

President's Message



Deborah Seiler

President

The Renaissance Society
of Sacramento

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Renaissance Website:

<https://csus.edu/rensoc>

Key Dates

Wednesday, Oct. 23

New Member Dinner

Monday, Nov. 4

Board Meeting

Friday, Nov. 15

*Spring Membership Opens
(\$60)*

Friday, Dec. 6

*End of Year Review with
Holiday Dinner at
Engrained*

Friday, Dec. 13

Program Leaders Workshop



A Time for Gratitude and Thanksgiving

Many of you may join me in celebrating the fall season with a reprieve from the searing heat of summer. I hope you join me in celebrating another year of life with family, friends, and our Renaissance community.

I encourage all of you to join me in celebrating the many gifts Renaissance Society members enjoy through our affiliation with Sacramento State, gifts which enable us to learn, connect and share as we age.

It has been over one year since President Luke Wood returned to his alma mater to lead the institution he once attended with astounding energy and creativity. We are gradually coming to meet many members of the remarkable new team he has assembled, and we are grateful for the seasoned members of his team whose support and friendship we continue to treasure.

Our most prominent and long-standing friend is Dr. Dianne Hyson, Dean of the College of Social Sciences and Interdisciplinary Studies who is our official liaison with the university. She, along with Associate Dean Marya Endriga, helps us navigate the intricacies of campus life.

Sadly for us, but exciting for her, Dean Hyson will step down at the end of this semester from her position as dean to engage in other meaningful work on campus. We are fortunate to learn that Associate Dean Marya Endriga will serve in the interim until a new dean is selected and that Dean Hyson will devote about 20% of her time in the Spring 2025 semester to assist Dean Endriga. This means she will still have some engagement, likely limited, with the Renaissance Society.

In return for our many gifts from Sac State, including Dean Hyson's leadership, technical support from IRT and College of Continuing Education (CCE) staff, and our fiscal sponsor University Enterprises, Inc among others, we always invite members who are able to support campus initiatives that benefit students.

In this issue you will find information about our annual push to support the Associated Students, Inc (ASI) Food Pantry's Thanksgiving Food Drive, which supplies Thanksgiving food for students and their families. This is also the time when we ask for end of year, tax-deductible donations to help fund the seven scholarships we award to students to help them secure a brighter future and become productive members of society. You will also hear about the status of our long-standing mentorship of students in the Gerontology Department.

As we celebrate our 38th year as a premier life-long learning organization, my greatest sense of gratitude is to you, our members. Thank you for your membership, your many hours of volunteering to support us, and your amazing generosity to help the Sac State students we support.

Deborah



Help Support the ASI Food Pantry's Friendsgiving Feast!

by Sommer Hayes and Ryan Choi

This holiday season, the ASI Food Pantry at Sacramento State is excited to introduce a new event – **Friendsgiving Feast** on Monday, November 25 in the University Union from 11 am to 1:30 pm. It will be a hot Thanksgiving meal designed to bring warmth, joy, and a sense of community to our students.

This event will replace the traditional Thanksgiving Food Baskets, as we aim to serve 250 students with a festive hot meal, dessert, and a special party favor.

The Friendsgiving Feast is more than just a meal. It's an opportunity for students to come together, enjoy delicious food, make new friends, and feel the support of their community during a time when they may be away from home. In addition to the meal, we'll have music provided by KSSU, Sacramento State's student radio station, a fun game of human bingo, raffle prizes, and a festive atmosphere to make this a memorable experience for everyone attending.

We need your help to make this event a success! We are collecting monetary donations to help cover the costs of the meals, beverages, and desserts for this special occasion. Your generosity will directly support the students, ensuring that we can offer them a warm, welcoming, and nourishing experience. Every contribution, no matter the size, will help us reach our goal.

How You Can Help:

Make a Donation: Your financial contribution will go towards providing high-quality, nutritious Thanksgiving meals to students. Every donation made to the ASI Food Pantry between November 1 -November 25 will count towards the 2024 Golden Plate Award competition. **Just be sure to mention that you are with Renaissance Society at Sac State!**

Spread the Word: Share this event with your network. The more people who know about it, the more support we can gather!

Get Involved: We are looking for 5 or 6 Renaissance Society volunteers to assist with sign-in, passing out our take-home party favors, and joining the students in conversation to make them feel welcome and at home, as if they were at Thanksgiving dinner.

Please contact Sommer Hayes or Ryan Choi at asi-foodpantry@csus.edu

Together, we can ensure that every student feels the warmth of community and the spirit of Thanksgiving. We appreciate your kindness and generosity in making this holiday season special for our students!

Thank you for supporting the ASI Food Pantry and our Friendsgiving Feast!



Wil Chen, Sommer, and Ryan present the Sac State ASI Recognition Award to Deborah and Renaissance Society

From Isolation to Connection: ACC's Senior Escort Program

By Remy Tokunaga,
ACC Senior Escort Manager

According to JAMA (Journal of American Medical Association) “In 2023, a national poll reported that about 37% of older US adults (aged 50-80 years) experienced loneliness and 34% reported feeling socially isolated.” Studies have shown that there is a correlation between social isolation and loneliness to a variety of physical and mental health conditions, such as: increased risk of heart disease, dementia, stroke, anxiety, and depression.

ACC Senior Services is an organization dedicated to enriching the lives of seniors. ACC’s Senior Escort Program, launched in 2022, was originally created to protect seniors in the community following an increase in anti-Asian hate incidents. Since then, it has evolved into much more — a program that empowers seniors by offering them companionship, safety, and a stronger sense of independence. The program has become a lifeline for older adults, connecting them with caring volunteers who walk with them, assist with errands, and help navigate appointments.

Volunteers have shared their joy in meeting participants and passion of giving back to the community. One volunteer, Julie Zumalt, is a retired social worker of 25 years. *“I love meeting such a wide range of individuals, providing a safe feeling outside, and letting seniors know that they*

are not alone. I enjoy this program so very much, and I am sure I get more out of it than the seniors,” said Julie.

Over 90% of the program’s participants report feeling safer, and 83% say they feel less isolated. They describe ACC’s Senior Escort Program as a lifeline, giving them companionship and independence they might not otherwise have. Wanda Thomas, a blind participant, shared her thoughts: *“I appreciate and love all of the escorts. I always look forward to walking with them. I feel like I can be myself and become more independent.”*

If you’re looking for a way to give back and make a tangible impact, the Senior Escort Program is the perfect opportunity. Your companionship and support can help seniors stay active, get more connected, and feel a greater sense of purpose. Become a volunteer for ACC’s Senior Escort Program today and make a lasting difference — one walk at a time.

Call 916-818-8236 or email volunteer@accsv.org for more information.

<https://jamanetwork.com/journals/jama/fullarticle/2819153>



November Forums

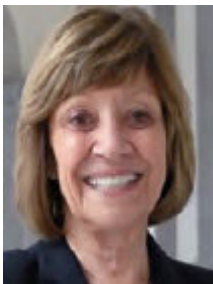
Forums are a special category of highly acclaimed and high-profile speakers addressing current topics of special interest to a wide variety of our Renaissance members. These esteemed speakers are also seasoned experts in their fields. They bring a diversity, depth, and breadth of topics to inform us about critical issues facing us and our society on an ongoing basis.

All Forums occur on Friday afternoons from 3 to 4 pm when no other Renaissance seminars, Shared Interest Groups, or presentations are offered. Speakers encourage the audience to ask probing questions about their topics.

Forum speakers for Fall 2024 will give in-person presentations in Mendocino Hall 1005. In addition, the new hybrid technology will enable these presentations to be simulcast via Zoom and viewable in real-time from home. Note: To access any of the previous Forums that are on our YouTube Channel, go to: <https://www.youtube.com/@therenaissancesociety-foru8188/featured>

November 1

Karen Ross: Reconnection of Consumers to the Land and People who Produce their Foods



Secretary Ross, of the California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA), will cover issues facing agriculture, including California's wine. Her presentation will focus on the core functions of protecting and promoting California agriculture. She has initiated programs to

provide greater opportunities for farmers and ranchers to engage in sustainable environmental practices through water conservation, energy efficiency, and ecosystem services. She has worked to provide greater access to farm-fresh foods at school cafeterias through CDFA's Farm to Fork Program.

November 8

Colleen McCain Nelson: The Possible Negative Impact When a City No Longer Has a Local Newspaper



Ms. Nelson is the Executive Editor of The Sacramento Bee and the California regional editor for McClatchy. She was previously the Kansas City Star's editorial page editor and a former White House correspondent for The Wall Street Journal. She is a University of Kansas alumna.

November 15

Chris Lango: Sacramento's Civil Rights History



Mr. Lango works as a consultant for the Nathaniel Colley Civil Rights Coalition. Since 2010, he has produced projects for the Center for Sacramento History. The first, *The Time is Now*, is an Emmy-nominated film spotlighting Nathaniel Colley, Sacramento's first private-practicing black attorney recognized as "Mr. Civil Rights of California." The second, *Replacing the Past*, examines Sacramento's redeveloping history. Lango produced a film about Sacramento's fight for fair housing — part of the Center's award-winning *Unlocking the Past* series. Recently he produced a film about Virna Canson, considered "The Mother of Civil Rights in the West."

November 22

Kim Nalder: What Have America's Voters Done, and Why?—Psychology, Perceptions, and Informational Asymmetries



Ms. Nalder is a Professor of Political Science; Executive Director, CalSpeaks Opinion Research; and Director, Project for an Informed Electorate. She will consider the Ballot Measures presented by Representatives Steven Maviglio and Rob Stutzman.

THANKSgiving End of the Year Renaissance Appeal

By Mike Pidd

We are approaching the calendar year's end when the Renaissance Society sends out an end-of-year appeal letter. We have an exceptional "mystery" guest letter writer this year and are encouraging everyone to donate for this wonderful purpose.

Our campaign's positive outcome is donating to our Scholarship and Endowment program, which has already helped 128 students achieve their dream of a college education.

College fees continue to rise, and we encourage everyone in our membership to contribute. The Renaissance Society stands as a beacon of hope for our scholarship recipients.

A college education is a transformative time in these students' lives. The students who have and will receive our scholarships will be on track to living "the American Dream." Many of our scholarship recipients are the first of their families to graduate from college.

The donations received for this campaign are tax-deductible through the Sac State 501c3.

Food Pantry Donations?

If you are a Program Leader with a First Friday Envelope or a dedicated Renaissance member who wishes to donate by check, please deliver your contribution to either:

- 1) Carol Barake OR Deborah Seiler on campus at the Forum.
- 2) the ASI Student Shop/ASI Accounting Office located on the 3rd floor of the University Union which is open Monday - Friday, 9:00am- 4:30pm. (please do not go to the ASI Food Pantry).

The campus Information Desk in the union can also assist with directions on finding this storefront.

We appreciate your efforts and are happy to help.



Applications for Renaissance Board Election

Get on Board! The Renaissance Society Board of Directors!
By Susan Brackenhoff

Do you want to be a part of the governance of Renaissance? Do you want to help make decisions that run the engine of Renaissance? We can use YOU!

Elections are in March for all Renaissance offices. President, Vice-President, Secretary and Controller are elected for a one-year term.

There are a total of six Members at Large with three being selected each year on a rotating schedule to serve a two-year term. Each Member at Large becomes intricately involved in the work of the committees.

Board meetings are once a month. Renaissance has over 1,500 members and offers over 100 programs a semester. This train uses hours and hours of volunteer time. And you can help! So, fill out an application and get on the Board. Contact Susan Brackenhoff at susan.brackenhoff@gmail.com for an application. 217-254-5037



Dining Together November

By Cheryl Nelson

Dining Together will meet at **River City Brewing Company** (www.rivercitybrewing.net), 6241 Fair Oaks Blvd (Milagro Center) at 5:30 PM on November 13, 2024.

Dining Together members who wish to attend should RSVP to Cheryl Nelson: slynnsearch@yahoo.com no later than November 8, 2024. Separate checks will be provided. Parking is available.



Significant Changes to Sac State Gerontology Dept.

*By Donna Jensen, PhD, LCSW, Chair & Professor
Department of Gerontology Sacramento State University*

Hi, Treasured Renaissance Society Partners! My name is Donna Jensen, and I am the chair of the Gerontology Department here at Sac State. There has been a lot happening at our campus, and within the Gerontology Department. I wanted to provide a few updates specific to Gerontology!

Spring of 2025 will bring some significant changes to our Gerontology Department. As one of our foundational partners, we wanted to update the Renaissance Society of these changes. After much thoughtful discussion with faculty, college leadership, and our community partners, we have decided to move our bachelor's degree (B.S. in Gerontology) and minor in Gerontology to an online/hybrid format.

Gerontology major courses will be delivered online (both synchronously and asynchronously). Students will still engage in service learning and internships as we will work with our students to find meaningful, high-quality placements near their homes to support and enhance their education.

We did not make this decision lightly. There are several factors that we considered, including student demand for online course offerings, the reduction of the number of current Gerontology majors, and the desire to have gerontological education reach beyond the Sacramento State service region.

As we know, our older adult population is growing. By 2040, just 16 years from now, California's older adult population is projected to reach 11.4 million – or about 28% of the total population. With this population growth, we will see the need to increase and to diversify the older adult workforce. This diversity not only means diversity in culture, ethnicity, and linguistic abilities, but also by expanding work with older adults in areas we do not traditionally consider.

The older adults in our state need health professionals and caregivers, but they also need policymakers to ensure that California is planning for this change. We need graduates from the technology, engineering, construction, sustainability, and leisure industries, with a focus on older adults, to serve the changing needs of older adults.

We value the partnership that we have with the Renaissance Society, and we recognize this is a big change that will have an impact on those of you who have graciously offered your time and support mentoring our students and serving as class speakers to increase the awareness of aging for our students. The hope is we can grow large enough to offer both in-

person and online options for our students, but we're simply not there with the numbers yet.

For those of you who have served faithfully as mentors, this does not mean that you will have to stop meeting with your students face-to-face/in-person. It will depend on the geographic location of the student, and of course, getting your schedules matched up. We have students who value the in-person meetings and expect those to continue as possible. I also know that some mentors prefer to meet online, so it may not be that much of a shift for you.

For over 40 years, Sacramento State's Gerontology Program has been committed to educating students on the strengths, gifts, talents, and needs of older adults. We also see our role in supporting our community partners in providing a workforce that has in-depth knowledge of aging – including what happens with our bodies as we age, as well as how we address social determinants of health, advocacy, family and caregiver support, policy making, etc.

Making gerontological education accessible to all areas of the state (and beyond) is a social justice issue. We look forward to continuing our service to older adults, their families, and caregivers.

In other exciting news for the Gerontology Department, we are currently working with the California State University Chancellor's office to develop a statewide Gerontology Consortium. This consortium will create a blended online program within the CSU system for Gerontology Bachelor's and Master's degrees. The goal is to increase access to Gerontology education throughout the state and maximize the expertise of faculty and educational opportunities from throughout California.

On a more local level, I am serving as a faculty fellow for the creation of the new Placer Campus. If you haven't heard about the Placer Campus, it's a brand-new campus being built in Lincoln. This is a partnership between Sacramento State and Sierra College. I have been able to represent Gerontology in this effort and we are working on developing the College of Wellness and Longevity. Stay tuned as I would love to connect with those of you residing in Lincoln/Placer County to gain your feedback on the College as well as identifying other community partners in the area to work with.

All in all, it's a busy time for Gerontology!

Donna Jensen, PhD, LCSW
Chair, Gerontology Department



Did You Know?

By Deborah Seiler

- **Did you know that Renaissance Society Board of Directors meetings are open to all members?**

They occur on the first Monday of the month (except for major holidays) and alternate between in person and Zoom.

In person meetings are held at 10 am at the Dunbarton Cabana Clubhouse in Campus Commons which is near Sac State.

They usually last from one and a half to two hours, sometime just a bit more.

Zoom meetings also begin at 10 am on the first Monday. If you are interested in attending and would like information, contact Deborah.seiler2@gmail.com or call 916 704 5735.

Our webmaster, Jennifer Kerr posts the dates on our website...look on the homepage and scroll down to the bottom.

- **Did you know that badges are available at the Renaissance Society office at 350 University Drive?**

Renaissance office hours are 10 am to 1 pm each weekday. Parking is easy (and shady), the building is near campus, and our office is on the first floor. You probably have a badge already prepared for you and our friendly, helpful staff are happy to help. Just come pick it up.

Can't? Let us know and we can arrange something for you. Badges are only needed when you are on campus or on our walks, but they are vitally important because of emergency contact information. We also want to welcome you by name.

- **Did you know that we have pizza parties on the first Friday of each month during the academic year?**

We meet at the Round Table pizza restaurant in the University Union after the Forum ends at 4 pm. We order four large pizzas, hoping to accommodate everyone for at least one slice and usually more.

Please join us. We are easy to spot on the college campus and we are very friendly.

- **Did you know we welcome you to join the various committees that make our Society run?**

This is a superb opportunity to meet other members and usually the tasks are simple with minimal time commitment.

Of course if you want something slightly more challenging, we are always looking for creative folks. Any talent you have can be useful!

- **Did you know that we have New Member Dinners and that our last Forum of each semester ends with a reception or dinner?**

We want to welcome new members and we want to enable seasoned members to interact and share their knowledge and experience with new members. Our gatherings also enable us to encourage new members' ideas and contributions to programming and leadership.

Have other questions?

Please contact Deborah.seiler2@gmail.com or any of our outstanding Board members.



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December Submissions Due: November 2

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