CSU ERFSA Reporter

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and Retired Faculty & Staff Association

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Legislative Report: CCC BA Opportunities Expand, AI, Legislation

By Robert Girling, CSU-ERFSA Legislative Director

Community College Bachelor's Degrees. The legislature passed and the governor signed AB 2694 and SB 960 as a joint package to streamline and structure community college bachelor's degree approval bills. These bills will expand community college bachelor's degree offerings:

The legislation implements a tiered framework (ranging from two to 12 new bachelor's degrees per district) based on criteria like completion and transfer rates, while capping applications for new degree programs at no more than three per district per academic year. Districts must demonstrate an unmet current or future regional workforce need verified through labor market data and consult with the California State University (CSU) and University of California (UC) on collaborative approaches. Community colleges offering baccalaureate programs are prohibited from displacing enrollment opportunities for students seeking associate degrees, associate degrees for transfer, certificates, or noncredit instruction.

SB 960 permits community college districts to create between 2 and 12 bachelor's degrees per year to meet local workforce needs, subject to a five-tiered system. Districts are placed into one of five tiers based on student completion and

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California Turf War Between Universities and Community Colleges Needs a Rational Resolution

By Dan Walters, CalMatters, October 29, 2026

"This commentary was originally published by CalMatters."

California being what it is — an infinitely complex socioeconomic matrix — even the seemingly simplest political issues can become a whirlpool of competing special interests.

So it was in the final hours of the Legislature's 2026 session two months ago, when the chancellor of California's community college system sent a letter opposing two bills that expanded community colleges' authority to offer bachelor's degrees, something they had been seeking

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CSU-ERFSA Sponsors Webinar on Retiree Insurance

The CSU-ERFSA Programs Committee hosts its first webinar on November 12 at noon, with Prof. of Insurance and Finance at CSUN David T. Russell speaking on *The Challenges of Insurance for Retirees Today*. Dr. Russell is co-director of the CSUN Center for Risk Management and Insurance. To attend, just go to:
https://csulb.zoom.us/j/86781214211
For more information, contact Daljit Singh (CSU Fresno) at
deansingh2@yahoo.com

,,,,,

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The *Reporter* welcomes submissions by members of CSU-ERFSA or other appropriate individuals of advertisements for academically oriented materials or services, to be printed at the discretion of the editor. The views expressed in the columns and articles in *The CSU-ERFSA Reporter* are those of the author, and not necessarily the views of CSU-ERFSA, its officers, or the editor. Editor's email: tanagnoson AT gmail.com

From the President

Dear Colleagues,

I hope you all are enjoying the changes in the weather that many welcome in Autumn. As I write this we are a week away from Halloween, which means that as soon as the "scary" decorations come down, up go the warm and fuzzy family-oriented Thanksgiving décor. They all evoke happiness for me, and I hope that is true for you and yours.

As you may have heard, our long-term CSU-ERFSA Office Manager Melanie Mamakos decided to retire a few weeks ago. Rosa Carillo has filled that position and is learning all she can about CSU-ERFSA and our membership. The office and phone number remain the same and you can still feel free to phone and ask Rosa any questions you have. She is a truly wonderful addition to our organization, and she is working hard to provide excellent service to CSU-ERFSA and our members. Please welcome her warmly.

Last week CSU-ERFSA had a very productive State Council meeting at which delegates from all campuses were present. We began with the usual welcome and announcements. Although we are financially stable, the budget we approved is still projecting a small deficit. This continuing situation focuses our attention to the decline in membership, the increase of which continues to be the focus of our efforts.

From our member survey it became clear that CSU-ERFSA is not "visible" to CSU employees and most of our members learn about the organization through their campus affiliates. We hope the new programs committee activities and our membership committee will be able to help identify ways to address these deficiencies.

An increasing concern voiced by delegates is that retirees are beginning to see some of their campus privileges decrease or be removed entirely. We are continuing to work to develop appropriate Chancellor's Office and campus contacts to make sure that policy is acknowledged. We continue to work with the ASCSU and through our executive director as we make progress in this arena. If you are aware of any changes in your privileges, please let me know. We believe the large community of CSU retirees provides an opportunity for the University, not only in the continuing productivity of the members, but in the potential for use of our talent and service.

Other concerns that were discussed dealt with the enrollment issues that we anticipate the campuses will have in the future, especially as the community colleges and the legislature seem to be increasing the pressure to offer baccalaureate degrees through the community colleges. If you are interested in more information, Robert Girling (Chair, Legislative Committee, girling@sonoma.edu) and Jerry Schutte, member of the ASCSU, jgschutte@ csun.edu) would be happy to hear from you. As we work to support the CSU, to better identify our purpose and relevance to the University and community, the State Council adopted a CSU-ERFSA guiding values statement that will be posted on our website.

We discussed the changes in our health benefits and CalPERS. We also discussed the Health Benefits Review Work Group recently established by the CSU, and whether that might mean possible changes to retiree situations. The health benefits committee has been investigating and we will look to them for future information after the first of the year.

We are excited that the Programs Committee has already planned a webinar for this Fall for which you should already have received an email invitation. We hope you will be interested in participating, and we hope you will invite some of your retired colleagues and encourage them to become members of CSU-ERFSA. Also, feel free to let the Programs Committee know if you have suggestions for future programs you would like to see the Association offer (Daljit Singh, Chair, deansingh2@yahoo.com)

The next Executive Committee meeting will be held on January 14, 2027. All of our contact information is available on our website (https://www.csuerfsa.org) and we look forward to hearing from our membership.

Best wishes to all for a safe and enjoyable final two months of 2026. We look forward to working with you all in 2027. Happy New Year!

With warm regards,

Sue Holl
sueh@csus.edu

From the Executive Director: "Keeping the Lights On..."

By Christine Miller, Executive Director, CSU-ERFSA, CSU Sacramento

I hadn't planned to undertake a review of CSU-ERFSA's office operations quite so soon after becoming Executive Director. But when two longtime employees leave within the same week, the opportunity presents itself, whether or not it's on the calendar.

Our Office Manager, Melanie Mamakos, left the state after eleven years of service to CSU-ERFSA, and our accountant announced her retirement after approximately twenty-five years. Despite the short notice, Melanie worked closely with her successor, Rosa Carrillo, to ensure a smooth transition. Rosa brings considerable experience to her new responsibilities, and I'm grateful to both of them for how they handled the handoff.

These staffing changes have given us an opportunity to examine how we organize office management and accounting, preserve institutional knowledge, and maintain continuity as people come and go. That doesn't necessarily mean changing everything. Some practices have endured because they work well. Others may benefit from a fresh look. Either way, maintaining the administrative infrastructure of the association is essential. We have to keep the lights on.

But we also need to think about where to shine them.

One of my priorities as Executive Director is strengthening CSU-ERFSA's ability to advocate for retired faculty, staff, and administrators. We've been hearing troubling reports from affiliates about the erosion of rights and privileges that retirees have traditionally enjoyed on their campuses. The circumstances differ from one campus to another, but they raise a common question: How can CSU-ERFSA more effectively represent the interests of its members, particularly when decisions affecting them are made without their participation?

Recently, President Sue Holl, Health Benefits Committee Chair Tom Krabacher, and I met with Nathan Dietrich, assistant vice chancellor for university relations and advancement, and Brittney Dresselle, manager of university relations and advocacy, both with the Chancellor's Office. It was a productive and encouraging conversation. We explored opportunities for CSU-ERFSA to become more active in legislative advocacy, including participation in *CSU Voices,* and discussed ways to establish stronger working relationships with the Chancellor's Office. Both expressed interest in continued collaboration and identified possible next steps.

These are related but distinct objectives. Supporting the CSU's legislative priorities gives retirees opportunities to contribute their voices and experience to issues affecting higher education. At the same time, stronger relationships with CSU leadership may provide avenues for addressing concerns about retirees' rights and privileges. For me, the latter is especially important. Working with our legislative affairs committee and campus affiliates, I hope we can strengthen CSU-ERFSA's role as an advocate for its members. Look for more information about opportunities to become involved in the days and weeks ahead.

I'm also encouraged by the work happening within the Association. Last year's member survey identified interest in programming, and our programs committee has worked hard to respond with its inaugural webinar. I'm looking forward to watching it, and I hope many of you will participate. Details appear elsewhere in this issue. The committee could also use additional members, so here's an opportunity to help shape what comes next!

Our campus connections remain equally important. I'm looking forward to joining Cal Poly colleagues for a visit to the Maritime Academy in early November, and I welcome opportunities to attend other affiliate events. These visits allow me to listen, learn, and better understand how the statewide sssociation can support its affiliates.

Six months into this position, I have a growing appreciation for the work that has sustained CSU-ERFSA over the years, much of it accomplished quietly and without fanfare. I'm also optimistic about the opportunities ahead. Keeping the lights on matters, and so does finding new places where they can shine.

CSU-ERFA Foundation Challenge Grant

The CSU-ERFA Charitable Foundation has a year-end challenge grant from a CSU-ERFSA member. The donor will match all individual donations received by the Foundation through December 31, 2026, up to a total of $500.

The CSU-ERFA Charitable Foundation is a 501(c)(3) organization that provides competitive grants to CSU-ERFSA members to support their research, scholarly, and creative activities. Between 1997 and 2025, the CSU-ERFA Foundation has provided $103,371 in support of 120 grants. Learn more about the CSU-ERFSA Grants program at www.csuerfsa.org by clicking on the GRANTS tab at the top.

Donations of any amount from both CSU-ERFSA members and the public are welcomed. Donations to the foundation are generally deductible from state and federal income taxes.

You may donate by sending a check made out to the CSU-ERFA Charitable Foundation. Mail it to CSU-ERFSA, Mail Stop 8339, 18111 Nordhoff Street, Northridge, CA 91330-8339.

Pocket Calendar

The pocket calendar is currently being sent ONLY to those who have opted in - please notify the office at the email, phone, or address on page 2 if you would like to continue receivng the calendar.

However, if you have opted in already, you do not need to opt in again. You will remain on the list to receive the calendar.

Health Benefits Report: CalPERS, CSU Benefits Costs

By Tom Krabacher, CSU-ERFSA Health Benefits Director, CSU Sacramento

CALPERS. There has been little to report on the CalPERS front since mid-summer when the proposed 2027 premium increases for its various health care plans options were announced. As discussed in *The Reporter* at the time, the average overall increase will be 4.97%, although the number will vary with the specific plan categories [Basic (non-Medicare) plans: 5.78%, Basic HMO plans: 4.49%, Basic PPO (Preferred Provider) plans: 7.31%, and Medicare plans: 0.51%.] The overall increase is well below the general 9% increase in the cost of health care nationally and is in line with the recent CalPERS trend of implementing lower increases on a year-to-year basis (e.g. the 2026 increase was 8.21%).

CSU Benefits Cost Management. The CSU calculates that its overall health benefits spending will increase by $81 million-between 2026 and 2027. The University recently (July 2026) proposed creation of a Health Benefits Review Work Group that would recommend strategies to absorb the increases. Although such recommendations at this point would be only advisory, the CFA (California Faculty Association), currently in contract bargaining with the University, is concerned that Group recommendations could potentially serve as a precursor to cost-shifting aspects of health care coverage, such as higher premiums, increased co-pays, or reduced coverage, for the individual employee. At the moment, nothing is decided as contract bargaining is still underway. Given the importance of university benefits to our retirees, the CSU-ERFSA Health Benefits Committee will continue to monitor and report back on events as they occur.

Hearing Aid Reimbursement. Your *Reporter* editor is a member of the PERS Platinum health plan, now administered by Blue Shield of California, and he recently got hearing aids (at Costco, of course, where else?). The plan reimburses 80% of the cost of hearing aids, and he filed a claim. The claim was "automatically denied," and at the bottom a note said, "This claim has been paid by CalPERS."

However, a call to CalPERS verified that they didn't know about it, and they referred him to Blue Shield. The Blue Shield representative said that they had to do something by hand for every hearing aid claim, and so we have advice: file the claim, but if you get a notice with it denied, call Blue Shield or whatever health plan you have, and they will advise you on what they or you should do.

2027 Open Enrollment Reminder: As the end of the year approaches: a reminder for members who have taken advantage of the recent Open Enrollment period to add to or change their health care plans for 2027. The effective date for your new plan is January 1, 2027. Check with your current provider to determine if you need to reschedule appointments. If possible, you should schedule any health care services – lab work, medical appointments, or prescription refills – that would ordinarily take place around the first of the year, for before December 31st under your current plan. This is to reduce the possibility of scheduling complications that might otherwise occur during the transition between plans. Remember, your new health plan, not CalPERS, is responsible for sending out your new membership identification cards.

CFA Report: CSU Faculty Moving To Strike?

By Jay Swartz, CSU-ERFSA Liaison to CFA, Cal Poly Pomona

The California Faculty Association officially has moved to fact finding in its contract bargaining process, the final stage before the implementation of a statewide strike, with fact finding dates set for the first two weeks of November.

Kevin Wehr, CFA Bargaining Chair and Sacramento State professor, will serve as the CFA fact finding representative, while Joseph Jelincic, Associate Vice Chancellor for Labor Relations will represent management. A neutral chairperson will chair the panel that seeks a settlement.

Once the panel finishes receiving evidence and testimony, it will write its findings and non-binding recommendations in a report issued privately to both parties. Ten days later, both parties can try to settle the agreement. The fact finding step is likely to take until December to conclude, as there are many unresolved articles and issues on the table.

After a 10-day blackout period, the report becomes final and public. After the report becomes public, CFA will be legally allowed to go on strike. Management may also impose terms and conditions at this stage.

As of press time, CFA reports that it is holding a "Strike Authorization Vote" period running from October 26th to November 19th. During this period campus chapters are holding "Cost of Living is a Nightmare" rallies.

Join CSU-ERFSA Today!
For information, see www.csuerfsa.org and choose Membership, or see the box on the main page.

CSU-ERFSA New Members

Channel Islands – Elenie E. Opffer
Carolyn M. Shamowski

Fresno – Breck A. Harris
Teresa Huerta

Fullerton – Denise L. Stanley

Los Angeles – Donna C. Schuele

Pomona – Eric J. McLaughlin

Sacramento – Timothy P. Fong
Aaron J. Cohen
Linda M. Howe-Ram*
Michael J. Linenberger*

San Diego – Cyrus M. Saghafi

San Marcos – Carmen R. Nava-Mattox

* = Lifetime member

Legislative Report: CCC BA Opportunities to Expand, AI

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transfer rates to four-year universities, with tighter caps for districts with lower graduation and transfer rates. Tier 1 districts may offer 10 to 12 degrees, depending on district size. Tier 2 districts may create eight to 10 programs. Tier 3 districts are capped at six programs, Tier 4 at four, and Tier 5 at two.

Currently, 50 community colleges have received approval for a total of 67 bachelor's degrees in programs including biomanufacturing, cybersecurity, and respiratory care. The tiered system isn't the only significant change the legislation makes to the process for creating bachelor's degrees. Most notably, community colleges will now be allowed to duplicate programs offered by California State University campuses, in some cases even when those campuses are located in the same region as the community college.

Community college leaders initially favored both bills but later said that they opposed both because of the limits placed on the number of degrees. As the CSU-ERFSA Liaison to the Statewide Academic Senate, Jerry Schutte, noted at the fall State Council meeting, the community colleges will be back seeking authorization for more degrees.

Higher Education's Major Restructuring: Adapting to the Modern Learner. Higher education is experiencing what's been called a polycrisis, and the institutions navigating it successfully are not simply waiting it out. They are adapting to a set of structural forces that may be permanently changing what higher education is, who it serves and what it must do to remain relevant.

Four factors are driving this shift:

1. The economics of value and affordability, which are forcing institutions to justify their proposition to learners with more options and less margin for error.

2. Artificial intelligence, which is disrupting curricula and workforce alignment faster than typical governance structures can respond.

3. A volatile regulatory environment that is creating both constraint and opportunity.

4. Five generations of learners engaging with higher education simultaneously—each with distinct needs that most institutional systems were not designed to accommodate at once.

These forces are collapsing the assumptions that have defined the campus operating model for decades.

CSU Invests in AI. An EdSource report says California State University is betting that artificial intelligence will transform the workplace – and that its 470,000 students need to learn to use it before they graduate. Last year, CSU became the nation's first public university system to provide students with access to ChatGPT Edu. It has awarded more than $3 million in grants to faculty experimenting with AI in classrooms, and several campuses now train students to use the technology responsibly.

Those measures are all part of CSU's strategy to prepare students for a future labor market reshaped by AI. But the investment in AI has come under criticism from some CSU faculty, and some students remain skeptical of the value of knowing how to use AI, even as most are concerned that the developing technology will threaten their chances of landing a job and keeping it.

The success of CSU's AI strategy will depend on how much AI affects the workforce that today's college students will soon enter. Hiring has stalled across many sectors as employers wait to see how artificial intelligence will reshape the labor market, said Eric Bettinger, a leading education economist at Stanford Graduate School of Education. But it's unclear whether AI is driving the slowdown.

As with previous emerging technologies, AI is forcing employers to decide whether to replace workers with the technology or to hire more employees who can leverage AI to be more productive, Bettinger said. New graduates are facing a difficult labor market, as the unemployment rate for this population has steadily risen since 2022, according to the Federal Reserve

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AI Implications for Universities

AI is generating both immediate rapid changes and long-term tectonic disruptions. AI is allowing instructors to develop exciting new learning experiences and enabling students to learn and experiment in innovative ways.

Beyond its implications for specific subjects and disciplines, the advent of AI demands a broader, holistic reassessment of the nature, scope, and purpose of higher education today. There have been a number of concerning effects on campus life, including signs that AI is:

- Upending foundational elements of the educational experience, especially for undergraduates, from the take-home exam to the classroom experience
- Increasing isolation
- Undermining student mastery and confidence
- Eroding the "social contract" between instructors and students
- Making it much harder to assess student progress
- Challenging decades of educational norms and values regarding rigor, the creative friction required for learning, collaborative problem-solving, and personal integrity
- Every subject taught will likely need to be reexamined and potentially revamped to ensure that how students are taught, what they're learning, and how they're assessed, are all "AI-aware."
- AI is changing what students need to know and how they need to learn it. Yet students are confused and concerned about a lack of clarity, consistency, and justification for the use of AI, both within a given subject and across the curriculum.

Source: *Report of MIT's Ad Hoc Committee on AI Use in teaching, Learning, and Research Training*, August 2026, pp. 3-4.

ASCSU Report: Faculty Trustee Process Frustration

By Jerald Schutte, CSU Northridge, Emeriti Academic Senator

Meeting Protocols. The meeting occurred on Thursday, September 3rd and Friday, September 4th, in Long Beach, California, at the Chancellor's office. The meeting started at 9:05 am with introductions of new members, a land acknowledgment, an interruption statement, approval of last May's meeting minutes, roll call, break protocols, and the subsection meeting locations during the day.

Reports. State-of-the-year reports were given by newly installed Chair Adam Swenson and by each of the newly appointed standing committee chairs for Fiscal and Governmental Affairs (FGA), Academic Affairs (AA), Faculty Affairs (FA), Academic Preparation and Educational Programs (APEP), Justice, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (JEDI), and General Education Advisory Committee (GEAC), as well as state and federal legislative reports. Committee reports were goals, as the academic year had just begun. State legislative comments were process reports, as no bills had been signed into law by that date.

Guests. Guest reports were given by Vice Chancellor Vlad Marinescu on audit; Ashley Smith, CSSA vice president on system-wide affairs; Vice Chancellor Junius Gonzalez and Nathan Evans on academic affairs; Vice Chancellor Dave Grant on human resources; and Vice Chancellor Dulcie Perez on enrollment management.

Diego Arambulla, Chair of the Board of Trustees, described his background and goals for the Board; and Chancellor Mildred Garcia commented on the state of the budget and legislation, among other issues. Other reports were given by Joi Braverman, executive director of the Alumni Association, on their special events and membership, and Margarita Berta-Avila, CFA President, who reported on the status of labor negotiations.

Faculty Trustee Position. Since no new resolutions were approved, the majority of the second day was spent analyzing the state of the Faculty Trustee Position. For background, Faculty Trustees are elected for a two-year term. Trustee Darlene Yee-Melichar's term expired on June 30, 2025. Despite forwarding two qualified candidates, the governor failed to appoint her replacement. Her appointment was therefore extended to one more year. However, she was required to step down at the end of that extension.

Currently, we have no Faculty Trustee. Instead of choosing, the governor asked for additional nominees. The ASCSU reaffirmed their original nominees. This situation seems destined to extend to June 20, 2027, when a new process will begin. Various alternatives were discussed. After rigorous debate, no action was taken.

The Rise in Alternative Investments in Public Pension Plans

The Center for Retirement Research at Boston College has published a short policy brief on risk in public pension plans in the United States. The basic point is that plans have changed how they view risky assets, moving from public equities to alternative assets, things like private equity, real estate, and hedge funds.

These constituted 14% of all risky investments in 2000, but by 2021 the share of risk assets in alternatives had grown to 39%. And the adoption of alternative assets varies a lot across plans. So the question in the paper is what has driven some public pension plans to reallocate toward alternatives? Why have some done so much more than others?

For more information, see the paper at the Center's website, https://tinyurl.com/39pmu6f5.

Stay in the Loop

Are you receiving CSU-ERFSA emails? If not, we may not have your current email address. Send your name and email address to csuerfsa@csun.edu and we'll update your membership record.

We use email only for occasional Association and affiliate communications, and we do not share member email addresses with outside organizations.

Former CSU-ERFSA President Dave Elliott Dies

David H. Elliott, Professor of Communication Studies at San Jose State University, died in summer 2026. Dave held numerous positions in academic governance, including chairing the SJSU Academic Senate, and was a long-time member of the CSU-ERFSA Executive Committee, as well as serving as President of the association and past president for several years.

He made numerous contributions to CSU-ERFSA during the time that he was active. He chaired the statewide Academic Senate as well.

He chaired his department for a total of 12 years and was Associate Dean of his college as well as Interim Associate Executive Vice President of SJSU.

A Celebration of Life for Dave Elliott will be held at the First Congregational Church of San Jose, 1980 Hamilton Street, on Saturday, November 14 at 11:00 am.

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Bank of New York.

Given SJSU's proximity to Silicon Valley and to companies reshaping the workforce, the university aims to lead in AI adoption, said Sandra Hirsh, special assistant to the provost for AI initiatives. "We need to prepare students for the latest opportunities and for the fact that change and evolution will continue to happen," she said. "The reality is that the world outside of school isn't slowing down, and we need to prepare our students for that reality," said James Frazee, San Diego State University's vice president for information technology.

Hirsh said companies want graduates to understand the basics of AI and how to apply it in their work. Despite the uncertain changes in the job market, companies that hire SJSU graduates have also told university leaders that students need skills in leadership, innovation, and ethics. The CSU system spends $13 million annually to provide ChatGPT Edu to all 470,000 students. Artur Gafurov, president of the California State Student Association and a fourth-year San Jose State student, said many appreciate access to AI tools but don't know how to use them responsibly or effectively.

Employers increasingly seek graduates who know how to use artificial intelligence. Through new courses and curricula, several institutions are preparing students to meet that demand. For example, beginning this fall, all incoming undergraduates at Indiana's Kelley School must take two AI classes: a 101 course in the fall that teaches students to use AI effectively and ethically, and a 201 course in the spring that explores AI's business applications in greater depth, according to Brian Williams, an accounting professor and chair of Virtual Advanced Business.

As of March, more than a third, 35%, of entry-level jobs required AI skills, up from 13% six months earlier, according to the National Association of Colleges and Employers' most recent job outlook survey. About 58 percent of surveyed employers said they assign interns tasks that "use AI tools and skills." Although 70 percent of respondents said college graduates are "somewhat prepared" to use AI in the workplace, they also reported that AI skills are the weakest among the skills they seek in graduates, trailing teamwork, technology, communication, critical thinking, professionalism, career and self-development, and leadership.

Legislation. The California Legislature has concluded its 2025–2026 session. Some relevant bills:

AB 1831 (Ahrens): CSU Executive Compensation – this bill would require the CSU Board of Trustees to repeal the executive compensation policy adopted at the November 2025 meeting of the trustees and to adopt a new executive compensation policy that aligns initial presidential salaries with those of comparable institutions and ties salary increases to goals that include enrollment, fundraising, and retention and graduation rates. The bill would also prohibit the trustees, in any fiscal year in which the trustees authorize a student tuition increase, from increasing the compensation of a chancellor, vice chancellor, executive vice president, or a member of the management personnel plan staff. **Status**: Held in Senate Appropriations Committee.

AB 2523 (Fong): Public Accessibility in Higher Ed Governing Boards – this bill requires the CSU and the California Community Colleges (and requests the same of UC) to post on their websites the name, a short bio, and the contact information (for conducting official business) of each member of their governing body: email address, phone number, and mailing address. **Status**: signed into law.

AB 2551 (Elhawary): Equity in Higher Education Act: time, place, and manner policies: student code of conduct violations – this bill would require demographic data to be included in the already required CSU and UC reports on violations and would require CSU and request UC to hold an open forum on a selected campus on or before December 31, 2027, to gather student feedback on policies. **Status**: Vetoed by the governor.

SB 928 (Cervantes): Protections for CSU Faculty from AI Encroachments – this bill would define a faculty member as a real person, preventing them from being replaced by AI. This bill would also require that an instructor of record for a course be a real person. **Status**: Signed into law.

AB 2236 (Berman): Postsecondary Education: articulation agreements – this bill would streamline the transfer process for students moving from California Community Colleges to four-year universities (such as the CSU and UC systems). CFA adopted an oppose-unless-amended position, aligning with the CSU & UC Academic Senates. **Status**: Passed the Assembly and held in the Senate appropriations committee.

AB 2301 (Soria): CCC Bachelor of Nursing Pilot – this bill would require the California Community College Chancellor's Office (CCCCO) to develop a Baccalaureate Degree in Nursing Pilot Program authorizing 10 community college districts to offer a BS in Nursing. **Status**: Vetoed by the governor.

SB 895 – This law, signed on 9/30/26, will place a $7.5 billion science and health research bond before the voters in March 2028. The law also establishes the California Foundation for Science and Health Research, a new office that will support scientific research through grants, loans, and contracts. If passed by voters, the bond would support research at California universities and institutions in biomedical science, public health, disease prevention, climate change, wildfire prevention, agriculture, and other fields. It would also provide $1 billion for infrastructure projects at the University of California and the California State University. The law was hailed by some as helping to fill the gap left by billions in research funds frozen or cut by the Trump administration.

LA college students face a tough housing market. So why are so many beds at CSU Los Angeles empty? For years, roughly 700 beds at Cal State Los Angeles have sat empty, even though officials describe the campus as being in a "highly housing challenged area." Officials cite a lack of funding and deferred maintenance as the reasons. The unused housing has languished despite the California State University 2025 Systemwide Housing plan stating the campus needs about 500 beds. "The deferred

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maintenance occurred over several years under previous leadership for the university and housing," Erik Hollins, a university spokesperson, told LAist in a statement. "The pandemic certainly appears to have been a factor. Addressing accumulated maintenance and returning those units to circulation has been a focus of new leadership." Housing and Residence Life (HRL), which is responsible for maintenance, operates independently of university operations but reports to the Division of Student Affairs and Enrollment Management. The department has its own budget, funded by rent and meal plan payments students make.

What Students Value Most in Higher Education. A new report from Qualtrics and Buro Happold finds that students value personal growth, relationships, and belonging most.

Based on a spring 2026 survey of 1,007 U.S. college students, researchers found that 74.2 percent of respondents reported receiving high or exceptional value from the purpose and personal growth they experienced in college, the highest of nine dimensions of the college experience. Economic return ranked lowest at 66.2 percent, even as concerns about college costs and career outcomes continue to dominate discussions about the value of higher education.

The researchers found a moderate positive correlation between students' satisfaction with personal growth and their perceptions of college's overall value. In the purpose and personal growth category, students were most satisfied with trying new things (80.1 percent), followed by being more mindful and present (77.6 percent), being academically challenged (75.3 percent), and gaining confidence (74.5 per cent).

CalPERS's Pensions Keep California's Economy Growing (see graphic below). The $34.6 billion economic impact shown below has grown over time and shows that nearly 158,000 jobs were supported and $1.6 billion in tax revenue was generated from the everyday spending by CalPERS retirees and beneficiaries. With more than 80% of retirees and beneficiaries living in California, most pension dollars stay in-state and continue circulating through local businesses and communities. As retirees spend money on housing, groceries, healthcare, transportation, dining, travel, and other everyday needs, their income provides a steady source of economic activity across the state.

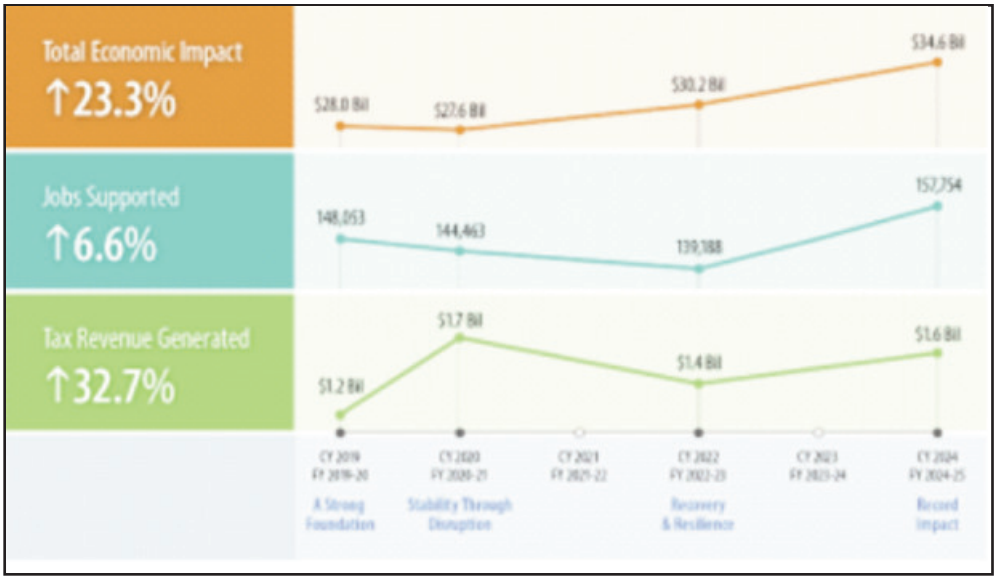
Chico State program addresses rural teacher shortage, pays residents $42K. An $8 million federal grant will allow Chico State to pay 60 teaching residents a $42,000 stipend. The federal Teacher Quality Partnership Grant will support the university's Rural Opportunities for Outstanding Teaching and Schools (ROOTS) program, designed to address the teacher shortage in California's northernmost region, where an estimated 170 new elementary teachers are needed in 2026–27, according to the university.

ROOTS prepares teachers in rural communities with the hope that they will stay after graduation and teach at local schools, Miller said. ROOTS will prepare four cohorts of 15 teacher residents, who are working toward a multiple-subject credential and master's degree, during a yearlong program. Residents in the program will work alongside experienced mentor teachers. After completing the program and entering the teaching profession, participants will continue to receive coaching and professional learning support. The $42,000 annual stipend is expected to cover living expenses during the residency program, so teacher candidates can teach during the day and attend classes at night, according to the university.

Million-dollar bonus to CalPERS CEO. The California Public Employees' Retirement System board awarded a $1.15 million performance incentive to Marcie Frost, who has led CalPERS since 2016. Last year's bonus was $766,000.The money is in addition to her base salary of $601,000. The board gave her a raise, too, bringing her salary to $641,000.

Two of the board's 13 members voted against Frost's bonus, Mullissa Willette and a representative for State Controller Malia Cohen. "The views of the board members with dissenting views were dismissed," her representative said on behalf of Cohen. "I cannot stand behind a motion which does not equitably take into consideration all relevant factors, particularly in light of the current structural deficit in California." Several retirees also spoke against Frost's bonus. They were affiliated with RPEA, which is led by former CalPERS board member Margaret Brown. "There is something fundamentally wrong when public service compensation begins looking like Wall Street compensation," Brown told the board.

CalPERS' Pensions Keep California's Economy Growing



California turf war between universities and community colleges needs a rational resolution

(Continued from page 1)

for years.

The bills, Senate Bill 960 and Assembly Bill 2694, passed anyway and were signed by Gov. Gavin Newsom, who had previously rejected such an expansion.

Chancellor Sonya Christian's letter was prompted by a raft of last-minute amendments imposing an ultra-complex formula to calculate what kinds of degrees and how many degrees community colleges could offer.

"The cumulative effect of the recent amendments moves us too far from the original objective," she wrote. "California should be making it easier, not harder, for community colleges to respond when there is a demonstrated workforce need, insufficient public baccalaureate capacity, and students who lack realistic access to a bachelor's degree."

That is true, but in California nothing in legislative politics is simply true. It is always subject to what's necessary to placate myriad stakeholders, no matter how nonsensical or even corrosive the additional verbiage may be.

In this case, it reflects the transformation of the 1960 California Master Plan for Higher Education's vision of seamless cooperation among community colleges, the California State University system and the University of California into a three-way battle over academic turf.

The plan spelled out how the three systems would meet the demand for low-cost, post-high-school education: The University of California would sponsor research and award four-year degrees, master's degrees and doctorates in a vast array of fields; the state universities would concentrate on bachelor's and master's degrees in professional fields such as education and engineering, and community colleges would provide vocational training and lower-division academic classes, to prepare students for transfers to the two other systems.

In the decades following the master plan's adoption, though, this tripartite vision developed cracks as California experienced vast cultural, ethnic, economic and political change and massive population growth.

Community colleges, especially those located far from UC or Cal State campuses, began exploring the possibility of providing baccalaureate degrees. That drew immediate opposition from Cal State, which saw it as poaching.

But Cal State's system also began pushing for authority to offer doctorates, which drew opposition from UC for the same reason.

Advocates for all three systems muscled up to pursue their aims in the Legislature, which responded with a series of pilot programs in community colleges and Cal State campuses. All were fashioned to supposedly bend — but not break — the master plan's demarcation of academic turf.

The community colleges achieved very limited authority for bachelor's degrees in 2014, followed by a modest expansion in 2021. Today they offer more than 50 programs in such fields as health care, industrial technology and public safety.

This year's version of the turf war launched in February, when the community college chancellor's office approved programs at three colleges over the objections of Cal State, which claimed they duplicate its offerings. Legislation was introduced to widen the scope of community college offerings and reduce some jurisdictional barriers, particularly the ability of Cal State campuses to claim duplication.

What happened to the two bills in the final hours of the legislative session was a partial win for the community colleges. But a complex set of hurdles were added to the bills to placate Cal State, drawing Chancellor Christian's opposition.

It's obvious the three-way turf war will continue and become even more byzantine, unless rationality rears its head with a complete overhaul of the 66-year-old higher education plan, which has become hopelessly outdated.

H. Dieter Renning, President & Liaison to CFA for CSU-ERFSA Dies

Dieter Renning, Professor of Economics at CSU Stanislaus, died in August 2026. He was the CSU-ERFSA Liaison to CFA for over a decade, from 1999 to 2010, and also served as President in 2010-11 and occupied the position of past president for the next five years.

He was known for his many contributions to the Stanislaus campus, including a contribution of $50 per month to a scholarship fund that resulted in a fund of $29,215 in total at the time he died. Both Dieter and his wife were members of the Modesto Symphony Orchestra Chorus for nearly 20 years.

Alzheimer's Disease Facts and Figures

From the annual report of the Alzheimer's Association, "2026 Alzheimer's Disease Facts and Figures," https://tinyurl.com/29t737xm

"The Future: Continued Population Aging. By 2060, the segment of the U.S. population age 65 and older will have grown substantially, and the projected 89 million older Americans will make up 24% of the total population (up from 19% in 2025). Additionally, the size of the older adult population is expected to continue to increase relative to the population age 64 and younger — a shift known as population aging — due to a projected decline in fertility, as well as to increased survival at older ages. Fertility, the average number of children per woman, has decreased since 1960 in the United States. With fewer babies born each year, older adults will make up a larger proportion of the population. Because increasing age is the predominant risk factor for clinical Alzheimer's dementia, as the number and proportion of older Americans grows rapidly, so too will the numbers of new and existing cases of clinical Alzheimer's dementia.... By 2060, the number of people age 65 and older with clinical Alzheimer's dementia is projected to reach 13.8 million, barring the development of breakthroughs to prevent or cure Alzheimer's disease."

Long-Term Care: The Best Kept Secret in Elder Care?

By Paula Span, The New Old Age, *The New York Times*

This article condenses a longer article available here: https://tinyurl.com/yc8ptj4c

The New York Times in October profiled the new profession of "aging life care manager." Formerly called geriatric care managers, these independent professionals serve as concierges and advocates for older adults and their families, coordinating everything from moves to senior living communities and navigating complex Medicare/Medicaid paperwork, to recommending local services and even sometimes acting as a neutral liaison among family members. Paula Span illustrates the role through the detailed workday of Kristin Martinelli, who deals with a last-minute bureaucratic crisis to secure safe placement for a client with advanced dementia, highlighting the profession's blend of logistical problem-solving and compassionate crisis intervention.

What differentiates these professionals from other senior care advisors is their formal structure and strict ethical code. They are represented by the nonprofit Aging Life Care Association, which requires advanced education and supervised experience for certification. In addition, they are bound by an ethics code that prohibits referral fees or kickbacks, ensuring their recommendations are objective and made solely in the client's interest. Span contrasts this with for-profit referral services like "A Place for Mom," which accept fees from facilities they recommend.

The article acknowledges that this expertise comes at a significant cost, with hourly rates ranging from $150 to $350 depending on geography, though some social service agencies offer services on a sliding scale. Despite the expense, a 2025 survey commissioned by the association found that 93% of nearly 200 respondents felt the benefits outweighed the costs, and 99% would recommend the service to others. Span concludes by emphasizing the profound value of a care manager's peace of mind, especially for adult children who live at a distance, quoting an engineer who found their guidance "tremendously helpful" when he couldn't relocate to care for his aging family members.

Aging life care managers are, in short, an invaluable, specialized resource that fills a critical gap between family caregiving capacity and the fragmented, often overwhelming landscape of senior healthcare, housing, and social services. The persistent "public awareness problem" cited by practitioners suggests a systemic failure to connect families with this form of professional support before they reach a crisis point, a challenge likely familiar to retired faculty and staff who have navigated similar systems for loved ones.

"Pooling Risks to Pay for Long-Term Services and Supports? European Lessons for the U.S." If you are intrested in how programs are designed, as your editor is, you might find the following document from the Joan Costa-Font and Richard Frank of the Center for Health Policy at the Brookings Institution to be interesting. It has wonderful examples from Europe, where the costs dictate some of the same tradeoffs we've had to make. It's here: https://tinyurl.com/4kcm7fvw

Nursing Home Beds Declining. Another recent New Old Age report from KFF deals with the decline of nursing homes and nursing home beds nationally, because of low pay for staff, resulting staff shortages, the Trump administration's campaign to exclude immigrants to the country, low Medicaid reimbursements, and more. See https://tinyurl.com/2s36dcvd for the full article. It's interesting.

Reimbursement of Part B Premiums if You are Covered by the IRMAA in 2027

As you may know, CalPERS automatically reimburses the basic Medicare Part B monthly premium ($202.90 for 2026, $209.50 for 2027 as estimated by the 2026 Medicare Trustees Report, but not official as of press time) for its retirees who are in Medicare.

What you may not know is that if you are subject to the Income-Related Monthly Medicare Adjustment Amount (the IRMAA) because your annual total adjusted income exceeds certain limits, you may be eligible to have part or all of the IRMAA reimbursed by CalPERS as well.

CalPERS mails a letter about the IRMAA to members who previously have received the additional reimbursement in the fall of each year. This letter will include a cover sheet that should be included when you request additional reimbursement. *However if you are new to Medicare or if 2027 will be the first year that you have to pay the IRMAA, you may not receive this letter.*

If you think you may be eligible for reimbursement for all or part of your IRMAA, you have to notify CalPERS in writing. Include in your letter to CalPERS a copy of your annual letter from the Social Security Administration describing your benefits for the coming calendar year. This will include the amount of your IRMAA. Be sure to include a copy of this ENTIRE letter. *(Be sure, also, that when you receive this letter, you don't throw it away!)*

Request reimbursement using secure upload on the myCalPERS website. To ensure secure and timely processing, upload your or your dependent's SSA notice online by logging in to your myCalPERS account by selecting the *Health* tab, then the *Health Summary* option. Scroll down to the *Health Deductions* section and select the *Submit Documents* link. (This seems ridiculously complex, but that's another issue….)

Within a few weeks you should receive a response from CalPERS, which indicates the amount of additional Part B reimbursement you will receive for 2027. Processing time is up to 60 days, and it can take longer for the additional reimbursement to begin to appear in your retirement check or deposit.

State law prevents CalPERS from providing any additional reimbursement for the Part D (drug benefit) IRMAA.

Winter Book Reviews

Reviewed by Sherry Keith, Emerita, SFSU

Patterson, Stella Walthall. Dear Mad'm. Happy Camp, CA: Naturegraph Publishers, Inc., 1956.

If you are thinking that you'd rather skip your next birthday or turn the clock backwards, try to find a copy of *Dear Mad'm*. This delightful memoir, written decades ago, will inspire you try something that you may be thinking is not possible later in life. Stella visits friends in northern California and takes a fall. The friends whisk her off to the nearest hospital, run by Catholic sisters. Following an X-ray revealing no injury, the older Sister in charge, patted Stella kindly, observing, "You have young legs," which started something. Stella had invested in a gold claim near the Kalmath River. On her claim, stood a little one room cabin which she rarely visited from her comfortable home in San Francisco. Deciding that her legs were still young, Stella embarks on an adventure: She decides to spend one year living alone in the cabin which she recounts with great humor and delight in this highly amusing, readable memoir. You may not have a gold claim, or even a cabin in a remote spot in the mountains but reading *Dear Mad'm* will help you to do that thing you have been telling yourself that you are too old to do!

Brooks, Geraldine. Nine Parts of Desire, The Hidden World of Islamic Women. NY: Anchor Books, 1996.

For those who do not know Geraldine Brooks, journalist/author, she covered the Middle East for *The Wall Street Journal* in the late 1980s and early 1990s. In this compendium about women in Islamic societies she presents an empathetic and insightful look into Islamic culture's designation of women so distant from contemporary Western "civilization."

Geraldine's meeting with the Ayatollah Khomeini during his leadership of Iran was especially interesting. He lived in a "boxy, two-floor house contrasting sharply with the opulent green marble palace of the former shah." The Ayatollah `had only one wife, who kept herself out of Iranian politics. The picture of Iran's "revolutionary leader" contrasts starkly with what had been written in the American press.

Nine Parts of Desire provides insights and understanding of Islam and women in nine countries throughout the Middle East. I recommend it highly for its exploration of the contrasting perspectives of the Islamic and Judeo/Christian worlds, particularly as they relate to gender.

Ecotopia, another utopian oldie, is still very relevant to contemporary environmental issues. It was written by Ernest Callenbach and published in 1975. A fictional reporter from the "old" USA, visits a new ecotopian society in California, Oregon and Washington, which succeeded in establishing a thoroughly environmental lifestyle. Today when few, very few of those ecotopic visions have come to fruition, this book can help to reinvigorate the idealism needed to move into an environmentally positive future.

In Memoriam

Dominguez Hills – David J. Karber

Fullerton – Carole S. Harrison

Humboldt – Gerald S. Beck

Northridge – Richard W Smith

Sacramento – Clifford E. Anderson
Elaine B. Kent
David W. Long

San Diego – Roger W. Caves

San Francisco – Richard F. Hough

San Jose – Donald F. Anthrop
Hi-Dong Chai
Vladimir Drobot
David H. Elliott
Daniel E. Glines

Sonoma – Robert G. Greenway

Stanislaus – Dieter Renning

The elephant races at CSU Fullerton!

In May 1962, Orange County State College (now Cal State Fullerton) hosted a truly unique campus event – "The First Intercollegiate Elephant Race in Human History." The idea reportedly began as a joke when Dean of Students Ernest Becker wrote "elephant races" as an example on a new club form, though some say it stemmed from Becker's story about his time in India where a prince gifted an elephant to the Coast Guard. Regardless of its origin, students enthusiastically embraced the idea and planned to challenge the Coast Guard to an elephant race, which the dean approved thinking they'd never actually secure elephants.

The logistical challenge of finding elephants in Southern California was solved by connecting with Jungleland, a Thousand Oaks theme park that rented animals to the movie industry. On May 11, 1962, as part of the "Day of the Titan" celebration, the event drew approximately 10,000 spectators to a converted cornfield nicknamed "Dumbo Downs."

Though the Coast Guard ultimately withdrew, fifteen colleges participated including Harvard, Princeton, Yale, Caltech, and Cal State Long Beach. Marines from El Toro Marine Air Station helped control the crowds as the event garnered national attention, making the Associated Press' top 10 stories of the year list, and even being covered by Walter Cronkite on the CBS evening news.

The race wasn't without incident – a mother elephant became agitated and abandoned the race to return to her baby, scattering spectators and reportedly stepping on someone's foot. Harvard's Joe Russin won that first year. A second elephant race was held in 1963 at the Los Alamitos Race Course, but the tradition ended there until its 1991 revival with just three elephants.

Notably, campus President Milton Gordon rode one of the elecphants in that 1991 recreation, coming in second place. The 2007 50th anniversary celebration featured electronic and human-powered elephant races, but no live elephants, marking the end of a colorful chapter in campus history.

We thank the stories in *The Orange County Register* and *LA Times*.

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California State University
Emeritus & Retired Faculty and Staff Association

How to Contact Your Governmental Representatives

Every legislator has an office in Sacramento, and most have offices in their districts. Here's how to find them. First, go to the state government website: www.ca.gov/departments/275/services/58/ And press the button "Launch service," which takes you to the Secretary of State's website. There you choose which legislator you want information on. The options are your member on the Board of Equalization, the State Senate, the State Assembly, the US Congress (House of Representatives), or the US Senate.

For state government, you would want the State Assembly or State Senate. If you press one of those buttons, you input your address, and it will take you to the website of your representative, where you will find their addresses. Written letters are reputed to have the most impact, and forms that you fill in your name on someone else's website (an interest group, which then sends a form letter with your name on it), the least. Emails are in between. Anything where you compose the text and are relatively specific (you favor or oppose a given bill because of X, Y, and Z reasons for example) will have the most impact.

You should get an answer, even if it is a form letter. In general, the amount of mail legislative offices receive has increased exponentially, and the number of staff they have to answer the mail is the same as decades ago, and consequently personal replies are rare these days. But that doesn't mean you haven't had an impact. Offices generally keep a record of the number of letters received on bills and whether letters are favorable or not, and this information influences legislators' votes. It's not always decisive, but it has an impact.

CSU-ERFSA Calendar of Events

November 12, 2026 - Programs committee webinar with Prof. David T. Russell speaking on "The Challenges of Insurance for Retirees Today." For info, see box on p. 1.
January 14, 2027 - CSU-ERFSA Executive Committee Meeting, on Zoom.
April 22, 2027 - CSU-ERFSA State Council Meeting, on Zoom.
July 8, 2027 - CSU-ERFSA Executive Committee Meeting, on Zoom.

About Delta Dental

This article is for those of you facing problems getting a dentist who accepts Delta Dental and is based on its tax return, required to be public. Did you know….?

Delta Dental's revenues in 2023 were over $6.1 billion, and its expenses were about $5.8 billion. It is organized as a 501(c)(4) nonprofit organization. It has assets of over $4 billion in 2023 and liabilities of about $1.15 billion. It confesses to funding at least some first-class or charter travel for some key employees and officers. The CEO makes $6.9 million; the executive VP $4.1 million; the president, $3.0 million.

No comment.