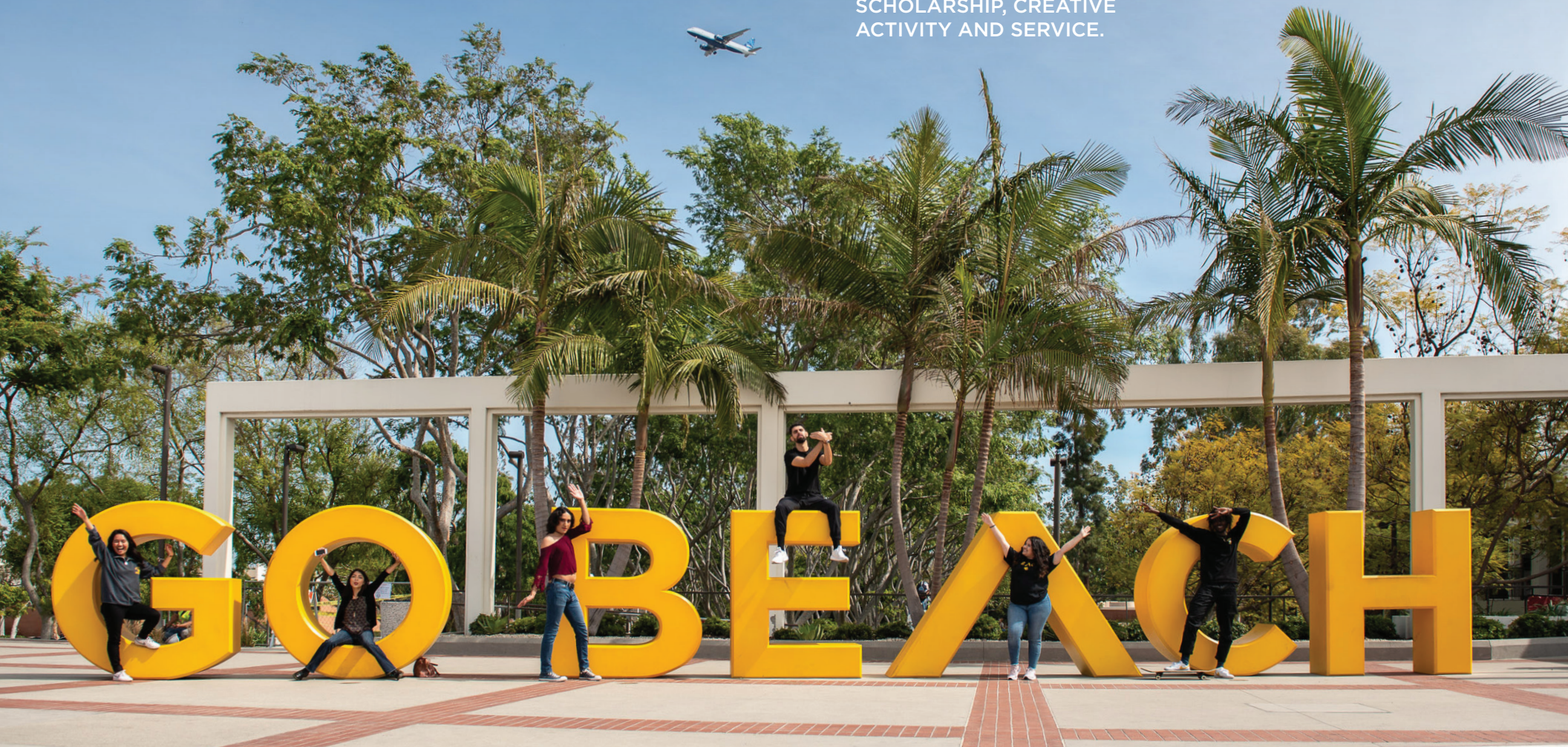
CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY
LONG BEACH

UNIVERSITY

ACHIEVEMENT AWARDS

2019

A CELEBRATION OF
INSTRUCTION, RESEARCH,
SCHOLARSHIP, CREATIVE
ACTIVITY AND SERVICE.



WELCOMING REMARKS

Dr. Brian Jersky
PROVOST & SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT FOR ACADEMIC AFFAIRS

OUTSTANDING STUDENT RESEARCH AWARDS**GRADUATE DIVISION**

Olivia Silke, [Psychology, College of Liberal Arts](#)

UNDERGRADUATE DIVISION

Lizbeth Castillo Monterrosa, [International Studies, College of Liberal Arts](#)

UNDERGRADUATE DIVISION

Jordan Ngo, [Chemistry & Biochemistry, College of Natural Science & Mathematics](#)

REMARKS

Dr. Norbert Schürer
ACADEMIC SENATE CHAIR

Dr. Simon Kim
ASSOCIATE VICE PRESIDENT OF RESEARCH AND SPONSORED PROGRAMS

EARLY ACADEMIC CAREER EXCELLENCE AWARD

Dr. Rachel E. Blaine, [Nutrition, Family and Consumer Sciences](#)

DISTINGUISHED FACULTY TEACHING AWARD

Dr. Pei-Fang Hung, [Speech-Language Pathology](#)

DISTINGUISHED FACULTY ADVISING AWARD

Dr. Lora Stevens, [Geological Sciences](#)

OUTSTANDING FACULTY MENTOR FOR STUDENT ENGAGEMENT IN RESEARCH, SCHOLARLY AND CREATIVE ACTIVITY

Dr. Jason Schwans, [Chemistry & Biochemistry](#)

IMPACT ACCOMPLISHMENT OF THE YEAR IN RESEARCH, SCHOLARLY AND CREATIVE ACTIVITY

Dr. Jessica Zacher Pandya, [Liberal Studies & Teacher Education](#)

DISTINGUISHED FACULTY SCHOLARLY AND CREATIVE ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

Dr. Stephen Mezyk, [Chemistry and Biochemistry](#)

OUTSTANDING STAFF AWARD

Susan Tsuji, [ASC History Department](#)

OUTSTANDING PROFESSOR AWARD

Dr. Ramin Esfandiari, [Mechanical and Aerospace Engineering](#)

NICHOLAS PERKINS HARDEMAN ACADEMIC LEADERSHIP AWARD

Dr. Norbert Schürer, [English Department](#)

COMMUNITY SERVICE AWARDS**STAFF**

Mitra Baghdadi, [Department Coordinator, Anthropology](#)

FACULTY

Dr. Libby Gustin, [Associate Professor, Hospitality Management, Family And Consumer Sciences](#)

STUDENT

Miriam Mercado, [Business Administration, Management](#)

OUTSTANDING STUDENT RESEARCH AWARDS, created in 2008, recognize excellent student research.

EARLY ACADEMIC CAREER EXCELLENCE AWARD, established in 2008, recognizes the outstanding and extraordinary academic and professional achievements of faculty members, at the early career stage, who have made major contributions to their profession and the university.

DISTINGUISHED FACULTY TEACHING AWARD, rewards sustained excellence in teaching by members of the university's faculty, including tenured and probationary faculty, lecturers and librarians.

DISTINGUISHED FACULTY ADVISING AWARD, established in 2008, rewards sustained excellence in advising by members of the university's faculty.

ACADEMIC AFFAIRS AWARD FOR OUTSTANDING FACULTY MENTOR FOR STUDENT ENGAGEMENT IN RESEARCH, SCHOLARLY AND CREATIVE ACTIVITY, created in 2008, honors student mentoring within the previous 18 months.

ACADEMIC AFFAIRS AWARD FOR IMPACT ACCOMPLISHMENT OF THE YEAR IN RESEARCH, SCHOLARLY AND CREATIVE ACTIVITY, created in 2008, honors research, scholarly or creative work conducted over the previous 18 months.

DISTINGUISHED FACULTY SCHOLARLY AND CREATIVE ACHIEVEMENT AWARD, rewards sustained excellence in scholarly and creative achievement.

OUTSTANDING STAFF AWARD, recognizes a staff member who has made significant contributions to the campus community.

OUTSTANDING PROFESSOR AWARD, encourages, rewards and publicly acknowledges outstanding professorial performance.

THE NICHOLAS PERKINS HARDEMAN ACADEMIC LEADERSHIP AWARD, created in 1989, is designed to acknowledge publicly and reward significant contributions to the principle and practice of shared governance at California State University, Long Beach.

THE COMMUNITY SERVICE AWARDS, designed to recognize and encourage service by members of the CSULB family to the community within which they live. The awards are sponsored by the Academic Senate, the Staff Council, the Alumni Association, and the Associated Students.

OUTSTANDING GRADUATE RESEARCH STUDENT AWARD



Olivia Silke
Psychology, College of Liberal Arts

Olivia Silke is a second-year graduate student in the Masters of Arts in Psychology Research Program. Since beginning the program, she has completed her thesis proposal and presented nine, first authored paper and poster presentations at professional and university-based conferences.

She continues to thrive in her program as a CSULB Graduate Research Fellow and as the American Psychological Association's Junior Scientist Fellow. Her master's project (built on a larger NIH-funded study) examines the role of maternal mindful disposition, or one's ability to maintain present moment awareness, on multifaceted-stress responses. Silke's research aims to conceptualize stress in low-income perinatal mothers and their infants by investigating multiple pathways of action, including: the hypothalamic pituitary adrenal axis, the sympathetic adrenal medullary axis, and perceived stress.

Silke plans to obtain her PhD in health psychology where she can expand upon this research. She aims to: address gaps in research by including diverse samples; outline biological outcomes linked with mindfulness; and increase mind-body prenatal programs in community settings.

Having dedicated over 20 hours per week to research methodology, design, and analysis, her future as a scientific researcher is bright.

OUTSTANDING UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH STUDENT AWARD

Lizbeth Castillo Monterrosa
International Studies, College of Liberal Arts



Lizbeth Castillo Monterrosa is a 4.0 GPA, International Studies major who has been welcomed into competitive programs such as the University Honors Program, the Building Infrastructure Leading to Diversity (BUILD) Research Program, and the McNair Scholars Program.

She began her research journey at the end of her freshmen year when she was able to conduct ethnographic fieldwork in Costa Rica, alongside her research mentor Dr. Fouratt. They initiated a research project focused on migrants and refugees and collaborated with a local non-profit organization, RET International, to host a digital storytelling workshop. The purpose of the workshop was to show migrant youth how voicing their migration experiences can serve as foundation to addressing wider anti-immigrant sentiments.

After her time abroad, Castillo continued working on this project with Dr. Fouratt through UROP and now BUILD at CSULB. They currently find themselves in the final stages of this work as they prepare to publish a manuscript. Through research, Castillo ultimately seeks to improve immigrant rights and refine the U.S. discourse on immigration by showing that immigration is not just a domestic issue but a global one as well. Her wider research aims also coincide with her aspiration of a future career in government.

Castillo is a first-generation student who excels in applying her skills and time outside of the classroom and eventually she hopes to pursue a JD and PhD in Public Health. Coming up next for Castillo is the GRE test, graduate school program applications and a summer internship in New Mexico. Here, she hopes to work directly with migrants and refugees at the US-Mexican border.

OUTSTANDING UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH STUDENT AWARD



Jordan Ngo
Chemistry & Biochemistry, College of Natural Science & Mathematics

Jordan Ngo's interest in cutting-edge research and his scientific curiosity as an undergraduate has made him a standout. A finalist for the 2019 Glenn Nagel Undergraduate Research award, he continues his passion of research and will participate in the upcoming CSUPERB annual symposium.

Ngo is currently developing a project for his undergraduate thesis on somatic mutation in cyclin-dependent kinase 5, which is associated with prostate cancer. Ngo presented his work at scientific meetings such as ABRCMS, CSUPERB annual symposium Experimental Biology meeting. He plans to present his research at the upcoming American Society for Cell Biology meeting in San Diego, where he will participate in an undergraduate research competition.

Ngo was selected to shadow Dr. Bhandari's lab through his Freshman Experience Success course in Spring 2016. Ngo went beyond the required hours in the lab, and spent his extra time shadowing Bhandari and assisting graduate students in their experiments. Ngo continued to work with Bhandari over summer in the lab to continue to learn while still maintaining a high GPA.

From his lab experience, Ngo moved forward to independently work on two main projects. He also co-authored one of the manuscripts from the lab. Additionally, this past summer Ngo was selected to participate in the Amgen Scholars program. His work highlights the interaction of Tau protein with membranes, and its effect on membrane aggregation. Ngo will be attending University of California, Berkeley this fall for his PhD program in molecular and cell biology.

EARLY ACADEMIC CAREER EXCELLENCE AWARD



Dr. Rachel E. Blaine
Nutrition, Family and Consumer Sciences

As an Assistant Professor of Nutrition & Dietetics, Dr. Rachel Blaine consistently exceeds expectations. Within her first year she redesigned multiple courses and accepted the role of Director of the Undergraduate Nutrition Didactic Program in Dietetics.

Her teaching style has been described by students as passionate, engaging, and inspiring. After all, Blaine received a \$3,000 grant from the Ukleja Center's for a curriculum proposal titled, "Ethical Considerations for Future Registered Dietitian Nutritionists" in 2016. Blaine also supported her department in securing funding for and designing a new nutrition lab which will include a hospital simulation unit for clinical nutrition training.

Blaine is the author of 19 peer-reviewed publications that mainly focus on pediatric nutrition, food parenting practices, and childhood obesity prevention. She is especially interested in supporting families and children living with autism spectrum disorder. On campus, she is also a trained Autism Ally and taught a six-week cooking class for the LIFE project, which helps CSULB students on the autism spectrum build skills that lead to increased independence.

As Faculty Advisor for Food-Ology Radio, a student-run program, she celebrated her students' success in winning a prestigious national award for "Best Specialty Show" in 2016 after having the nutritionist for NASA as a special guest. She also has a history of supporting the College of Health and Human Services. For example, she sat on task forces related to promoting student success and addressing health disparities in the community. Moreover she sits on the Editorial Board for the International Journal of Behavioral Nutrition and Physical Activity.

DISTINGUISHED FACULTY TEACHING AWARD



Dr. Pei-Fang Hung
Speech-Language Pathology

Dr. Pei-Fang Hung is fluent in Mandarin Chinese, English, and Taiwanese, and has been a medical speech-language pathologist for more than 15 years. She is an assistant professor and graduate advisor in the Department of Speech-Language Pathology at CSULB.

Hung served as a full-time and part-time lecturer before becoming an assistant professor of CSULB in 2013. Prior to this, she was a speech-language pathologist at hospitals, extended-care facilities and skilled nursing facilities in Taiwan, and Los Angeles and Orange Counties.

Hung primarily teaches graduate level courses in neurogenic speech and language disorders; which includes aphasia, cognitive-communication disorders, swallowing disorders, and medical internships. Her professional interests are cognitive-communication disorders, aphasia management, and semantic-based intervention to improve word retrieval ability.

Hung has 10 peer-reviewed publications, one book chapter, three translated book chapters, and more than 40 peer-reviewed presentations in international, national, and regional conferences. She also directed one undergraduate honors thesis, chaired eight master's theses, and supervised fourteen students as their thesis committee member.

Hung has taken on several administrative tasks as a graduate advisor since 2015. She developed and revised several graduate-level courses, redesigned the graduate curriculum, strengthened and revamped the admissions process, prepared reports and required data for the program accreditation, and streamlined the advising process.

Hung is a member of ASHA Special Interest Group 2: Neurogenic Language Disorders, the California Speech-Language-Hearing Association, and the American Speech-Language Hearing Association.

DISTINGUISHED FACULTY ADVISING AWARD

Dr. Lora Stevens
Geological Sciences



Dr. Lora Stevens-Landon's impact goes beyond the CSULB campus. She serves as the Director of the Louis Stokes Alliance for Minority Participation program, a graduate advisor for the Department of Geological Sciences, and is a mentor for students ranging from high school to the graduate level both in the United States and Vietnam.

As an advisor, Landon modified the Introductory Graduate Seminar curriculum to include student research projects. The curriculum also includes more information on programmatic requirements, a database of resources available to them, posting funding jobs, and internship opportunities.

Landon worked on several fronts to increase the participation in STEM of students traditionally underrepresented. She was co-PI on the NSF-OEDG grant "Recruiting and Training the Next Generation of Geoscientists: Geosciences Diversity Enhancement Program Track 2," the NSF-SSTEM grant "Physical Sciences and Mathematics" and the NSF-SSTEM grant "proposed the Mentored Excellence towards Research and Industry Careers (MERIC)." She also serves the campus as the Director of the CSULB chapter of the Louis Stokes Alliance for Minority Participation.

As a research mentor, Landon truly believes in her students. During her time at Fulbright, she mentored two female graduate students and supervised them on their research on catastrophic flooding in Central Vietnam. Her designs for undergraduate and master's projects maximize the development of field and laboratory skills and tracks the success of her students over the years.

OUTSTANDING FACULTY MENTOR FOR STUDENT ENGAGEMENT IN RESEARCH, SCHOLARLY AND CREATIVE ACTIVITY



Dr. Jason Schwans
Chemistry & Biochemistry

Dr. Jason Schwans' rise at CSULB does not come as a surprise to his students and colleagues. He has been dedicated to student research, intellectual achievement and career preparation for his students. He was recently promoted to Associate Professor and awarded tenure.

Schwans' research is dedicated to bioorganic chemistry with an understanding of enzyme catalysis. He works with a large group of research students for assistance, and currently mentors five graduate students and 12 undergraduate students.

These students participate in campus student research programs like MARC, RISE, BUILD, HSI-STEM and UROP. Eight of his students in the recent five years completed their theses and were awarded M.S. degrees.

Schwans is noted for his students' success. He has a keen ability to divide up research projects for students to focus on. This proactive step increases student engagement and contributes to the scientific development of students. Most recently, 15 presentations were made by his students at a national or regional level.

IMPACT ACCOMPLISHMENT OF THE YEAR IN RESEARCH, SCHOLARLY AND CREATIVE ACTIVITY

Dr. Jessica Zacher Pandya
Liberal Studies & Teacher Education



Since Dr. Jessica Zacher Pandya arrived at CSULB in 2005, she has become a dynamic leader on campus. Her ongoing research, combined with her active involvement in the Academic Senate, makes Pandya an inspiring faculty for her students and the campus community.

Her research focuses on issues of equality and diversity in language and literacy practices of children in elementary school. As an expert ethnographer of children's literacy practices, Pandya has published 17 peer-reviewed articles, two single-authored books, four co-edited books, 11 peer-reviewed book chapters, eight invited and editor-reviewed articles, and will publish more in 2019.

She has presented over 40 peer-reviewed conference papers and brought in over \$500,000 in grant funding to the College of Education for her research, and funding for institutional efforts to improve teacher preparation programs.

Pandya's successes have earned her accolades, including the Divergent Award for Excellence in the 21st Century Literacy in 2018 and the Edward B. Fry Book Award from the Literacy Research Association in 2014. She was also named a Foundation for Child Development New American Children Young Scholar for her research that examined how English learners make videos in school.

Pandya is the Past Chair of the American Educational Research Association Writing and Literacies Special Interest Group. She is the Vice Chair of the Academic Senate and the Department Chair of Liberal Studies.

DISTINGUISHED FACULTY SCHOLARLY AND CREATIVE ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

OUTSTANDING STAFF AWARD



Dr. Stephen Mezyk
Chemistry and Biochemistry

Dr. Stephen Mezyk joined the Department of Chemistry and Biochemistry at CSULB in the fall of 2001. During his tenure at CSULB he has been celebrated for his successes and commitment in mentoring both his undergraduate and graduate research students.

Mezyk is recognized for his 80 plus peer-reviewed journal articles and 14 book chapters, published with more than 100 research students as co-authors, over the past decade. Many of his students received their own CSULB honors and research support through program such as the Beckman Scholars program, CSULB's Women and Philanthropy, BUILD, RISE and MARC Programs. Many of Mezyk's students traveled, an experience that permitted opportunities to present their research at numerous regional, national and international scientific conferences. These successes have allowed dozens of Mezyk's students to pursue their MD/PhD programs at prestigious universities including Harvard, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Columbia, University of Colorado, University of California, Berkley, and University of California, Irvine.

Mezyk's has plenty of past successes, but most recently he was chosen as the recipient of the Wang Family Excellence Award in the category "Outstanding Faculty Innovator in Student Success" from the faculty of the 23 CSU campuses. In addition, Mezyk received the 2017 Outstanding Faculty Mentor for Student Engagement in Research, Scholarly and Creative Activity, the 2014 Outstanding Professor Award, and an Emmy for his work on the 2010 Video Series, "Understanding Chemistry in our World."

Susan Tsuji
ASC History Department



Susan Tsuji's influence and dedication to CSULB has been reflected to not only her department, but to the entire campus as well. She is the department coordinator and graduate coordinator for the Department of History, and an active member of the campus community since 2011.

"Susan is without a doubt the first ASC in my thirty years who not only inspires trust in how she carries out her responsibilities, but who combines her performance skills with humor, thoughtfulness, and kindness," said Dr. David Shafer, chair of CSULB's Department of History.

Currently, she is a CSULB Staff Council representative, member of the council's Special Events Committee and is the chair of the Staff Council's Staff Development Committee. Since she plays a key role in Staff Council, her duties range from coordinating education for staff engagement to planning staff campus events.

Tsuji also serves in the Campus Climate Committee of the Academic Senate, a General Financial Need Scholarship Application Reviewer, and formerly as the Staff Council Treasurer.

As an active volunteer in the community, Tsuji also volunteered for the Cabrillo Marine Aquarium from 2002 to 2011. During her tenure she received the Distinguished Volunteer Achievement Award by the aquarium.

OUTSTANDING PROFESSOR AWARD



Dr. Ramin Esfandiari
Mechanical and Aerospace Engineering

Dr. Ramin Esfandiari made a name for himself during his tenure at CSULB. He is a recipient of the TRW Excellence in Teaching and Scholarship Award, the Distinguished Faculty Teaching Award, the CSULB Alumni Association Favorite Faculty Award, the OCEC Outstanding Engineering Educator Award, the President's Award for Out-

standing Faculty Achievement and a two-time recipient of the Meritorious Performance and Professional Promise Award.

Esfandiari received 11 CSULB Scholarly and Creative Activities Awards, the results of which generated projects that led to five master's theses in the field of Dynamics, Vibration, Control and Robotics, along with three other Master's projects. Two were published in the Journal of Sound and Vibration and the Journal of the Franklin Institute.

Esfandiari published seven textbooks and software manuals that are adopted by major universities in North America, Europe and Asia. He maintains over 16 refereed journal publications.

Esfandiari's achievements can be traced to his involvement as the Engineering Faculty Council Chair. There he established and created an environment where college issues could be solved efficiently. Under his leadership, the EFC handled the revision and approval of the COE Constitution, restructured the associate dean positions, and supervised the merger of different programs of Engineering Technology with the four COE departments.

Esfandiari also supports the engineering community by being a reviewer for several journals, including Optimal Control Applications and Methods, the Journal of Sound and Vibration, the Journal of Vibration and Control, and the Journal of Franklin Institute.

NICHOLAS PERKINS HARDEMAN ACADEMIC LEADERSHIP AWARD

Dr. Norbert Schürer
English Department



Dr. Norbert Schürer joined the English Department at CSULB in 2003. He teaches courses and does research on literary theory, 18th-century British literature, and on major authors such as Jane Austen and J.R.R. Tolkien. His recent publications include the anthology British Encounters with India with Tim Keirn (2011), the collection of primary materials Charlotte Lennox: Correspondence and Miscellaneous Documents (2012), the cultural guide Berlin (2014) and the Long Beach local history study Boom and Bust: Miner Smith and his 1920s California Bungalow Mansions (2015).

He engages with students not just beyond the classroom, but beyond the country: Every other winter session he and Tim Keirn take students to India for a study-abroad experience.

Schürer was elected a member of the Academic Senate in 2008, became a member of the Executive Committee in 2014, and has been Chair of the Academic Senate since 2016. He models the importance of shared governance across all levels and divisions on campus. He worked on projects such as the General Education policy and the new CSULB definition of student success. His main interest has been improving communication on campus and ensuring that all constituents are consulted in all decision. Schürer's success in his role as Chair has been based on his ability to maintain key collaborations in all academic environments.

COMMUNITY SERVICE AWARD – STAFF



Mitra Baghdadi
Department Coordinator, Anthropology

Mitra Baghdadi is involved in issues related to diversity, social justice, equity, and equality at a local and national level. She is a member and has served as Board of Directors for the Iranian-Persian American Association of Greater Long Beach (IPAA), which aims to promote the Persian/American community's involvement in local social

events. She also runs fundraisers and donations for the Rescue Mission of Long Beach and Homelessness Services.

In addition Baghdadi links the CSULB Anthropology department with City Council Member Suzie Price, and the Long Beach Homeless Services. United, they research the challenges of outreach and service provision to the wide-ranging homeless population.

Baghdadi's concerns for the community extend to national and international issues such as the travel ban. For example, in 2017 she reached out to Representative Alan Lowenthal's office to speak about the legal and social consequences of President Trump's so called "travel ban." She organized a group of students to attend a town hall meeting to speak with Representative Lowenthal. Baghdadi worked to help students impacted by this Executive Order to find free legal advice and to access necessary counseling services.

As the Chair of Diversity for the American Association of University Women in state of California, Baghdadi promotes women empowerment. She developed research tools and educational programming to study and expand diversity and inclusion in membership throughout AAUW California.

One of Baghdadi's most recent achievements is her new position as one of the staff representatives for the President's Commission on the Status of Women. She now partakes in the Publicity & Public Relations Committee and the Colloquium Committee within the organization.

COMMUNITY SERVICE AWARD – FACULTY

Dr. Libby Gustin
Hospitality Management, Family And
Consumer Sciences



Dr. Libby Gustin believes in making a difference to not only her students, but the Long Beach community as well. As an Associate Professor for Hospitality Management in Family and Consumer Sciences, she uses her connections to benefit students in need through the Campus Community Garden and the ASI Food Pantry. She also informs students and the surrounding campus community in food justice, health concerns and cooking skills.

Her "Farm-to-Student" project, in partnership with students and the University Art Museum, promoted student education on sustainable food. She also involves service-learning in her Hospitality Management course on a sustainable food system by providing fresh produce to the community, campus food programs and food banks.

Gustin created an eleven-episode series on Beach TV addressing sustainable cooking with a focus on affordable and healthy food. Gustin funded, wrote, and with the guidance of Beach TV, filmed the entire series which aired on public TV and on YouTube. Moreover, she directed her students to service-learning projects for homeless, and recently homeless families at the Villages of Cabrillo. She ran cooking classes, which taught about accessing, preparing and cooking sustainable food to affordably increase nutrient intake and health.

Gustin also works to educate the community on reducing food waste by working with Food Forward and Waste Not OC to glean food from farmers markets and restaurants. For example, she enlightened restaurants about food sharing options protected under on the Good Samaritan law, which states that they can donate the food to non-profit organizations.

COMMUNITY SERVICE AWARD – STUDENT



Miriam Mercado

Business Administration, Management

Miriam Mercado's future goal of becoming City Manager for the city of Paramount seems inevitable. Her active involvement in local and state government service organizations, while majoring in Business Administration with an emphasis in Management, show she is on her way to seeing her dreams become reality.

Miriam currently serves as an intern for Speaker Anthony Rendon, the Assembly member for the 63rd district. Here she works with representatives, conducts community outreach, assists community-based organizations, and organizes civic events and projects.

Mercado is an active member of two city of Paramount committees. She is a member of the Paramount Heritage Parade planning committee, which has initiated the first city parade in over 45 years. She also participated in the committee that organized the first ever Paramount Veterans Day event, while she served as an ambassador for the city's youth.

Mercado is also a recreation leader for Paramount and a member of Paramount-Tepic Sister Cities organization. In this position she works hard to educate and mentor Paramount's youth. In Paramount-Tepic Sister Cities, she served as the high school liaison for the organization, but now is their Youth Director and Event coordinator. In her capacity as a leader, she oversees planning city-wide cleanups, setting up events and taking the lead on service-learning projects.

She also splits her time with the Paramount Lion's Club and the Friends of the Library. As a Lion, she has volunteered in Vision and Diabetes screening events that help attendees find out if they need glasses or have diabetes. As a Friend, she promotes her local library events and the importance of reading.

