



Renaissance Society Annual Report 2023-2024

Prepared By: Deanna Hanson and Amber Korb



Learn. Connect. Share.

Renaissance Society of Sacramento
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(2023-2024)

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MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

October 2024

Greetings Everyone.

This past year the Renaissance Society (RS) celebrated its 38th anniversary of learning, connecting, and sharing at Sacramento State. Our Society was established in 1986 by faculty, staff, and community members including Bob Heilman, Peg McKoane, and Robert Arellanes. Then President Donald Gerth and First Lady Beverly Gerth not only acted as enthusiastic supporters, but also provided a \$2,500 loan (\$7,200 in 2024 dollars) to launch the program.

Today our Society has grown from about 40 founding members to 1,784 at the end of FY 2023-2024. It is a premier life-long learning organization featuring a unique peer-to-peer model in which members teach and learn from one another.

This Annual Report chronicles our many program offerings, the highly successful 2024 Summer Program, our record philanthropy, engagement with Sac State students, and many social activities to enrich the lives of our members.

Some highlights:

- Third consecutive year winning the ASI Food Pantry's Golden Plate Award with over \$40,000 in donations throughout the year
- Seven \$3,000 scholarships bringing our cumulative total to \$290,000 for 128 scholarships since 1993
- Funding for three endowed scholarships
- Participation at the July 2023 Homeless World Cup Soccer event
- Diversity outreach to community partners such as St. Andrews AME Church and ACC
- Resumed efforts to reinstate RS presentations at local libraries

Major transitions at Sac State provided opportunities to meet new President Dr. Luke Wood, new Vice President for Student Affairs Aniesha Mitchell, and Senior Advisor Mark Wheeler among others. All have welcomed our Society and endeavored to better understand our mission and contributions to Sac State students.

We were fortunate to continue our fine relationship with Dr. Dianne Hyson who, as Dean of the College of SSIS, is our official liaison and a dear friend.

A major challenge we confronted was to diversify our membership, programming, and leadership. While we made some progress, we know we have much farther to go and plan to re-double our efforts in 2024-2025.

Come join us for another great year and help us pursue our goals!

Deborah Seiler, President
Renaissance Society of Sacramento



The Renaissance Society members and presenters adhere to CSU Statement of Values:

The California State University (CSU, which includes Sacramento State (Sac State), is committed to maintaining an inclusive and equitable community that values diversity and fosters mutual respect. We embrace our community differences in Age, Disability (physical and mental), Gender (or sex), Gender identity (including nonbinary and transgender), Gender Expression, Genetic Information, Marital Status, Medical Condition, Nationality, Race or Ethnicity (including color, caste, or ancestry), Religion (or religious creed), Sexual Orientation, Veteran or Military Status. All Students and Employees have the right to participate fully in CSU programs, activities, and employment free from Discrimination, Harassment, Sexual Misconduct, Sexual Exploitation, Dating Violence, Domestic Violence, Stalking, and Retaliation.

INTRODUCTION

It is my pleasure to be the editor of the Renaissance Society 2023-2024 Annual Report. This report provides an overview of the Renaissance Society's accomplishments and activities for the fiscal year 2023-2024.

If you have questions or would like to find out more about the Renaissance Society, please contact the Renaissance Society Office at renaissa@csus.edu or (916) 758-5133. To find out more about joining the Renaissance Society, please visit our website at csus.edu/rensoc. Follow us on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/rensocietysac> or X(aka) Twitter <https://twitter.com/RenaissanceSoc1>

Although we are a volunteer organization, we are so fortunate to have three part time staff who serve our members by helping them navigate our web site and registration process. Amber Korb is our Office Manager, Lorene Sarne manages the course catalog and all communications with presenters and Sandy Ward assists all of us communicate with our members. We wish to thank them very much.

Deanna Hanson, Editor

Renaissance is Grateful for the Support of University Leadership

Sacramento State's President, Dr. Luke Wood, has been very welcoming to our members and complimentary of the work of the Renaissance Society. We have had the opportunity to participate in various meetings and events with Dr. Wood as well as with faculty, staff and students.

Dr. Wood shared his vision and progress in his time at Sac State during our end-of-year Annual Meeting. He communicated new initiatives to promote the general well-being and diversity of the university. Here, at Sac State, the first Black Honors College in the United States, is dedicated to fostering academic excellence and cultural awareness with the Black community. Dr. Wood has also inaugurated Combat U, the first-ever university-backed development program for combat sports. The program will provide an entry point for students seeking a world-class education as well as high-level opportunities for combat sports training and competition. And, he stated, there will be much more to come during the 2024/2025 school year.

Dr. Wood is the ninth permanent President of Sacramento State University. He is a proud alumnus receiving both a BA and MA in Childhood Education Leadership from Sac State before continuing at Arizona State University where he received an MA in Early Childhood Education and a PhD in Educational Leadership and Policy Studies. In 2023 he was appointed by the State Senate to serve on the California Racial Equity Commission. He is a consistent voice on leadership theory, black male achievement and school suspensions.



*California State University, Sacramento
President Dr. Luke Wood*

We are honored to be part of Sac State and all there is to come under Dr. Wood's leadership.

SEMINARS, LECTURES, AND SHARED INTEREST GROUPS



The Renaissance Society of Sacramento
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The Renaissance Society expanded how members could participate in and attend programs. In addition to offering programs in person, on Zoom, and hybrid, Program Leaders also offered walk-in programs. Walk-in programs enabled members who had not previously signed up for a class to walk into these designated programs to find a seat on a first come, first served basis.

Renaissance Society programs come in a variety of styles:

- **Seminars** — Led by members, focus on a specific topic, and run for 2 to 13 weeks.
- **Shared Interest Groups (SIGs)** — Led by members, offer activities centered on groups sharing common interests and ideas, e.g. dancing, writing, reading, and language. SIGs generally run for 6 to 13 weeks or some may run year-round.
- **One-Time Presentation Series** — Feature a variety of single presentations by Renaissance Society members or community speakers. Each of the series generally runs for 6 to 13 weeks.
- **Summer Programs** — Continued the emphasis on diverse presentations and welcomed everyone, including non-members.
- **Forums** — This Friday speaker series features exceptional and engaging thought leaders who discuss topics based on their areas of expertise. During Fall semester 2023, we welcomed Attorney General Rob Bonta, Mayor Darrell Steinberg, Tammy Ma, Kathryn Kasic, Christine Kreuder Johnson, Geoffrey Schladow, Nilda Valmores, Larry Berman, Jaime Mason, Ryan Mallory, and Michael Troyan. Spring 2024 brought Dean Amy Kautzman, Bill George, Aaron Tang, Dr. John Gray, Kenn Altine, Arthur Angel Luna, Randall Hagar, Michael Sanford, Jaime Mason, Greg Jung, Jason Jacobs, and Professor Scott Stephens. President Deborah Seilers capped off the end of both semesters accompanied by President Luke Wood.

We published two illustrated semester catalogs as digital flipbooks, filled with course descriptions and leader profiles. We also published a calendar format schedule (At-A-Glance) that our members could use to select programs based on date, time, location, and delivery format.



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2023-2024 Academic Year Programs by the Numbers

Program	Fall 2023	Spring 2024
Seminars	38	37
SIGS	26	24
One-time Presentations	32	34
Forums	12	13
Total Number of Programs	108	108
Total Number of Enrollments	8,470	9,692
Diversity & Inclusion Programs	24	27

Total number of enrollments (Fall 2023 [8,470] + Spring 2024 [9,692]) = 18,162

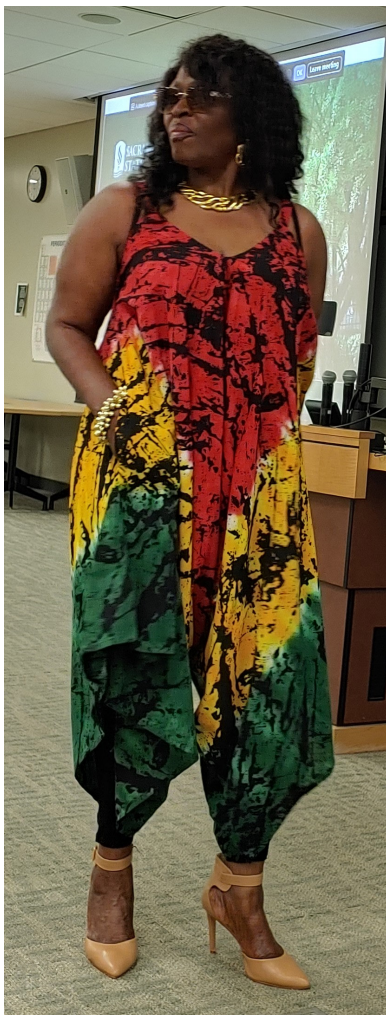
Total number of 2023/2024 programs = 207

Summer Series

Artivism: How it Can Address Community Issues



Capitol Chinese Orchestra



African Glam Fashion Show

Our summer series, which is open to the public, continued in 2024 with an emphasis on diversity. We celebrated culture, clothing, music and wonderful food over the eight programs beginning June 7 and running through August 2. We attracted Renaissance members as well as friends, community members and students. One program was well attended by students and their teacher from Luther Burbank High School.

We enjoyed a tour of Sojourner Truth Museum, an African glam fashion show by Unlimited Fashions, Artivism: how it can address community issues, Capitol Chinese Orchestra performance, Japanese Music with centuries old musical instruments, Mexican muralists, The Secret Story of Quilts and the Underground Railroad and a presentation by Ginger Rutland covering her upcoming play, “When We Were Colored”.

Many presentations were followed by lunch at area restaurants such as Abyssinia Ethiopian Restaurant, Ming Dynasty, Fuji Sacramento, and Fixin’s Soul Kitchen. Most of the programs were held on campus in Del Norte Hall. More than 600 people attended in-person with many also on Zoom and able to watch on our You Tube Channel.



EDUCATIONAL PARTNERSHIPS WITH SACRAMENTO STATE

The Renaissance Society has a dedicated Volunteer Services Committee that supports Sac State student services and results in building upon the close relationship between the Renaissance Society and the University. The Committee serves as the RS liaison to the Sac State ASI Food Pantry, Theater/Dance, Gerontology, Physical Therapy, Psychology and Audiology Departments. This allows Renaissance Society to integrate its members into the fabric of the Sac State community by volunteering thousands of hours as well as fund raising to support student needs. Members offer themselves as patients to students training in medical specialties, as subjects for student and faculty led research, as mentors to students, and as ushers at student performances.



Dr. Luke Wood, Barbara Davis-Lyman, Jack Jennings



RS Secretary Susan Brackenhoff, Dean Dianne Hyson, RS President Deborah Seiler



GERONTOLOGY DEPARTMENT

The highly regarded Gerontology program at Sacramento State continues to train professionals who will meet the needs of the increasing number of Americans ages 65 and older, expected to increase from 58 million in 2022 to 82 million in 2050. The Renaissance Society legacy of supporting this important program involved a total of 126 Renaissance members serving as volunteers to mentor students enrolled during Fall and Spring semesters.

Each mentor and student relationship develops throughout the semester with in-person interviews adding a greater understanding of the lives of the mentors and their students. The final class meeting provides an opportunity for each student to share with the class what they have learned about their mentor in this process. Many Renaissance members have volunteered over the course of the program and are still in touch with their students, a real measure of the program's success.



“The Department of Gerontology is honored to have the continued support of the Renaissance Society and its dedicated members. Often students come into the class with stereotypes and preconceptions of what it means to age, and the experience of working with older adults. Without fail, our Renaissance Mentors shatter those stereotypes and preconceptions in a way that a textbook or classroom lecture could not. We are most grateful for the Renaissance Society for its commitment to our students.”

— Donna Jensen, PhD, LCSW, Chair & Professor, Department of Gerontology.



PHYSICAL THERAPY

Sixty Renaissance Society members took part in an assessment by the Department of Physical Therapy. These doctoral students work under the supervision of Licensed Physical Therapists. RS members left with a personalized treatment and home exercise plan and a better understanding of the importance of maintaining physical flexibility and balance, especially throughout the aging process.



AUDIOLOGY

Renaissance members are invited to receive hearing evaluation, ear molds, and other related services through the Maryjane Rees Language, Speech, and Hearing Center Audiology Clinic. Members then receive a written report they can share with their doctor. The services provided to our members enable the Doctor of Audiology (Au.D.) students to experience working with older adults and practice their skills on a wide range of hearing related issues.

THEATER USHERING

During Fall 2023 our members' involvement with the Theatre Department was limited to a dance production, with a limited need for ushers. Eleven Renaissance volunteer ushers covered one dance production in four separate shows held at the smaller theatre. During Spring 2024, the Theater Department presented three productions: 1) Sacramento /Black Art of Dance 2024 – Rooted in Relevance (March 7-10) in Playwrights Theatre; 2) Into the Woods (4/5-7) in University Theatre; and 3) The Antigone Project: A Devised Production (May 9-12) in University Theatre. A total of 39 Renaissance members assisted by ushering during these events.



ASI FOOD PANTRY VOLUNTEERS

In addition to Renaissance members' monetary contributions to the ASI Food Pantry, several members volunteered to work. Bruce Gunn, Bob Diercks, Will Vizzard, Diana Vizzard, Rob Taylor and Pat Paul were involved in a myriad of ways. They helped with deliveries, restocking, greeting students, inspecting produce, bin washing and leading new volunteers.

HOMELESS WORLD CUP SOCCER

One of Dr. Robert S. Nelsen's last acts as President of Sac State was to oversee the 18th Homeless World Cup which was the first time the Cup was held in the US and on a university campus. To show support for President Nelsen and 400 formerly homeless soccer players from 40 countries around the world, Renaissance members turned out July 8 - 15 to witness street soccer and cheer for the players. Some recruited children and grandchildren to serve as referees and one member, Beth Mann, cheered for her son Chris who led the team from Sacramento.



OUR GRATITUDE

Many Thanks to Sac State University Staff

The Renaissance Society couldn't do what we do without the support of the administration and staff of the University.

Our key partner is our liaison, Dr. Dianne Hyson, Dean of the College of Social Sciences and Interdisciplinary Studies (SSIS). Dean Hyson attends meetings of the RS Board of Directors and helps us navigate the University Enterprises, Inc. (UEI) process so that we can smoothly transact our organizational business. Assistant Deans, Dr. Boatamo "Ati" Mosupyoe and Dr. Marya Endriga assist her with these endeavors. As a team, they provide us with invaluable guidance on working with the various university departments and keep us informed on important news and developments at the University.

Sac State provides a wide range of technical assistance to Renaissance Society as well. Specific thanks go to:



Dean Dianne Hyson

Jeff Dierking, Director of University Transportation
& Parking Services (UTAPS)

Steve Grondin, Consultant Information Technology, CCE

Ehsan Halterman, Instructional Multimedia Consultant, IRT

Lori Harrison, Schedule Analyst, Space Management, Administration & Business Affairs

Mark Hendricks, Vice President & CIO, IRT

Deborah Hunt, Chief Deputy Director, Organizational Excellence and Leadership, CCE

Donna Jensen, Gerontology Department Chair

Peggy Kay, Associate Vice President for Academic Technology & Campus Engagement
and Deputy Chief Information Officer, IRT

Steve Morgan, PC Technician, Information Technology, UEI

Julie Taylor Perdun, Account Administration, UEI

Dale Powers, Account Administration, UEI

Camellia Sahm, Director of Space Management, Administration & Business Affairs

Cheryl Stone, Accounts Payable Supervisor, UEI

Robert Van Winkle, Info Tech Consultant Expert, IRT

Ian Watts-Willis, Identity Management Analyst, IRT

THE RENAISSANCE TRADITION OF GENEROSITY



Deborah Seiler, Sommer Hayes, Carol Barake

The Renaissance Society continues to grow and be a vital part of the Sacramento State family making a significant impact on our community. We are deeply grateful for the diverse ways each member contributes. Member gifts support Sacramento State students and make a significant difference in their lives.

Thank you to our generous members, who donated nearly \$45,000 to the Sacramento State food pantry last year. Our Renaissance community has won the coveted “Golden Plate” award for the past three years. This support is vital to student success and is deeply appreciated. Fundraising is all about helping students when they need it most. Nearly 11 percent of California State University students admitted to being homeless—sleeping in their car, on a friend’s couch, in a shelter, or outdoors—at least once during the past year, and 41.6 percent sometimes went hungry. Almost half described their food security as low or very low.

Annually, the Renaissance Society awards \$3,000 scholarships to seven Sacramento State students whose field of study relates to older adults’ intellectual, social, and health needs. We are grateful for the generosity of our members who have donated to the scholarship fund which has continued to grow over the years. Christina Budwine spoke regarding the struggles and efforts that students may have. *“I find joy in pursuing learning, whether I take a class, develop a seminar, join a group, or give my support to provide scholarships for deserving students. Learning is not just getting a degree. A degree may open doors but learning feeds curiosity. It keeps our brains alive, while the engagement and participation keep us vital and healthy.”*

The impact we’re making is remarkably inspiring. There is a “Donate” button on our webpage to make it easy for our members to make donations online. If each of our members donated to one of our resource development projects, it would have a dramatic effect on our community. While some donors wish to remain anonymous, RS believes that recognition encourages participation and camaraderie.



Major Donor Recognition Event, November 2023



Scholarship Committee Chair Laurye Brownfield, Deborah Seiler, & Scholarship Recipients

STUDENT SCHOLARSHIPS

Established in 1993, the RS Scholarship Fund has provided a tangible expression of our devotion to students and our gratitude to Sac State. This year RS once again gave seven \$3,000 scholarships, totaling \$21,000 to deserving students after screening over one hundred qualified applicants. These awards bring the total number of scholarships awarded by RS to 128, for a cumulative amount of \$290,000 to support academic excellence. All scholarship funding is provided by voluntary contributions from individual members. Two of the seven scholarships have been endowed.

This year's winners and their majors are:

- Jasmine Asfour - Doctorate of Physical Therapy
- Jackie Chang - Biomedical Science
- Prynness Deloney - Health Science
- Nargis Karamatova - Biomedical Science
- Javier Marquez - Social Work
- Missael Perez - Doctorate of Physical Therapy
- Pham Tong - Nursing

"I sincerely appreciate the Renaissance Society for selecting me as a recipient of this scholarship and want to emphasize the impact this support will have on my academic pursuits and more. I'm determined to continue working towards my goal of becoming a doctor and making a meaningful difference in my community, being able to potentially give back."

— Jackie Chang, scholarship winner



"Stingers Up!" with President Wood & Scholarship Recipients

GERONTOLOGY SCHOLARSHIPS

Through the generosity of long time Renaissance member Dolores Eitel, each year Gerontology students receive \$2,500 scholarships. This year the recipients were Fapiena “Faye” Kaho, Michelle Silva, and April Thompson.

MUSIC SEMINAR AWARDS



Sac State Music Department Leaders and RS Classical Music Seminar Members with Awardees

On Friday, December 8, 2023, participants of the Renaissance Classical Music Seminar awarded \$1,000 grants to two music students from the Sac State School of Music. The recipients, Laliqe Montesini and Kenya Abdallah, are percussion majors and were chosen by the Sac State faculty. Both students were also recently selected as winners of the Festival of New American Music competition.

Each Spring, Renaissance Society member Robert Seyfried leads a Classical Music seminar in Capistrano Hall. Seminar participants share their love of music by contributing to a music grant program. Two \$1,000 grant awards were announced at the end of the Spring 2024 semester to Sac State music students. The winners this year were two remarkable young music students, Stella Moschovas, violin and Oskar Castanedas, piano. The selections were made by their professors, Anna Presler and Kirsten Smith. A special thanks goes to the wonderful members of our seminar whose generous contributions makes these grants an ongoing reality. Since the beginning of these Classical Music Seminars, more than \$85,000 has been raised for School of Music students.

SETH NELSEN STUDENT EMERGENCY FUND

RS donates to the Seth Nelsen Student Emergency Fund in honor of each speaker at our Friday Forum series. \$600 was contributed to this fund supporting students in need.

SOCIAL ACTIVITIES: AN IMPORTANT BENEFIT FOR MEMBERS

Social activities bring members together for fun and friendship. Social engagement is a critical element of belonging to Renaissance Society. Social opportunities are provided via events and activities as well as participation in programs – both in-person and on Zoom. These activities ward off the isolation often felt after retirement and have been proven to provide both physical and mental stimulation.

We celebrated September 17, Mexican Independence Day at Arden Park. This event celebrated our return to Fall semester classes and paid honor to Hispanic-Latinx Heritage Month. 75 members ate, drank, chatted and listened to music – a good way to celebrate returning to classes.



Musicians at Mexican Independence Day Social

We welcomed our largest gathering of new members – 65 - in many years at a catered reception on Friday, October 27 at Nepenthe Club House in Campus Commons. Many connections were made between new and veteran members who attended to promote ideas for future seminars and social events.



Deborah Seiler, President Wood, & Dr. Idara Essien-Wood

Sixty attended our Holiday Jingle and Mingle on Friday, December 8 at Engrained Restaurant in the University Union. We enjoyed a delicious buffet dinner and a no-host bar. Decorations, provided by Susan Brackenhoff, made the room sparkle while Frank Martinez played DJ, spinning lively music of the season! President Luke Wood and his wife Idara Essien-Wood surprised us by stopping by to wish us happy holidays!

On Sunday, May 19, the “Celebration of Spring” party was held at Nepenthe Club House in Campus Commons. Although we were sad that classes were ending, several members had fascinating summer trips they were looking forward to. Also, the planned summer programs promised exciting diverse presentations. The day was perfect for enjoying seating at poolside as we listened to music provided by Frank Martinez.



RS at Music Circus

Through the generosity of Broadway Sacramento, Renaissance was offered a block of tickets for the Music Circus dress rehearsal performances of both Jersey Boys and 42nd Street.

MEMBERSHIP, DIVERSITY & COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT (MDCE)

The goal of the MDCE Committee, led by Debbie Martinez, continues to be building membership with special attention to expanding diversity and working closely with community partners. We finished the year with 1,784 members. Our goal for 2023/24 was to continue to increase membership renewals as well as attract new first-time members.

RS Ambassadors and Board members participated in various outreach events and speaking engagements to publicize the Renaissance Society. We participated in the HART Center Senior Pride Fair, a walk-a-thon sponsored by A Caring Community (ACC), Fair Oaks Harvest Day and several other community-wide events. These events allow us to build community name recognition, leading to increased membership as well as providing our members with the opportunity to actively participate in promoting Renaissance.



Martin Luther King Jr. Day Walk with Mayor Darrell Steinberg



Membership is much more than numbers. It includes providing support for our members when they renew and when they enroll in programs. We provided Fall and Spring Orientation for new members and Open House events featuring presenters, and provided both on-campus and community organizations an opportunity to showcase their organizations. We were able to show our new and returning members our enthusiasm for our programs and introduce new members to on-campus services such as the Cardiovascular Wellness, Physical Therapy and Audiology services provided to RS members.



January 2024 Open House at Unitarian Universalist Society of Sacramento

THE WARREN BONTA DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION AWARD

The Warren Bonta Diversity and Inclusion Award is given annually to recognize an individual or organization that has worked to further the Renaissance Society's goals of creating a more diverse and inclusive organization. This year's recipient was the St. Andrews African Methodist Episcopal Church of Sacramento.

Under the leadership of their pastor, the Rev. Dr. Jason Thompson, St. Andrews and the Renaissance Society co-sponsored a beautiful and highly successful Gospel Choir concert. St. Andrews has continued to support us by tabling at our Open House and promoting RS events to their community. A cohort program was established to encourage St. Andrews members to join the Renaissance Society.

MDCE Committee Chair, Debbie Martinez and RS member Dora Dugars presented the award at the Annual Meeting on May 10, 2024. Rev. Dr. Jason Thompson and Kimberly Washington accepted the award on behalf of St. Andrews. Many St. Andrews members attended, and several stayed for the reception which followed.



Debbie Martinez presenting the Warren Bonta Diversity and Inclusion Award to Rev. Dr. Jason Thompson with Dora Dugars (left) and Kimberly Washington (right)

FINANCES

In Fiscal Year 2023-24, Renaissance Society membership increased over the prior Fiscal Year. Most Renaissance Society revenues are from membership dues. Fortunately, many members make an additional contribution through a donation to “Give Something Extra.”

Financial Results

For the current Fiscal Year, revenues from members were less than expected. Revenues were \$182,917, which is less than budget by \$21,082, or 10.3%.

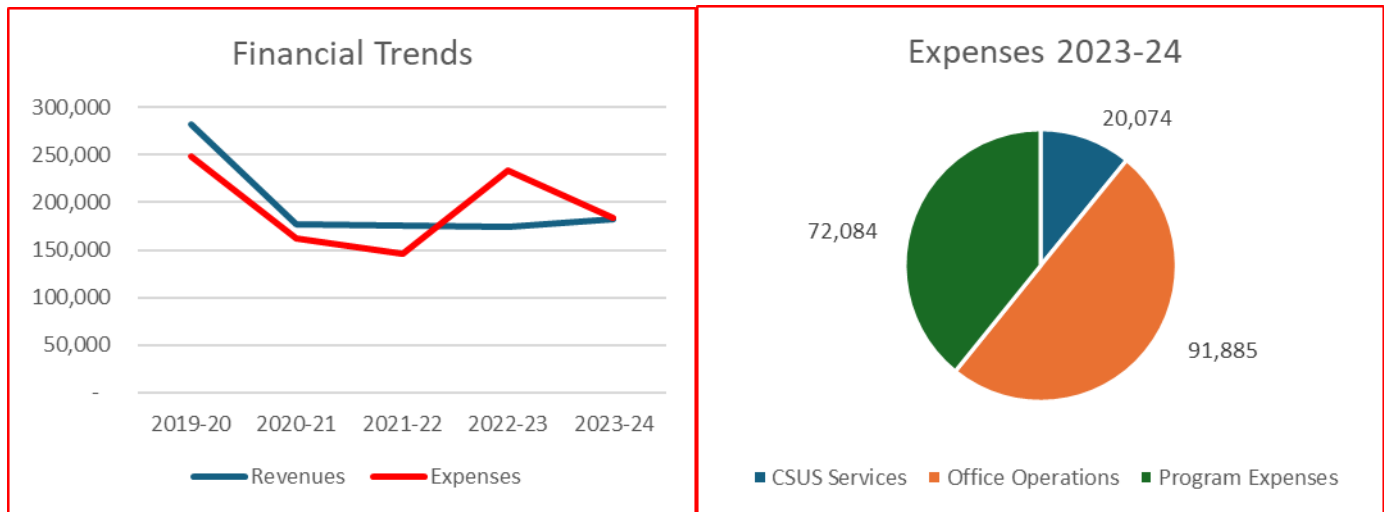
Expenses for the current Fiscal Year were lower than budget. Expenses came in at \$184,043, which is lower than the budget by \$28,404, or 13.4%. This result is due to:

- Salaries and payroll taxes were less than plan by \$10,788
- Consultant fees were lower by \$4,250
- Project Expenses were down by \$3,572
- Rent was lower by \$2,878

For Fiscal Year 2023-24, the Renaissance Society had a small deficit of \$1,126. This is better than was budgeted by \$7,321, or 86.7%.

Financial Condition

Renaissance Society has maintained a conservative cash balance to manage any financial deficit. We enter the new Fiscal Year with a cash balance of \$178,611. This is a strong financial position and allows the Renaissance Society to continue its mission to learn, connect, and share.



Scholarship Results

For the Fiscal Year, the scholarship funds continued to grow. The funds started the Fiscal Year with \$272,622 in assets. They ended the Fiscal Year with \$359,892 in assets. The net assets grew by \$87,270, which is an increase of 32.0%.



RENAISSANCE
SOCIETY
SACRAMENTO STATE

Learn. Connect. Share.

“The Renaissance Society, in partnership with California State University, Sacramento, provides innovative learning and community engagement for the older adult community.” (Mission Statement)

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Cover Art courtesy of Renaissance Members (clockwise from top) Laurene Fitzpatrick, Christie Braziel, Jane Steele, Jeff Hendy, Allan Keown, David Grenier, Judy Maben, and Allan Keown.