

Select a page



 Subscribe: [RSS](#)



Giving an Identity to Those Who Need One

on April 30, 2012 | in [CSUN Leaders, Politics and Society](#)

[Tweet](#)

[Pin it](#)



CSUN professor Brian Burkhardt is giving some students a chance – the same one he almost lost. Photo by Lee Choo.

CSUN American Indian Studies professor Brian Burkhardt could have been another cautionary tale told on the reservation. Such talent and promise, wasted. That was the path he was heading down when he dropped out of college after his first semester, citing how unprepared he really was. But then something happened to Burkhardt on his way to leaving his scholarly life. At some point, he got the “sheer will” to go on.

Burkhardt, who is half-Cherokee and lived most of his adolescent life growing up on the Navajo Nation in Arizona, had a hard time adjusting to college. A lot of Native Americans do — 50 percent drop out within the first year. Burkhardt joined the National Guard and traveled the country making his living as a musician on the powwow circuit. Then something called him back to school.

“I started back at the lowest of the remedial classes,” he said. “But that only made me more motivated and focused on succeeding.”

That focus brought him to Northern Colorado University to receive his two undergraduate degrees and then Indiana University, Bloomington to get his doctorate in philosophy. Now he’s teaching at CSUN helping to define a generation’s view of themselves.

“Students come to (me) with issues of identity, trying to discover who they are and how they relate to that,” Burkhardt said. He can’t imagine a higher purpose than helping American Indian students grappling with those essential questions.

Select a page

CSUN Today



 Subscribe: [RSS](#)



Eight CSUN Scholars Vie to Nab Fellow Spot

on April 30, 2012 | in [CSUN Leaders, Education, Faculty and Staff News](#)



Clockwise from top right: Connie White, Sean Flanagan, Debra Malmberg, George Youssef, Marcia Henry, Rafi Efrat, Frances Gateward and Clement Lai. Photos by Lee Choo.

[Tweet](#) [Pin it](#) Eight faculty members selected for California State University, Northridge's prestigious Research Fellows Program will creatively explore the topics of our history, our future and the challenges we face as a society today.

Select a page



 Subscribe: [RSS](#)



Student Play Honors Veterans

on April 26, 2012 | in [University News](#)



Rehearsals for "The Bonus Army." Photo by Lee Choo.

[Tweet](#) [Pin it](#) As more veterans return from their tours of duty in Afghanistan and Iraq, helping the general public understand and recognize the tough time veterans can go through reacclimating to life back home becomes even more important. CSUN theater professor Doug Kaback, through the retelling of a little-known World War I story, is helping to elevate awareness

around this topic.

It was 1932 when a group of WW I veterans known as the “Bonus Army” set up camp outside the White House, demanding the immediate payment of bonuses they were promised to fight in the war. The soldiers, a mass of varying races and backgrounds, had two things in common: They were out of work thanks to the Great Depression, and they needed money to survive in the new world they inhabited. Riots and death ensued before they finally were given their bonus.

Now, more than 80 years later, Kaback has grouped together of students from varying disciplines across the campus to put on a retelling of the story in the form of a play called “The Bonus Army.” Kabeck called on his fellow colleagues in the departments of **social work**, **music** and **sociology** to help him put together a group who could tell the story he so desperately wanted to tell.

“The students, who come from disciplines from across the campus, have gone out and interviewed World War II, Korean War and Vietnam War veterans,” Kabeck said. “Six of the students are vets themselves and have shared their experiences. While the play deals with veterans of the First World War, what the students are finding as they do their research is that despite the different wars and time periods, the experiences of the veterans in coming home can be very similar,” he said.

For More: [CSUN Theater Project on the 1932 Bonus Army Gives Students Insight Into the Needs of Today’s Veterans](#) [CSUN Media Releases]

Tweet

Pin it

Arts and Culture, College of Social and Behavioral Sciences, Mike Curb College of Arts Media and Communication, Theater, Veterans

SUBSCRIBE



RELATED POSTS:

[The Wonders ‘Under the Sea’ and in a Chocolate Factory: This Summer at CSUN’s Teenage Drama Workshop](#)

[CSUN’s Teenage Drama Workshop Helps Shine Spotlight on Madrid Theater’s New Marquee](#)

[CSUN Ranked Among Top Animation Schools in the United States](#)

[CSUN Faculty Member Co-authors Textbook for Caribbean Tourism Education](#)

[CSUN Chicana/o Studies: Arbol de la Vida/Tree of Life Mural Paints a Depiction of Social Issues](#)

TOP STORIES

[CSUN’S Experimental Mechanics Lab Creates the Future](#)

Select a page



 Subscribe: [RSS](#)



Alumna Rebecca Mielwocki Wins Teacher of the Year

on April 24, 2012 | in [CSUN Leaders](#), [Education](#)



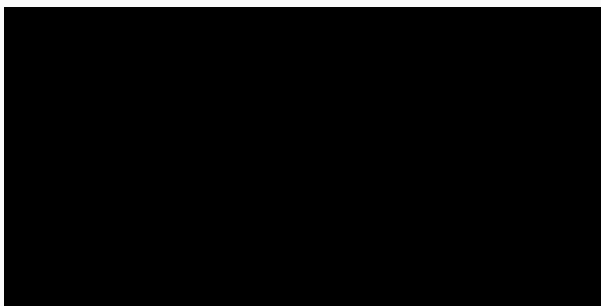
Rebecca Mielwocki '96 receives her National Teacher of the Year award for 2012 trophy from President Barack Obama.

[Tweet](#) [Pin it](#) One of California State University, Northridge's primary functions is to mold and shape the people who will be molding and shaping the young people of tomorrow. That is why we are so happy to congratulate Rebecca Mielwocki '96, winner of the National Teacher of the Year award for 2012.

The award, given by the Counsel of Chief State School Officers in partnership with the University of Phoenix and People to People Ambassador Programs, is the latest laud for Mieliwocki, who teaches seventh-grade English at Luther Burbank Middle School in Burbank, CA. Earlier in the year, she was named one of the top-five teachers in the state.

According to Michael Spagna, dean of CSUN's Michael D. Eisner College of Education, she is a bright, shining example of the program. "She is a teacher's teacher, a caring professional who values collaborative partnerships and academic excellence," said Spagna. "She embodies everything that makes an effective teacher, and we are very proud to call her an alumna of our college."

President Obama also called her "the definition of above and beyond." Watch Mieliwocki accept her award at the White House.



For more: [CSUN Officials Congratulate America's Top Teacher, Northridge Alumna Rebecca Mieliwocki](#)

[Tweet](#)

[Pin it](#)

[Alumni, Barack Obama, Featured, Mike Curb College of Arts Media and Communication, Rebecca](#)

[Mieliwocki](#)

Select a page



Subscribe: [RSS](#)



L.A. Riots: Helping to Heal 20-Year-Old Wounds

on April 19, 2012

in [Politics and Society](#)

[Tweet](#)

[Pin it](#)



Twenty years ago, anger and fire tore the City of Angels apart during the riots that engulfed almost half of the city. In the post-mortem, the focus was on the dissection of the African-American, Latino and Korean-American population's response to the civil unrest. But even with the great amount of coverage it received, there are stories that fell through the cracks.

CSUN is looking to get those stories heard. On Apr. 25, at 4 p.m. in the [Valley Performing Arts Center](#) Lecture Hall, 181, a panel discussion featuring Jin Ho Lee of Radio Korea, Karen Slade of KJLH, Ruben Tapia of Radio Bilingue and K.W. Lee of the Korea Times will try to paint a more vivid picture of what went down on Apr. 20, 1992.

"These journalists were at the frontier of their respective communities struggling to unravel one of the most contradictory urban riots in U.S. history," said Taehyun Kim, assistant professor in CSUN's [journalism department](#). Kim also feels that there are still some open wounds, especially in the Korean-American community, that an open discussion like this can help heal.

"[M]any people in the Korean community still had the residue of anger left over from the riots, because they had never had a chance to tell their story," Kim said. "As I did research, I discovered that other communities have the same wounds on their hearts. In order for people to heal, they need to tell their stories to others, and know that someone is listening and understands."

For more: [CSUN Panel to Explore 'Sounds that Heal' from the 1992 Los Angeles Riots](#) [CSUN Media Releases]

[Tweet](#)

[Pin it](#)

[College of Social and Behavioral Sciences, Community, Events](#)

SUBSCRIBE

Select a page



 Subscribe: [RSS](#)

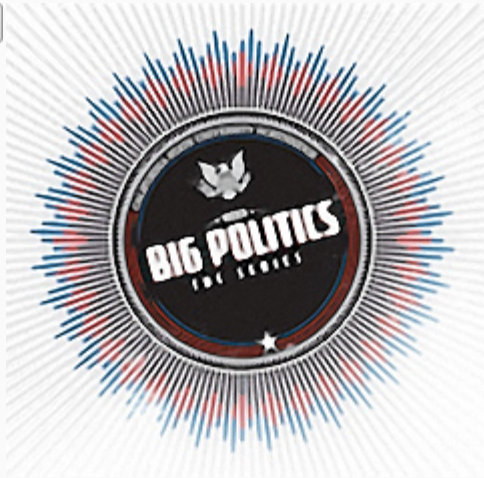


CSUN to Host the 30th Congressional District Debate

on April 19, 2012 | in [Politics and Society](#), [University News](#)

[Tweet](#)

[Pin it](#)



CSUN is going to be the nexus of the 30th Congressional District race on Apr. 30. That's because the campus' Associated Students is kicking off their "Big Politics – The Series" set of debates with a group vying to become congressperson of the San Fernando Valley's newest district.

The foursome — Democratic Congressmen Howard Berman and Brad Sherman, and Republicans Mark Reed and Susan Shelly — are looking to make their mark after a severe redistricting changed the congressional landscape. Berman

had been the 27th district's congressman and Sherman represented the 28th. Before moving up to the San Fernando Valley, the 30th district was located in West Los Angeles.

Associated Students is looking to the set of debates to inform CSUN students and community members about issues that effect the region and encourage them to participate in the political process.

"Our goal is to educate people on how important the political process is and hopefully help them become more aware and engaged in the issues that affect them," said Associated Students President Amanda Flavin.

"We also want to underscore the important role the university plays in the region and remind the community that we need to hold our elected officials accountable for their actions on issues that affect us."

The debate will be moderated by Cal State Northridge alumnus and KFI Radio host Bill Handel.

For more: [30th Congressional District Candidates to Debate the Issues as Part of 'Big Politics' at Cal State Northridge](#) [CSUN Media Releases]

Select a page



 Subscribe: [RSS](#)



Marketing Grad Receives Honorary Degree

on April 19, 2012 | in [CSUN Leaders](#)

[Tweet](#)

[Pin it](#)



2012 honorary Doctor of Laws recipient Vincent P. Barabba. Photo by Lee Choo.

Back in 1962, Vincent P. Barabba graduated from what was then San Fernando Valley College with a degree in marketing. With that diploma, he would become the Director of the U.S. Bureau of the Census, which, among other things, shapes the way America looks at itself. CSUN is celebrating this aspect of Barabba's life in American politics by conferring him a degree during the 2012 Commencement ceremonies.

Barabba began his career as a pollster when he opened up a firm that provided electoral

information to political campaigns from city hall to the presidency. Rather quickly, he ascended to working in the White House when Richard Nixon chose him to be the Director of the Census Bureau in 1973. Presidents Ford and Carter followed suit, making him one of the first to be appointed to the position by commanders-in-chief from different parties.

Aside from his political life, Barabba never strayed too far from the CSUN family. He is a member of the Board of Directors of the California State University, Northridge Foundation and CSUN's Ad Hoc Committee on Athletics Engagement, and was co-chair of the university's 2010 Founders Day celebration. He was also a recipient of a Distinguished Alumni Award in 2003.

"The learning experiences and the actions in which I participated while at CSUN contributed to my ability to play a part in a wide range of rewarding activities over the last 50 years," Barabba said. "The recognition associated with this honorary degree for what was accomplished following those experiences and actions is greater than the totality of all the previous acknowledgements. It is deeply appreciated."

Read more: [CSUN to Confer Honorary Degree on Business Executive and Former Director of the U.S. Census Bureau Vincent](#)

Select a page



 Subscribe: [RSS](#)



Tseng College Staffer Wins Award

on April 17, 2012 | in [Business](#), [CSUN Leaders](#)



[Tweet](#) [Pin it](#) The Small Business Institute awarded LaFaye Wilson, associate director of finance for the Tseng College, a third place win in the 2012 Small Business Institute's competition for graduate business students. As a class project, LaFaye's team created a marketing plan to boost the presence and sales of a gourmet peanut butter.

LaFaye and her four team members applied the knowledge gained in CSUN's MBA program and the Tseng College's **Graduate Certificate in Business Administration** to introduce the product to consumers.

"In 2011 the company was ready to relaunch its gourmet product and was seeking out new ways to market its peanut butter," LaFaye says. "Our team provided the company with a marketing plan to effectively reintroduce the company's peanut butter back into the marketplace."

Her student team submitted its project in the graduate specialized category, competing against graduate business students around the country.

The Projects of the Year awards, a national annual competition sponsored by the Small Business Institute, recognizes consulting projects created by college and university students to benefit small businesses.

For more: [Graduate Certificate in Business Administration \(GCBA\)](#) [Tseng College]

 [Tweet](#)

 [Pin it](#)

[Awards, The Tseng College](#)

SUBSCRIBE



RELATED POSTS:

[Middle Eastern and Islamic Studies Program Blossoms at CSUN](#)

[Founder of CSUN's Brown Center Honored by Swimming Hall of Fame](#)

[CSUN Recognizes Exemplary Staff at Annual Awards](#)

[CSUN Names Li New Provost](#)

[CSUN Journalism Instructor Honored with Prestigious Award](#)

TOP STORIES

[CSUN'S Experimental Mechanics Lab Creates the Future](#)

on July 8, 2015

in **Media Releases, Science and Technology**

[The Wonders 'Under the Sea' and in a Chocolate Factory: This Summer at CSUN's Teenage Drama Workshop](#)

Subscribe: [RSS](#)

Senior Design Projects Showcase Celebrates ‘Problem Solvers’

on April 17, 2012 | in [CSUN Leaders](#), [Science and Technology](#)

[Tweet](#)

[Pin it](#)



Students at the 2011 Senior Design Projects Showcase. Photo by Lee Choo.

The future is now, and it's taking shape at CSUN. Homes and bridges designed to better withstand earthquakes, an airplane that flies itself and innovative cell phone apps are just some of the student projects featured in the third annual Senior Design Projects Showcase hosted by Cal State Northridge's College of Engineering and Computer Science.

The showcase features the culminating design projects of graduating seniors in the college's five departments: civil and applied mechanics; computer science; electrical and computer engineering; manufacturing systems engineering and management; and mechanical engineering. It demonstrates the knowledge, skills and abilities that future graduates will bring to industry, and empowers students in the process.

"The showcase is a way to demonstrate the outstanding programs we have in the college and that we educate problem solvers," said S.K. Ramesh, dean of the college. Student projects are getting more sophisticated, and industry professionals are taking notice.

"We had no idea that you had projects of this complexity," says Ramesh, recounting the typical reaction he hears from professionals attending the fair. "The scope and breadth were outstanding."

For more: [CSUN College of Engineering to Show Off Senior Design Projects](#) [CSUN Media Releases]

[Tweet](#)

[Pin it](#)

[Awards, College of Engineering and Computer Science](#)

Select a page



 Subscribe: [RSS](#)



L.A. Superior Court Recognizes Tseng College Academic Lead

on April 16, 2012 | in [Uncategorized](#)



[Tweet](#) [Pin it](#) Jack Goetz, academic lead for the Tseng College's [Mediation and Conflict Resolution certificate program](#), has been recognized as the 2011 Alternative Dispute Resolution Volunteer of the Year by the Los Angeles Superior Court. Mediators help opposing parties resolve their differences to avoid drawn-out court procedures and trials.

“CSUN plays a critical role in providing Los Angeles County with volunteer mediators, giving all residents an opportunity, regardless of social-economic status, to solve their litigated court disputes free of charge,” Goetz says. “A trained mediator can facilitate settlement discussions among the parties and often arrive at a voluntary solution that leaves both disputants feeling they have ‘won.’”

The Tseng College’s Mediation and Conflict Resolution program trains community members from any background in voluntary dispute resolution. Students engage in mediation as part of their training and are prepared to offer mediation after completing the program. The Tseng College offers a free **information session** April 19, where the community can learn more about this program.

For more: [Certificate in Mediation and Conflict Resolution](#) [Tseng College]

Tweet

Pin it

Awards, The Tseng College

SUBSCRIBE



RELATED POSTS:

[CSUN and Cleantech Incubator Host CEO Speaker Series](#)

[Female Political Leaders Share Stories to Inspire](#)

[Performance to Showcase New Dances by CSUN Choreographers](#)

[CSUN Spearheads National Media Literacy Campaign on Body Image](#)

[CSU Chino Wants to Check Out Shawna Dark’s ‘Field Testing’](#)

TOP STORIES

CSUN’S Experimental Mechanics Lab Creates the Future

on July 8, 2015

in **Media Releases, Science and Technology**



The Wonders ‘Under the Sea’ and in a Chocolate Factory: This Summer at CSUN’s Teenage Drama Workshop

on July 6, 2015

in **Arts and Culture, Community, Media Releases**

Select a page



Subscribe: [RSS](#)

CSUN Professor Joins Board of Broadcast Education Association

on April 11, 2012 | in [CSUN Leaders](#)

[Tweet](#)

[Pin it](#)



CSUN professor of cinema and television arts Mary J. Schaefer.

Mary J. Schaefer, professor of cinema and television arts, already knows that her luck in Las Vegas is going to be good. That's because during the Broadcast Education Association's next annual conference, being held in Vegas, she will be named its next VP for academic relations.

The BEA is a group that joins professors, industry professionals and graduate students who are interested in teaching and research related to electronic media and multimedia enterprises. Schaefer's role will be to represent the interests of university and college faculty and their

students on the association's board

"I am proud to represent the interests of my colleagues from around the world in the areas of broadcasting, film and new media," Schaefer said. "As curriculum at universities change as new media emerges and the roles television and film play in our lives continue to evolve, BEA has been at the forefront of keeping faculty and industry professionals abreast of the latest information."

For more: [CSUN Multimedia Professor Mary Schaefer Named VP of Professional Board](#) [CSUN Media Releases]

[Tweet](#)

[Pin it](#)

[Arts and Culture, Broadcast Education Association, Mike Curb College of Arts Media and Communication](#)

SUBSCRIBE



RELATED POSTS:

 Subscribe: [RSS](#)



Finding the Right Path to Graduation

on April 10, 2012

in [University News](#)

[Tweet](#)

[Pin it](#)



Students at CSUN can now choose their General Education class path.

When students come to California State University, Northridge dreaming of becoming, say, nurses or geographers, many are surprised to find that their introduction to college curriculums are general education courses. Some feel these classes are roadblocks to taking the first steps in achieving their dreams. However, thanks to a group effort between CSUN and Pierce College, the newly developed Pathways program is looking to make some of those required units more meaningful.

Pathways classes, developed by Cal State Northridge history professor Patricia Juarez-Dappe and other faculty, are divided into three themes: social justice, global studies and sustainability. “We’re taking a very multidisciplinary approach,” Juarez-Dappe said, “so that students can see that what they are learning in that GE math class actually has relevancy in their GE humanities class or health class.” If the program is successful, the organizers are hoping to increase the number of threads to include topics like health, social media, the arts and technology.

Regardless of whether a student began at CSUN or another school, every Matador must complete 48 units of general education classes. Each Pathways theme carries 18 total units, which, according to Elizabeth T. Adams, senior director of undergraduate studies, allow for total scheduling flexibility.

In addition to learning in the classroom, each student will also be expected to take those lessons out into the world in the form of service learning within the community. “The umbrella theme is designed to connect the idea of making students more engaged at the general-education level across all disciplines while at the same time exploring the idea of civic engagement,” said Juarez-

Dappe.

The impetus for the creation of Pathways was a need to help ease transfer students' transition from a two-year college to a four-year school. This new program was established through a \$40,000 grant from the Association of American Colleges and Universities and the Lumina Foundation.

"We are hoping that this will help make these courses more meaningful as students realize that what they learn in a general education class can have an impact in the real world," Adams said.

For more: [Cal State Northridge is Developing 'Pathways' Through General Education](#) [CSUN Media Releases]

Tweet

Pin it

Education, Gifts and Grants

SUBSCRIBE



RELATED POSTS:

[CSUN's Marine Biology Department Puts the Field in Field Trip](#)

[CSUN Ranked Among Top Animation Schools in the United States](#)

[Middle Eastern and Islamic Studies Program Blossoms at CSUN](#)

[Recent CSUN Grad to Travel to Malaysia as Fulbright Scholar](#)

[CSUN Students Help At-Risk Youth Take the Plunge](#)

TOP STORIES

CSUN'S Experimental Mechanics Lab Creates the Future

on July 8, 2015

in **Media Releases, Science and Technology**



The Wonders 'Under the Sea' and in a Chocolate Factory: This Summer at CSUN's Teenage Drama Workshop

on July 6, 2015

in **Arts and Culture, Community, Media Releases**

CSUN Engineering Students 'Bull' Their Way to a Championship

Select a page



 Subscribe: [RSS](#)



Fair Trade, Fair Preconception?

on April 9, 2012 | in [CSUN Leaders, Politics and Society](#)

[Tweet](#)

[Pin it](#)



Is fair trade chocolate healthier?

Fair trade goods – products from farmers overseas that, when bought, promote sustainability in the seller’s region – have a huge audience in the United States. Grocery stores have begun stocking up on fair trade items like coffee, cocoa, bananas, sugar, tea and spices for a ravenous consumer base that bought over \$4.7 billion so-labeled items globally in 2011.

The usually pricier foods are purchased with the understanding that it’s giving a fair wage to those

who plant and cultivate them. However, what other notions are consumers harboring when they go home with these foods?

That is what one CSUN psychology professor, Jonathon Schuldt, set to find out when he and his colleagues – Dominique Muller, a psychology professor at the University of Grenoble France, and Norbert Schwarz, a psychology professor at the University of Michigan – delved into the theory of the “halo effect” when applied to fair trade foods.

The halo effect is when other attributions are made on a subject that doesn’t belong, just because of another claim. For example, fair trade chocolate is sometimes up to 50 percent more expensive than its domestic competition. However, Schuldt found that people have also attributed another benefit to it – that it’s healthier, even though the chocolate company never made such claims.

“It’s important to keep in mind as a consumer what a claim really means and what it doesn’t,” Schuldt said. “Chocolate is still chocolate. It is still junk food.”


For more: [Two Little Words, ‘Fair Trade,’ Can Turn Chocolate Healthier. Or Can They? Study by CSUN Professor Explores the ‘Halo Effect’ Good Deeds Have on Food](#)

Select a page

CSUN Today



 Subscribe: [RSS](#)



Meet Incoming President Dianne F. Harrison

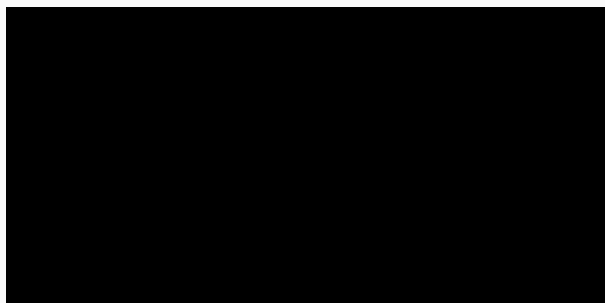
on April 2, 2012 | in [University News](#)



The new CSUN president, Dianne F. Harrison. Photo by Lee Choo.

[Tweet](#) [Pin it](#) In her first official campus visit, incoming president of California State University, Northridge Dianne F. Harrison shares her background, ideals and commitment to the mission of the university. Currently serving as president at California State University, Monterey Bay, Harrison was named CSUN's fifth president by the California State University Board

of Trustees on March 22, 2012.



For more: [Incoming President Dianne F. Harrison Outlines Plans in First Address to Campus](#) [[@CSUN](#)]

Tweet

Pin it

Dianne F. Harrison

SUBSCRIBE



RELATED POSTS:

[CSUN Recognizes Exemplary Staff at Annual Awards](#)

[CSUN Journalism Instructor Honored with Prestigious Award](#)

[CSUN 2014-15 Academic Year Ends With Pomp and Circumstance](#)