

## President's Message



**Deborah Seiler**

President

The Renaissance Society

of Sacramento

[deborah.seiler2@gmail.com](mailto:deborah.seiler2@gmail.com)

**Renaissance Website:**

<https://csus.edu/rensoc>

## Key Dates

Friday, May 31

*Program Leaders Workshop*

Saturday, June 1

*Registration Portal Opens*

Friday, June 7

*Summer Program: Sojourner  
Truth African Heritage Museum*

Friday, June 14

*Summer Program: African  
Glam Fashion Show*

Friday, June 21

*Summer Program: Mexican  
Music & Theater*

Friday, June 28

*Summer Program: Capitol  
Chinese Orchestra*

## End of Semester Celebrations

At our May 10 Annual Meeting, we concluded our Spring 2024 semester on a high note. Our impressive new Sac State President, Dr. J. Luke Wood, raced to Mendocino Hall, taking time from his jam-packed schedule, to congratulate the Renaissance Society and pose for pictures with our seven scholarship recipients. He combined serious words about the just-resolved protests on campus with uplifting messages about his initiatives to promote the general well-being and diversity of the university through the Black Honors College and Combat U programs. He encouraged questions from our members and answered them with refreshing candor. We were honored and very touched.

MDCE Committee Chair Debbie Martinez and member Dora Dugars presented the St. Andrews AME Church with our annual Diversity and Inclusion award which was received by Rev. Dr. Jason Thompson and Kimberly Washington who worked hard to offer us last summer's unforgettable Gospel Choir performance. Many St. Andrews members attended, and several stayed for the reception which followed.

We announced new members of the Board of Directors: Vice President Deanna Hanson, Controller Dave Ferguson, Members at Large Richard Atkinson, Darryl Freeman, and Jackie Lamb. We also recognized and thanked Anne Putt for stepping into the unofficial but important new position of Assistant Controller. The new Board members take office on July 1.

We also honored our three wonderful staff members: Office Manager Amber Korb, Senior Clerk Lorene Sarne, and Clerk Sandra Ward with lovely bouquets and a few brief words. Please be sure to thank them if you contact them for service.

We celebrated our strong philanthropy as we funded our scholarships and won the ASI Food Pantry's Golden Plate Award for the THIRD consecutive year. Our ushering and mentoring programs were robust, and we look forward to walking, climbing, squatting, and bending for the benefit of the Physical Therapy Dept. doctoral candidates on July 3.

For all this well-deserved celebration, we must face up to challenges.

We ended the year with 1,784 members, which is slightly above last year's total and may sound impressive but is well below our pre-pandemic level. If we remain at this level, our Controller projects a whopping deficit of over \$30,000! We have reserves, but to avoid this steep deficit, we have two options:

- 1) 200 of you need to bring one new member: OR
- 2) We raise dues which we haven't done for six years.

As your President, I am asking you to strive for the former option AND I'm asking you to attempt to attract new members who reflect the beautiful diversity of this region which we are celebrating as part of our Summer Program.

Please renew your membership on June 1 and bring a friend!

Deborah



**Fall 2024 - Spring 2025 Academic Year**  
**MEMBERSHIP REGISTRATION INFORMATION**

This special **Membership Edition of The Recorder** explains the process for signing up for the upcoming Fall 2024— Spring 2025 Academic Year.

Renaissance Society will send a Constant Contact email message on **Saturday, June 1**, with a link to our Registration site inviting you to either renew your membership or to join us for the first time for the upcoming 2024-2025 academic year. ALL Renaissance members will receive a printed June Recorder newsletter in the mail.

**Membership for the 2024-2025 Academic Year is  
\$100.00 per person.**

There are two ways to **Renew or Sign-up** for a Membership:

- 1) **Online** with a credit card payment (preferred method) or
- 2) **By Check** using the form on the next page of this Membership Edition of the Recorder and mailing it in with a check.

Registering online is the fastest, most efficient method and saves administrative costs. The Paper version is available if your online access is limited. The paper form can also be found on the Renaissance Society website, under “Membership” which can be printed, filled in, and mailed in with your check starting on June 1, 2024.

Note: If you will be 90 years old before July 1, 2024, you are eligible to become an Honorary Member and you will no longer be required to pay membership dues. If you register online, just select the “Complimentary Membership” option. If you are already an Honorary Members, please continue to renew each year either online, by mail, or by contacting the office: (916) 758-5133 or email [renaissa@csus.edu](mailto:renaissa@csus.edu)

**ONLINE CREDIT CARD PROCESS:**

To **renew your membership online** you will need to know your **Renaissance Society membership number** which you can look up online with your Last Name and Zip Code at

[apps.cce.csus.edu/sites/renaissanceSociety/index.cfm?lookup](https://apps.cce.csus.edu/sites/renaissanceSociety/index.cfm?lookup)

**The online internet process is simple and safe.**

- Go to the Renaissance Society website at [csus.edu/rensoc](https://csus.edu/rensoc)
- Click on the “Online Registration” box, then
- **Returning Members** click on “Sign Me In” or “Help me Login”
- **New Members** click on “Sign Me Up”
- The system will ask for credit card information to make your payment but it does not retain credit card information once the transaction is completed

It’s simple and in a flash you are up-to-date with your Renaissance Society membership. Do not submit the online registration information more than one time because your credit card will be charged each time. If you think that your payment did not go through, phone the Renaissance Office at (916) 758-5133 or email [renaissa@csus.edu](mailto:renaissa@csus.edu).

Note: Instructions for purchasing parking permits are available at <https://tinyurl.com/RSparking>.

Parking Permits cost \$40 and will be good from July 1, 2024 — June 30, 2025.

You can purchase your parking permit for the new fiscal year starting on June 1, 2024. Go to the UTAPS online parking portal at [https://sacstate.t2hosted.com/cmn/auth\\_ext.aspx](https://sacstate.t2hosted.com/cmn/auth_ext.aspx)



**RENAISSANCE SOCIETY MEMBERSHIP  
APPLICATION FALL 2024/SPRING 2025**  
PLEASE COMPLETE ONE FORM FOR EACH MEMBER

**Please Print**

Have you been a member prior to this year? YES  NO

First Name	Last	Date
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Address: Street	City	Zip
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Phone	Email	
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	
Emergency Contact: Name	Emergency Contact: Phone	
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	

<b>Membership Fee</b> <b>Library Card Fee (\$10)</b> <b>Donation for Renaissance Society General Programs**</b>	<b>\$100.00</b> \$ _____ \$ _____ <b>TOTAL:</b> \$ _____
** Do you want your donation to be anonymous? ____ Yes ____ No	<b>Note: There will be no refunds</b>

Make check payable to:

**The Renaissance Society**  
**California State University, Sacramento**  
**6000 J Street – Mail Stop 6074**  
**Sacramento, CA 95819-6074**

**QUESTIONS**

1. What is your ethnicity?

- African American
- Asian American
- Hispanic/Chicanx/Latinx
- Native American
- Other/Multi-racial
- Pacific Islander
- Caucasian
- Decline to state

2. What is your gender?

- Male
- Female
- Non-binary
- Decline to state

3. Year of birth: \_\_\_\_\_

4. Do you want your name, email, and phone number listed in the Membership Directory?

- Yes  No

5. Do you need a new name badge for on-campus activities?

- Yes  No

6. Preferred name for badge: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature and Date: \_\_\_\_\_

# Your Dues Are a Huge Part of Our Success

*By Norv Wellsfry, Controller*

When the Pandemic shut down Sac State several years ago, the Renaissance Society had a loss of 25% of its Membership. Since then, our membership has stabilized but we have been unable to recover the lost members. As the on-campus program on Friday recovers and expands, it is anticipated that the lost membership will return. Renaissance will continue to deliver its high-quality program this next year.

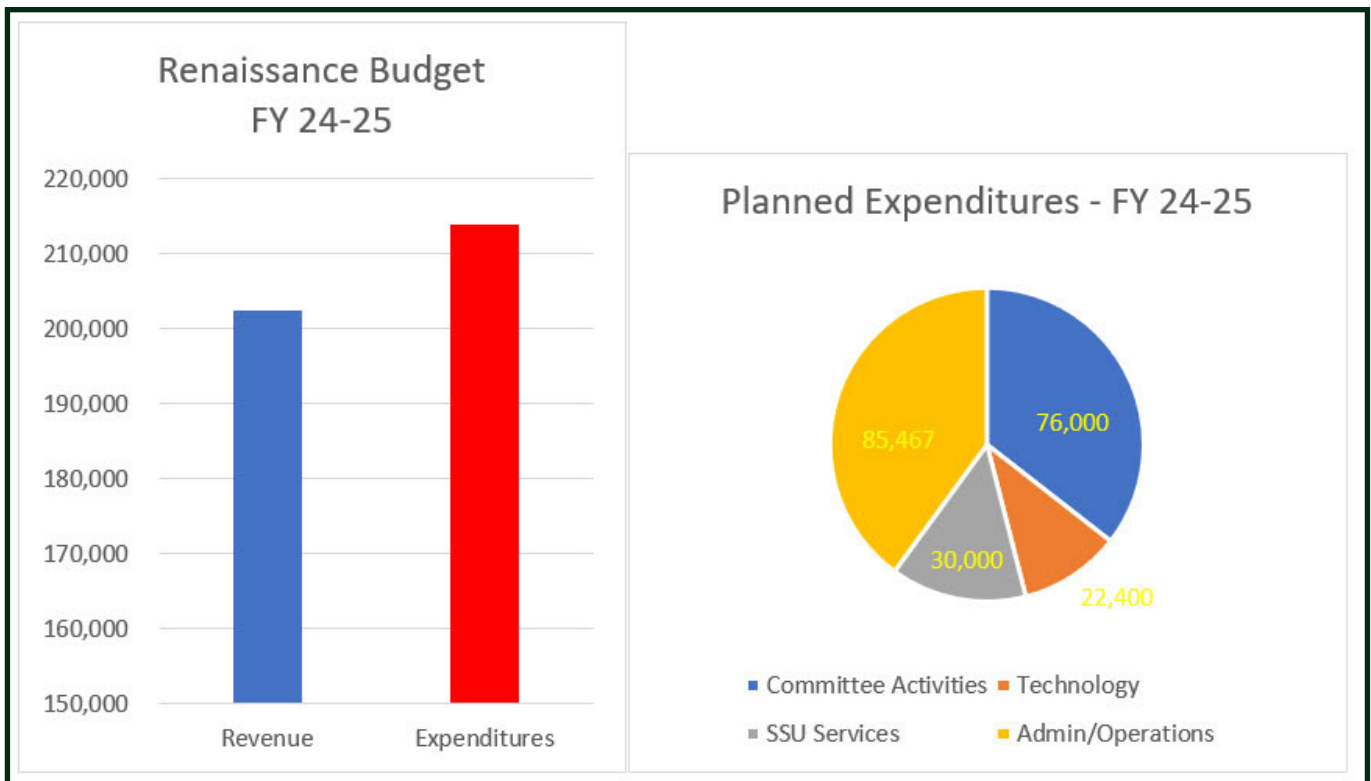
In the past several years, many members have contributed to the “Give a Little Extra” campaign by giving more than the \$100 for membership. This has been a significant factor in improving the stability of our finances.

However, we need more members to improve our financial condition. Renaissance is dependent on membership to support its program. We are

projecting 1,650 members for this coming Fall. However, we will only achieve this level with the cooperation of our current members. If we do not reach our membership goal, we will be faced with the potential for a large deficit. Since most of our costs are fixed, we will need to look at the option of increasing the cost of membership in the coming year. We have a choice, either increase our membership or increase our dues.

We look forward to expanding our return to the campus. When we do, it will be because our members have supported the Society and demonstrate their confidence in our ability to provide one of the best senior learning programs in the country.

The two charts below illustrate our current budget and the expenditures that support our programs.



## A Message from Sac State President, Luke Wood

Greetings Hornet Family,

While many colleges and universities have been encouraged to take sides and embrace a binary approach to global issues, conflicts, and wars across the world, we at Sacramento State have intentionally pursued a third space in these conversations – specifically focused on leading with listening and love – and being intentional about what is within our control. And as many of you know, our listening sessions last semester with over 1,500 students, faculty, staff, and alumni have resulted in a year-long series of new initiatives and efforts to create a safe and welcoming environment for all of our students, including those who identify as Jewish, Palestinian and their allies. More specifically:

- Students expressed concerns that the food options on campus did not provide enough options for their dietary restrictions. So, we intentionally expanded Halal and Kosher food options on campus. This is the first time the campus has ever had this focus.
- Students expressed the need to have places and spaces on campus that serve as sites for their identity development, allyship and belonging. So, a few weeks ago we launched a center focused on serving students who identify as Southwest Asian and North African or SWANA. And yesterday, we celebrated the grand opening of our new Jewish Life and Resource Center in collaboration with Hillel at Davis and Sacramento.
- Students expressed that they felt isolated and alone on campus. So, we created recruitment plans specifically focused on recruiting students who identify as Palestinian and students who identify as Jewish. We want our campus to be an environment where students from all over the nation and world can come and feel supported, safe, and able to engage in honest dialogue without being cancelled or vilified.
- Students expressed that they were in deep pain. The violence and loss of life across the world has led to heartache and fear. This has had an impact on students' focus in the classroom. And, given this, we have sent regular messages to our faculty to be mindful of this emotional strain, to be flexible with students when they can, and to be sensitive to the fact that there are those in this community who have lost loved ones overseas.
- Students expressed concerns that faculty and staff do not always understand their communities and the harm and pain they have endured. So, we have developed partnerships to begin expansive training for our educators including, this fall, trainings on Islamophobia and on anti-Semitism.
- Students expressed that they don't always know who to turn to when bias and hate occur, and that the university had no clear plans for how we would continue to support our diverse communities. So, we created a university-level taskforce on Islamophobia. We also created a university taskforce on anti-Semitism. They are separate taskforces with shared principles of fostering understanding, harmony, safety, and respect.

These have all taken place over the course of this academic year. Our efforts have been a comprehensive approach designed to support students from all communities and with all viewpoints, perspectives, and ideologies. Our goal is to educate, promote peace, and to continue to lead with listening and love.

In addition to inclusive food options, cultural centers, messages to faculty, trainings, and taskforces, I have provided executive guidance to the Sacramento State Foundation and our other auxiliaries on socially responsible investment. This request mirrors similar policies that many nonprofit organizations, educational institutions, government agencies, healthcare organizations, and other entities have put in place. Our policy states that we will not prioritize investments in companies that profit from death and desolation.

Here is why this is important to our community: Sacramento State has long held a stance against genocide, ethnic cleansing and human rights violations. The campus is hosting its 7th international conference on genocide, which will feature the President of Rwanda and the UN Undersecretary for the Prevention of Genocide. We also have numerous faculty who are scholars in this area. In fact, an essential part of my education as a student here at Sacramento State was learning about the genocides in Rwanda, the genocide against Native American peoples, the Holocaust, and human rights violations in Haiti.

This historical focus at Sacramento State has also led to important practices regarding how we approach these global issues at a local level. For example, the finance committee of our University Foundation has been so committed to socially responsible investments that we have no direct investments in any of the companies about which many of our students have concerns. Our new policy on socially responsible investment formalizes the informal and moves from practice to policy. It also provides guidance regarding how we deal with indirect investments, which will be addressed in a thoughtful way.

This policy is not targeted to one nation or people, but to the world. We want a world that prioritizes life, humanity, and understanding. We want a world that sees all our students, that hears their voices, and is attentive to their concerns. And I want to be clear about one thing we did not do: We did not sign a treaty or agreement with students to close the encampment. You sign a treaty with your enemies, not with your students. We are proud that our students expressed their concerns peacefully and in accordance with our policies. The encampment didn't disperse because the protestors saw our policies; they left because they saw our hearts.

Sincerely,  
Dr. Luke Wood, President, Sacramento State



## Vacation Haikus

*By Theo Goodwin*

When we want to get out of our routine or forget the daily frustrations of living in a troubled society, we like to go on vacation and “leave our troubles behind.” What do we expect? On what do we focus our thoughts and vision? I asked myself these questions on a recent trip to Puerto Vallarta, Mexico.

Here are some haiku poems that reflect my thoughts and experiences. I used the free form haiku format to reflect the relaxed needs of a vacation. Fewer rules, more freedom.

1.  
When abroad listen  
to the local voices for kindness  
of the heart.
2.  
Walking the beach  
toes feel hundreds of grains of sand  
formed from rocks by waves.
3.  
I stroll in wet sand  
collecting shells whose owners died,  
whose souls moved on.
4.  
Pelicans sail down,  
jaws wide open scoop up fish,  
they ascend smiling.
5.  
Tiny, round barnacles  
Painted gray, black, cling to stone walls,  
Washed by daily tides.
6.  
On ending my trip  
What did I leave behind,  
What will I bring with me?

Ask yourselves these questions at the end of the Renaissance Society semester or after your next vacation.



## Dining Together

Dining Together will meet at  
Riverside Clubhouse, 2633 Riverside Blvd,  
(<https://riversideclubhouse.com>) at  
5:30 PM on June 12, 2024.



Dining Together members who wish to attend  
should RSVP to  
Cheryl Nelson: [slynnsearch@yahoo.com](mailto:slynnsearch@yahoo.com)  
no later than June 5. Separate checks will be  
provided. Parking is available.



## Take a Hike!

Renaissance aficionado Phil Ho is an avid hiker and would like to organize hikes for members who enjoy the outdoors.

These hikes are designed for intermediate-level and above hikers.

If you are interested, contact Phil at  
[ph5775@yahoo.com](mailto:ph5775@yahoo.com) for details and to set dates.



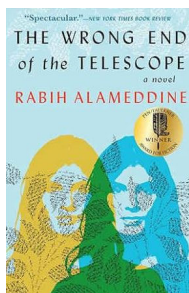
## *In Memoriam*

Mary Norsweather, a long time member died in November. She was 102 years old and attended regularly until Covid.



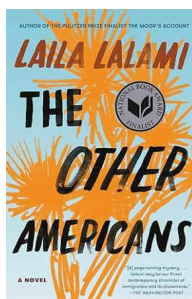
## READINGS ON DIVERSITY

By Robert Benedetti and Roberta Gleason



### **The Wrong End of the Telescope** by Rabih Alameddine

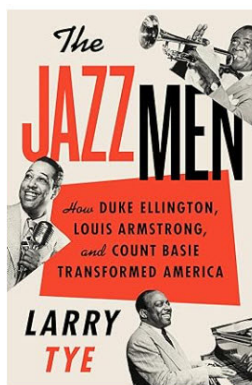
Mina Simpson, a Lebanese doctor, arrives at the infamous Moria refugee camp on Lesbos, Greece, after being urgently summoned for help by her friend who runs an NGO there. Alienated from her family except for her beloved brother, Mina has avoided being so close to her homeland for decades. But with a week off work and apart from her wife of thirty years, Mina hopes to accomplish something meaningful, among the abundance of Western volunteers who pose for selfies with beached dinghies and the camp's children. Soon, a boat crosses bringing Sumaiya, a fiercely resolute Syrian matriarch with terminal liver cancer. Determined to protect her children and husband at all costs, Sumaiya refuses to alert her family to her diagnosis. Bonded together by Sumaiya's secret, a deep connection sparks between the two women, and as Mina prepares a course of treatment with the limited resources on hand, she confronts the circumstances of the migrants' displacement, as well as her own constraints in helping them.



### **The Other Americans: A Novel** by Laila Lalami

Late one spring night in California, Driss Guerraoui—father, husband, business owner, Moroccan immigrant—is hit and killed by a speeding car. The aftermath of his death brings together a diverse cast of characters: Guerraoui's daughter Nora, a jazz composer returning to the small town in the Mojave she thought she'd left for good; her mother, Maryam, who still pines for her life in the old country; Efraín, an undocumented witness whose fear of deportation prevents him from coming forward; Jeremy, an old friend of Nora's and an Iraqi War veteran; Coleman, a detective who is slowly discovering her son's secrets; Anderson, a neighbor trying to reconnect with his family; and the murdered man himself.

As the characters—deeply divided by race, religion, and class—tell their stories, each in their own voice, connections among them emerge. Driss's family confronts its secrets, a town faces its hypocrisies, and love—messy and unpredictable—is born.



### **The Jazzmen: How Duke Ellington, Louis Armstrong, and Count Basie Transformed America**

By Larry Tye

A sweeping and spellbinding portrait of the longtime kings of jazz—Duke Ellington, Louis Armstrong, and Count Basie—who, born within a few years of one another, overcame racist exclusion and violence to become the most popular entertainers on the planet.

This is the story of three revolutionary American musicians, the maestro jazzmen who orchestrated the chords that throb at the soul of twentieth-century America.

- **Duke Ellington**, the grandson of slaves who was christened Edward Kennedy Ellington, was a man whose story is as layered and nuanced as his name suggests and whose music transcended category.
- **Louis Daniel Armstrong** was born in a New Orleans slum so tough it was called The Battlefield and, at age seven, got his first musical instrument, a ten-cent tin horn that drew buyers to his rag-peddling wagon and set him on the road to elevating jazz into a pulsating force for spontaneity and freedom.
- **William James Basie**, too, grew up in a world unfamiliar to white fans—the son of a coachman and laundress who dreamed of escaping every time the traveling carnival swept into town, and who finally engineered his getaway with help from Fats Waller.

What is far less known about these groundbreakers is that they were bound not just by their music or even the discrimination that they, like nearly all Black performers of their day, routinely encountered. Each defied and ultimately overcame racial boundaries by opening America's eyes and souls to the magnificence of their music. In the process they wrote the soundtrack for the civil rights movement.

Based on more than 250 interviews, this exhaustively researched book brings alive the history of Black America in the early-to-mid 1900s through the singular lens of the country's most gifted, engaging, and enduring African-American musicians.



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July-August Submissions Due: June 2

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Sacramento CA 95819

**Our Summer Program is Filled with Adventure!**

If you have visited our website, you know what an exciting Summer Program we have planned. We hope you've signed up on Eventbrite for the presentations you wish to attend.

In addition to the presentations, we have added outings to some restaurants that reflect the culture featured in the presentation.

**Friday, June 7** - Following our tour of the *Sojourner Truth African Heritage Museum* we have organized an optional trip to *Abyssinia Restaurant*, 1346 Fulton Ave in Sacramento which features Ethiopian cuisine. We've arranged a no host, \$20 buffet lunch accompanied by the owner's explanation of food and culture in Ethiopia. To sign up, contactCarolynn Washington at cwashington@lsnc.net

**Friday, June 28** - Our exciting *Capitol Chinese Orchestra* presentation will be in Shasta Hall, Room 113 and the theater department has agreed to offer a backstage tour of the *Shasta Hall Theater*. We are working to organize another no host lunch at *Ming Dynasty*, so stay tuned for an announcement in the Weekly Update.

**Friday, July 26** - Following Ginger Rutland's talk about her upcoming play, *When We Were Colored*, we plan to go to *Fixin's* soul food restaurant in Oak Park followed by a 2 pm tour of the historic *Guild Theater*. To sign up for the no host lunch and the theater tour, wait for an announcement in the Weekly Update

**Friday, August 2** - Come hear *Traditional Japanese Music* and then go to *Fuji Restaurant* on 1235 Broadway for a special buffet lunch featuring traditional Japanese offerings not typically available. This \$30 no host lunch will feature acclaimed Chef Russell Okuba discussing the cuisine as well as a presentation by member Priscilla Ouchida who still prepares Japanese food in a traditional style retained in California but lost in Japan. For sign ups look for an announcement in the Weekly Update.

No boring summers for Renaissance members!

