

President's Message



Deborah Seiler

President

The Renaissance Society
of Sacramento

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Renaissance Website:
<https://csus.edu/rensoc>

Key Dates

Friday, Feb. 21
New Member Dinner

Monday, March 3
Board of Directors Meeting

Friday, March 7
First Friday Pizza

Monday, March 31
Cesar Chavez Day

Friday, April 4
Spring Break
Campus Closed



A Bastion of Stability

What a wonderful return to campus we are experiencing. Friday, February 7, was our first day back on campus for the Spring 2025 semester and it was a beautiful day.

I heard members chat happily about their classes, we had a fabulous Forum speaker, and there was a terrific turnout for First Friday Pizza – (yes, we do need to order more pizza!) Our generous members donated \$2,228 to the ASI Food Pantry in envelopes circulated in the on-campus classes that day. The mood at the Help Desk was upbeat and our volunteers were happy to assist new and returning members.

As of this writing, our membership stands at 1,789 which is a bit higher than this time last year. Our “Give Something Extra” donations to our Renaissance General Fund exceed \$21,000, and our donations to scholarship funds are more than \$17,000 so far this fiscal year. I can’t thank you enough for your generosity.

Yet all of this good news comes at a time fraught with uncertainty on the national level. Threats of mass layoffs, deportations, and an end to inclusionary policies, sow fear and trepidation among many but particularly among our Sac State students, faculty, and administrators.

At our Board of Directors meeting on February 3, I shared how the Renaissance Society feels like a **bastion of stability** in these troubled times, a sentiment echoed by our liaison, Interim Dean Marya Endriga. It’s a feeling I never would have imagined expressing before.

In light of this, I have asked President Luke Wood and some in his administration how we, as Renaissance members, might show our support for Sac State students. President Wood and others have suggested that, for the time being, we might simply drop by some of the Affinity Centers on campus to say hello and share a kind word. A small gesture perhaps, but meaningful for young people who feel threatened. Please see further information about Affinity Centers on Page 6 of this edition.

I am also moved by the thoughtfulness of our member, Darryl Freeman, who writes with great insight about how we might better address some of our diversity issues. Please see his article on Page 5. His thoughtfulness and perspective provide much to consider.

Together we hold tight, in appreciation, friendship, and support, for the students of Sac State.

Deborah



Volunteer Spotlight: Orientation and Open House Volunteers Spring 2025

By Carol Barake

The fabulous energy in the room during the January 17 Orientation and Open House event was a warm spring breeze! Friends reconnecting, seminar leaders pitching their wonderful programs and community partners engaging our members in new opportunities for volunteering.

A big thank you goes out to the wonderful volunteers who gave their time and energy to make the event a success. We appreciate you!

Event Lead

Joel Leong

Community Partners, Open House Set Up

Ken Cross, Al Barake, Frank Martinez

Orientation Welcome Table

Debbie Martinez, Jackie Lamb

Open House Welcome Table

Pam O'Brien, Marsha Holland

Program Membership/Registration Tables

Tom Nelson, Ron Marcroft, Alan Baker, Jennifer Kerr, Al Barake, Ann Putt, Virginia Sturdevant

Member Badge Table

Nancy Martin, Cathy Lieb

Renaissance Staff Table Support

Dave Ferguson

Hospitality Table, Campus Tour Coordination

Susan Brackenhoff, Beth Mann, Carol Greenberg

If you would like to join the volunteer team for the next Orientation and Open House Event in August 2025, please contact Carol Barake, Volunteer Services Coordinator at cmbarake@comcast.net.

This is a great way to get more involved and meet some new friends, perfect if you are new to the organization too.



Sac State Theater & Dance Usher Volunteers

By Carol Barake

The Sac State Theater Department has provided opportunities for Renaissance members to serve as ushers at the Spring performances underway. A new link has been provided to Renaissance members to sign up for a specific performance time and date.

The SignUp portal will help the department streamline the process of coordinating with our members who wish to volunteer. Note that only three (3) Renaissance volunteers per performance will be allowed on the portal. Here's how it works in 3 easy steps:

1. Click this link to see our SignUp: <https://signup.com/go/qwxkoMq>
2. Review the options listed and choose the spots you like.
3. Sign up!

It's easy! You will NOT need to register an account or keep a password on SignUp.

As a reminder for folks, the production schedule and locations are as follows:

University Dance Company (UDC) 2025 : Persist

Directed by Megan Brunsvold Mercedes and Lorelei Bayne

March 5, 6, 7, 8 at 7pm and March 8, 9 at 2pm
Dancespace Solano 1010

The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Nighttime by

Simon Stephens

Directed by Christine Nicholson

March 19, 20, 21, 22, 26, 27, 28, 29 at 7pm and March 23, 30 at 2pm

Playwrights Theatre, Shasta Hall 101

House of Desires by Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz

Directed by Nicole Limón

April 16, 18, 17, 19, 23, 24, 25, 26 at 7pm and April 20, 26 at 2pm

University Theatre, Shasta Hall 113

You can learn about these production as well as ticket purchase and parking information on the Sac State Theater Department website.

Free parking is NOT available for ticketed events on campus, including volunteers.

Links to purchase parking permits is provided on the Sac State Theater website: Theatre & Dance | Sacramento State.



March Forums

Forums are a special category of highly acclaimed, high-profile speakers addressing current topics of special interest to Renaissance members. All Forums occur on Friday afternoons in **Mariposa Hall 1000 from 3 to 4 p.m.** when no other Renaissance seminars, Shared Interest Groups, or presentations are offered.

March 7

MICHAEL VITIELLO: Victims' Rights Movement



Professor Vitiello has been a Professor of Law at McGeorge School of Law since 1990. He will focus on the Victims' Rights Movement, one of the most important and powerful political movements over the last 60 years. He will explain the racial disparity in the imposition of the

death penalty. He began his teaching career in 1977 at Loyola New Orleans Law School. He also taught as a visitor at the University of Parma Law School, Tulane Law School, and the University of Mississippi Law Center. He received his BA at Swarthmore College and his JD at the University of Pennsylvania.

March 14

Adam Berrey PhD: The Roots of Our Modern World: Archeological Perspectives on the Emergence of Complex Society



Assistant Professor Adam Berrey is an anthropological archeologist who specializes in the comparative study of early complex societies. His research focuses on understanding the interplay between demographic, economic and sociopolitical

processes as systems of organization based on hierarchy, inequality and economic specialization were first beginning to emerge. Exploration of how these early complex societies developed can provide valuable insight into the evolutionary roots of our own modern world.

Professor Berrey has a BA. and PhD in anthropology from the University of Pittsburgh and joined the Department of Anthropology at Sacramento State in the fall of 2021

March 21

STAN PADILLA: Walls that Speak: The Murals of Stan Padilla



Stan Padilla is a Yaqui/Chicano artist, Indigenous educator, and cultural activist. He has been engaged in youth education and social justice issues through the arts for over 50 years. His artwork has been exhibited nationally and internationally. He is one of the principal mural painters for the

Royal Chicano Air Force Arts Collective. He is currently the Artistic/Cultural Mentor for the United Auburn Indian Community Tribal School. The California Arts Council recognized him with a 2024 Master Legacy Artist Fellowship.

March 28

JENNIFER MARTINEZ: DEI in the Workplace — Benefits to Employers and the Impact of Recent SCOTUS Decisions



What is Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI)? What is it not? How can it benefit companies and society? Join us for a discussion about what DEI initiatives are designed to accomplish and what the challenges to these initiatives get wrong about them.

Jennifer provides strategic, programmatic, and operational leadership for initiatives that advance diversity, equity, and inclusion as core values of the firm. She is a partner in the Hanson Bridgett law firm. She has an undergraduate degree from UCLA and a JD from Stanford University.

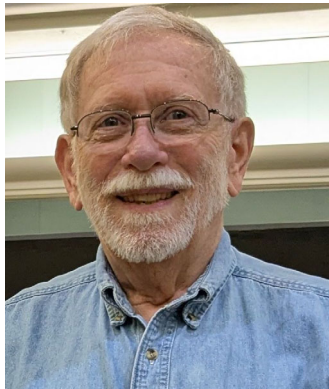


Member Profile

Alan Baker Answers the Techie Call

By Judy Lewis

After spending his first two years in North Carolina, Alan Baker and his family moved to Hollywood, Florida. He reports that his father was a Baptist preacher who was “a little ahead of the times” and found himself kicked out of his church. His father



picked up various occupations, including farming, making bricks, flooring, and creating tools used in plastering swimming pools. In 1956, his father built a house in Vermont, which the family used to escape the Florida summer heat.

Following graduation from the University of Florida, Alan joined the United States Air Force. For five years, he served as a pilot, flying four-engine C-141 planes, hauling equipment and personnel on long-distance flights from Travis Air Force Base. Within Viet Nam, Alan flew C-130 tactical planes for short distances, from large airfields to smaller areas which often consisted of dirt or metal landing sites.

While stationed at Travis, Alan and his roommate decided they were tired of living in Fairfield, so they moved to Davis. It was there that he met his future wife, Gloria.

After completing five years of military service, Alan accessed the G.I. Bill to earn a degree in computer science. This resulted in a job with IBM in San Jose, where he was involved with software and tech team leadership projects. At age 62, he retired.

The couple’s daughter and son-in-law lived in Folsom, and encouraged them to move closer. They’ve been happy since they relocated five years ago.

He became aware of the Renaissance Society when he helped member Chris Smith with the software for the Sacramento Time Bank.

Alan has been active with the AARP Fraud Watch Network in both Sacramento and Vermont for about seven years. He and Gloria spend part of each year in Vermont, continuing the family tradition of escaping from the summer heat.

As a member of the SeniorTechPal in the Sacramento area, Alan volunteers his time helping older citizens learning to use technology, such as cell phones. He also serves as the state webmaster for the SIR group.

For spring semester, he is offering a seminar titled “Privacy & Security on the Internet: Avoiding Scams.”

When he isn’t cooling off in Vermont, Alan explores the Sacramento area with Renaissance’s Walkabout group.



Dining Together March

By Cheryl Nelson

Dining Together will meet at
Thai Terrace
(<https://thaiterracesac.com>),
1596 Howe Ave, at 5:30 PM on
March 12, 2025.

Dining Together members who wish to attend should **RSVP** to Cheryl Nelson:
slynnsearch@yahoo.com no later than
March 8, 2025.

Separate checks will be provided. Parking is available.



Moving Toward a More Inclusive U.S. Society by Eliminating Racial Categories

By Darryl O. Freeman

This article addresses the counterproductive use of racial categories in the language vernacular of the United States. Racial classifications such as black, white, and Asian have long been used to categorize people in our society. However, these broad racial labels are not only outdated but also fail to capture the true complexity of human identity.

A more inclusive and accurate approach would be to recognize people by their ethnicity rather than their race. Shifting from race to ethnicity as a primary classification would help challenge racial stereotypes, appreciate individual identity, and foster a deeper understanding of American cultural diversity.

When individuals are grouped under broad racial labels, they are often subjected to sweeping generalizations that do not account for their unique backgrounds. For example, categorizing people simply as “black” fails to acknowledge the vast cultural differences between African Americans, Afro-Caribbeans, and African immigrants, each with distinct histories and traditions. Likewise referring “Asian” ignores the significant cultural, linguistic, and historical differences between East Asians, South Asians, and Southeast Asians.

By shifting to ethnicity-based recognition, society can foster a more nuanced understanding of individuals and weaken the stereotypes associated with race.

Eliminating race categories would help reduce inadvertent reinforcement of racial stereotypes and subconscious discriminatory behavior toward different minority groups.

Recognizing ethnicity rather than race would promote a greater acceptance of individual identity.

Race is an arbitrary social construct that often ignores the rich and diverse histories of various ethnic groups. Ethnicity, on the other hand, acknowledges shared cultural experiences, traditions, and ancestral heritage.

For instance, a person of Mexican descent and a person of Puerto Rican descent may both be classified as Hispanic or Latino, but their heritage and cultural identities are distinct. Recognizing these differences allows individuals to celebrate their unique heritage without being forced into a monolithic racial category that fails to reflect their lived experiences.

By prioritizing ethnicity, people can reclaim their cultural identities and gain a stronger sense of belonging while navigating life in this country.

According to the 2020 U.S. Census, almost 12% of the United States population self-identify as multi-ethnic. Members of the U.S. population identifying as multi-ethnic is the fastest growing demographic increasing 276% from 2010 and 2020. These individuals often feel disenfranchised when filling out government or job applications that require checking one of 4 singular racial categories.

Transitioning public discourse from race to ethnicity would encourage a deeper understanding of our cultural diversity. The United States is a salad bowl of cultures, and acknowledging ethnicity rather than race would allow for a more accurate representation of this diversity.

Instead of using racial categories that often oversimplify people’s backgrounds, recognizing ethnicity would highlight the vast array of traditions, languages, and histories that contribute to American society.

This shift would promote cultural appreciation and education, fostering a more inclusive society where people are encouraged to learn about and respect different ethnic backgrounds.

While some may argue that race-based data is necessary for addressing racial disparities, ethnicity-based data can achieve the same goal without reinforcing racial divisions. Policies aimed at addressing social inequalities can still be informed by data on ethnicity, socioeconomic status, and historical context rather than rigid racial categories.

Moving away from race-based classifications does not mean ignoring racial inequality, rather, it provides a more precise and meaningful way to address economic disparities without reinforcing the very divisions society seeks to overcome.

In conclusion, eliminating racial categories and recognizing ethnicity would help U.S. society move toward a more inclusive and accurate understanding of identity, eventually eliminating the need for public and private sector specific DEI programs.

That being said, we are not at that point yet. By focusing on ethnicity rather than race our society can continue more effective steps toward breaking down racial barriers and promoting a more united society.



How We Can Help Sac State Students In These Times?

By Deborah Seiler

In these times of rapid change and threats to certain sectors of society, Renaissance members often ask what we can do to help students, especially those from diverse backgrounds. In general, our members consider it important that all students, regardless of their situation or identity, feel safe, empowered, and capable of achieving their academic and personal goals.

At a recent event with President Luke Wood, some of us asked him what we might do to help. President Wood was grateful for the concern and said that specific steps are being considered. In the meantime, he suggested our members, individually or with a friend, drop by the various Affinity Centers on campus just to say hello and express support. Our liaison with the university, Interim Dean of the College of Social Sciences and Interdisciplinary Studies, Dr. Marya Endriga, heartily endorsed this approach, and I agreed to compile some information about the centers.

Sacramento State hosts several Affinity Centers dedicated to supporting its diverse student body. These centers provide safe spaces, resources, and support for students from various backgrounds and identities, promoting self-empowerment and community building.

Please consider dropping by when you are on campus just to say hello and remind students how much we care.

Here are the Centers and their locations:

| Affinity Center Name | Location |
|---|---|
| APIDA Student Center Asian Pacific Islander Desi American | Lassen Hall, 2200 (8 am – 5 pm) |
| Dreamer Resource Center | River Front Center, 1022 (8 am – 5 pm) |
| Esak'tima Center | Lassen Hall, 1100 (8 am – 5 pm) |
| Guardian Scholars Program | Sacramento Hall, 118 (8:30 am – 5 pm) |
| Jewish Life and Resource Center | Modoc Hall, 1010 (NA) |
| Martin Luther King Jr. Center | Lassen Hall, 2201 (9 am – 5 pm) |
| Multi-Cultural Center | University Library, 1010 (8 am – 5 pm) |
| Pride Center | University Union, 2230 (8 am – 5 pm) |
| Project Rebound | Sacramento Hall, 152 (NA) |
| Serna Center | River Front Center, 1023 (8 am – 5 pm) |
| Southwest Asian and North African Center (SWANA) | Academic Information Resource Center (AIRC) building, 1012 (9 am—5 pm) |
| Women's Resource Center | University Union, 2250 (8 am—5 pm) |
| Veteran's Success Center | Lassen Hall, 2302 (8 am—5 pm) |

Participate in Research at the UC Davis Alzheimer's Disease Research Center

By Selene Leal Carrillo and Rita Venua, UC Davis

The UC Davis Alzheimer's Disease Research Center (ADRC) is seeking volunteers aged 55-85 with mild cognitive impairment (MCI) or early Alzheimer's Disease (AD) for a Phase II clinical trial scheduled to last one and a half (1.5) years. This study tests the investigational drug, *Senicapoc*, which may help improve memory and slow the progression of Alzheimer's disease. Participants will undergo various assessments, including physical and neurological exams, blood draws, and brain scans. Located at 1651 Alhambra Blvd., Suite 200A, we hope to have volunteers by the end of this April.

Who Can Participate?

- Age 55-85 years old
- Fluent in English
- Mild Cognitive Impairment or Mild Alzheimer's Disease
- Study partner presence required at all visits
- Able to undergo Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI) Scan
- Able to swallow oral tablets
- Good venous access (able to have blood drawn)
- Not pregnant or breastfeeding

Services We Offer

- Assessments for adults with memory problems, including medical and neurological evaluations
- Consultation for families on diagnosis following evaluation
- Referrals to Alzheimer's Association for improved quality of care for persons with Alzheimer's disease
- Community education programs for caregivers
- Opportunities to participate in observational research studies exploring cognitive and behavioral changes, caregiving, and clinical trials for new drug therapies

Alzheimer's disease is the leading cause of dementia, accounting for 60-80% of cases. While there is no cure, medical treatments and lifestyle changes can help manage and slow its progression. Ongoing clinical research offers hope, with researchers across the country working tirelessly to find better treatments and interventions. For more information, please contact our Clinical Research Coordinators, Selene Leal Carrillo or Rita Venua: rmvenua@ucdavis.edu, (916) 734-5496.



Last Chance for Logo Wear!

We have sold approximately \$1,550 worth of our fantastic logo wear. We're currently managing a **waitlist** for our next batch of shirts. The polyester polo shirt will be available in men's and women's sizes from XS to XXL for \$49.99. The 20 oz. aluminum tumblers are \$24.99. Our vendor requires a minimum order of 12 shirts to proceed, and we have four eager individuals on our waitlist ready to rock the new design.

You too can be the proud wearer of one of these wonderful, high-quality shirts designed by our own Mike Pidd. Hurry! Reach out to Mike to place your order. mikepidd@sbcglobal.net.



Mike Pidd, Chris Berger, Laurye Brownfield

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April Submissions Due: March 2

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In Memoriam

Robert Arellanes, former College of Continuing Education Dean at Sac State who along with then-President Donald Gerth, was instrumental in launching the Renaissance Society with a starter loan of \$2,500.

Dave Harzoff, a committed life-long learner, who earned a master's degree in Business Administration from Golden Gate University and a certification in green building and sustainability. He was an active Renaissance member.

Gerry Camp, a Renaissance Society presenter for over 10 years, whose passion for all things Shakespeare and all things theatre was well-known and appreciated by anyone who took one of his classes. His daughter Amy says, "I am convinced that his involvement in Renaissance gave these last years of his life true excitement and great joy." She invites members to donate to Renaissance Society in Gerry's honor, by check mailed to 350 University Ave., Suite 108, Sacramento CA 95819 or online at <https://www.csus.edu/college/social-sciences-interdisciplinary-studies/renaissance-society/spotlights/donate.html>

**Spring Semester New Member
Party!**

We are excited to announce that our Spring Semester Social will be held on **Friday, February 21** at the Old Spaghetti Factory, 1255 Watt Ave (Watt/Arden Way) in Carmichael from 5:00 - 7:30 pm.

Longtime members will gather to greet our new members for socializing and fun.

There will be individual ordering from the menu and separate checks; games; music by Frank "Cupid" Martinez; and flowers. In addition, we'll have a house bar for alcoholic purchases.

Please RSVP to Allan Keown: ahkown@gmail.com by February 17.

