



# Senate FORUM

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A publication of the Academic Senate, California State University, Fullerton

SENATE FORUM PRESENTS

## Arrivals & Departures

*Interviews with Cal State faculty and administration as they look toward the next chapter*

**What attracted you to the position of chancellor of the CSU system?**

Well, I've always admired the mission of the CSU. I had been chancellor in Florida for 14 years, and it was a combination of UC and CSU, and I knew about the master plan in California, which made it clear what the State Universities and the Community Colleges and the Universities of California did.

CSU's mission has two parts. First, the CSUs help students help the people of California — teacher education and nursing, for example, with CSU giving us 65 percent of nurses, 95 percent of the people in welfare services, and so on. CSU almost exclusively has that over UC. And with Cal Poly SLO, Fresno, Chico and Humboldt, CSU has the largest undergraduate program in agriculture in the United States. More than anyone else. And look at engineering! We prepare half the engineers in the United States. Almost 65 percent of the engineers in Silicon Valley come from CSU. So there's an economic side — preparing California's workforce — and a clear mission of reaching out to underserved communities, especially the most needy and students of color. So I decided: Let's go do it.

**What would you say have been your top three accomplishments?**

One of the things I'm proud of is that I was able to make the system grow and provide access since I became chancellor in 1997. I had the opportunity to make this place grow. I brought in a new campus at Channel Island, and Monterey Bay was only a couple years old when I started. Now there are a hundred thousand more students than when I came in. As part of that growth, I have signed more than 2 million



diplomas. If you think about it, all those people have diplomas signed by one of four different governors, but those diplomas are all signed by the same chancellor.

Second, I saw the need to change the master plan. My predecessors had tried it and failed, so I led the effort to get the CSU to put together applied doctorates in education and nursing. California has fewer students per capita with terminal degrees in K-12 and the Community Colleges, and that's because the UCs didn't want to do it and didn't want anyone else to do it. We had to overcome that in the legislature. There was a huge fight with the UCs over this. I could have passed the bill two years before, but Gray Davis said he would veto it. I used to work for a governor and there's nothing in that. I agreed to work on a joint degree.

### Charles Reed

CHANCELLOR  
California State University

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*REED continued*

So I talked to the Berkeley faculty who said, “We’ll work with you. We’ll take seven students.” That was ridiculous. So having the opportunity to change the Master Plan and recognize the strengths of the CSU.

Third, I’m really proud of how all the presidents and the campuses work together to create unique outreach programs for under-served Californians. Super Sundays, for example, when we meet with African American church leaders. I spent all February and part of March going to African American churches. Our African American enrollment has increased 25 percent. We offer algebra in those churches in the summer. We also have PIQE (Parental Initiative for Quality Education) particularly to be sure Latino kids are prepared and clear about what they need to do. They get passes to go to sporting events and use the library. There also are Asian American and Pacific Islander programs and a Native American program. That has been the hardest. California has more than 100 tribes, and they told me they each were sovereign nations and we needed to deal with them one at a time.

### **Where does the Compact fit in all of this?**

Compact worked when California had money, and didn’t work when California didn’t. It did provide certainty for planning purposes. One of my disappointments is that the political leadership in California decided to disinvest in higher education. There are a lot of competing priorities. Healthcare, the prison system, and K-12 are all competing priorities. Another one of my biggest disappointments has been the CFA. Their mantra is “We want to fight.” I’m not interested in fighting. I want to do the best I can. I can’t spend money I don’t have. They never understood the word “No.” They think I can take the parking lot money and use it for ongoing salaries. And your CFA friends have so much money, they follow me around the United States — five or six of them. I was giving a speech, and they burst into the ballroom. The audience was in shock. Security guards hustled them out. It happened again in Raleigh, North Carolina, when I was addressing a conference of governors. That wouldn’t happen in the South, where there is an emphasis on civility, but here, anything goes. And of course I’m disappointed about budget issues in general.

### **If you could change one decision as Chancellor, what would it be?**

Well you know, that’s the hardest question you asked me because I’m really torn between “I wouldn’t change anything” and “I wish I didn’t have to recommend as big a tuition increase as I did.” I don’t have any regrets about any decisions I have made.

**It sounds like you’re saying that if the state doesn’t give you the money, you have to get it from the kids.**

If you have to make cuts, there will be fewer classes, fewer students, fewer faculty and fewer staff.

Eighty-two percent of every dollar goes for compensation and benefits. If you are going to downsize, then you are going to have fewer people. Our healthcare is about \$450 million annually. I just got a letter the other day that says “Starting January 1, you owe us \$35 million more.” We’ll have 3,000 fewer employees and cost *increased* 9.6 percent. There are 22,000 faculty members that get healthcare for free.

**As chancellor you have worked with the Board of Trustees for many years. How would you finish this sentence: The best Board of Trustees is comprised of those who....**

The best trustees understand the CSU mission. They keep their *noses* in my business and keep their *hands off* my business. Those are the best trustees. They need to understand every policy and every recommendation and every consequence of the recommendations I make. But you hire a chancellor to run the system, and I’m not interested in having a trustee calling me up at 7am to ask about students having beer.

**How can we depoliticize higher education? And should we pursue that goal in the first place?**

Higher education has become more politicized. One of the great things about the CSU is that it has not become politicized. A couple of years after I came in, Dee Dee Myers was appointed to the Board, and you would think that if anyone would be political it would be Dee Dee Myers. But she has told brand new trustees to check their politics at the door. The CSU has a mission to educate as many people as we can. Every couple of years we would have a retreat to assimilate the new trustees, and she would come back — even after she went back to Washington — to give everyone the check-politics speech.

To be honest with you, in the last year or so I have seen more political intrusion than what we have had in the past. I don’t think politics should have anything to do with presidential compensation. I think you need to pay people fairly for the job that they do. And I have been severely criticized for the salary I paid the new president at San Diego State University. I asked him to start raising a million dollars a week last July, and I called him last week and asked how it was going, and he said

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**REED** *continued*

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he had raised 67 million dollars. The faculty there wasn't complaining. California is a very populist state so if you make \$100,000, you are a bad person. And it's just not right.

### **To be a successful CSU president, one must...?**

The successful president has to have a vision for where the institution needs to go, has to have focus on the institution's needs and constituents, has to have an enormous amount of energy because it is a 24/7 job, has to raise resources from the private sector and from government in every way possible, and has to keep everybody happy.

### **What do you see as the role of the faculty in ensuring the continued success of the CSUs?**

One, be in charge of the academics. Two, do everything you can to improve and maintain quality. Faculty are able to set policy and set parameters and carry out policies that affect academic progress.

### **How about student-faculty ratios & student involvement in research?**

I could get into debate with you about this. My daughter says the single best class she ever had was biology, and she learned more there than in any other class. And there were 500 students in that class. The faculty member was fabulous and made them want to learn more than anybody else. So as to SFR, sure there are some courses where you need small ratios, but it depends on so many different things. But to say that one ratio is perfect? You can't do that. I got criticized by the folks up at Humboldt because they thought 1:12 was perfect. But that's a faculty decision and it ought to be different in every department. With technology there are things we could do better with mixtures. I've been following some research that shows the lecture is no longer as good as students learning with the use of technology.

Research and grants? That's so difficult. Faculty in math and science have a much easier time getting grants. It's very difficult if you are in English to get a large grant. But if you are a physics faculty member, then you better be clippin' the coupons.

### **What do you see as the future for the CSUs over the next 10 years with respect to student fees and faculty job security?**

It will really depend on a lot of things. I feel strongly that the state of California has to reorder its priorities, and the single best thing that California could do is to invest in the higher education of its people. If we have the smartest and most creative people, we win. And if we

don't invest in them, we just regress and regress.

The general public and the business community need to wake up and realize that no one is investing in their future. California stepped off the cliff with Proposition 13. That was the beginning of the end. And there are ways to do that. Why is it that all the commercial properties have turned over many times but their taxes haven't increased?

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*"I can honestly say I've enjoyed every day I've come to work, no matter what's happening."*

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Also, we've got to get out of the business of trying to severely punish everybody for misdeeds. There are 12,000 women in prison in California for nonviolent crimes — bad checks, smoking dope. No other country punishes people like the United States — [especially in] California and Texas. Three strikes and you're out? And there is very little education in the prison system. Almost everyone is illiterate and unable to get jobs when they get out. And many of them don't need to be there and could be supervised some other way. And there's the healthcare. It costs \$250,000 per year to keep a prisoner who is over 72. The prison system is out of control. It costs \$65,000 per prisoner here and \$30,000 in Texas. We will have world-class prisons and second-class higher education institutions. We need to reinvest in higher education.

### **What advice would you give the incoming chancellor?**

Know that you are going to have to work hard. This is the largest higher education system in the United States. SUNY only looks bigger because it includes the community colleges. CSU is the largest four-year higher education system.

### **Anything else?**

Have a thick skin.

### **What will you be doing with your time during retirement?**

I'm going to take a couple days off. I may have an opportunity to teach. There are three really good institutions that have offered, so I'll probably do that. And I'm on some advisory boards. Otherwise I like to read — particularly history and David McCullough — and watch sporting events. ☞

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## Gordon Bakken

PROFESSOR

Department of History

**What brought you to CSUF in the first place?**

It was the only job in American Constitutional History in 1968. But when I got here the chair of the department told me football practice was in the afternoon. The history department had a football team that played the fraternity teams, and one of the players said we've played you guys for three years and never won. But I didn't have any real ties here before. So I defended my thesis on Friday morning and left Madison on Friday afternoon and drove out, got here on Sunday and showed up for class on Monday morning.

**What changes have you seen over time while working at CSUF?**

The most positive change was merit money. The worst thing was merit money went away. The second worst thing was that we found the reopener clause in the contract. The other major change was we got very large. When we got here there were maybe 9,000 students and now there are 37,000. Unlike some places, even when the union came in, the senate remained active. Also the school expects more. Shields raised the bar and said we will be scholars. And if you aren't, you won't make full professor. The history department has become more engaged and exciting.



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**BAKKEN** *continued*

**Were there any disappointments with your time here at CSUF?**

Loss of merit pay, because it compensated people for things that were good for the university. When merit pay went away people became less engaged and less active. Biggest problem today is that we have had no pay increase last 10 years and nothing available for next four years. If you go back and look at economic tables for what it was in 1969, you are still exactly where you were then.

**You've seen a lot of changes in the administration of the university and of the system as whole. Any thoughts on those developments?**

As I said, Shields raised the bar. What I liked about Cobb was that she understood we needed to raise extramural funds. We needed to get money from outside. Remember that I was in the administration and spent 12 years working under seven different vice presidents. It's important for administrators to get out and around the campus. I believe in management by shoe leather.

**Did you ever think about leaving CSUF?**

Well, you know how it is. You get socialized into the community. Then you make a bargain with the devil and say that you won't leave until the kids are through with school. I did try to get a few endowed chairs. Then you would teach fewer courses and they give you additional travel and research money. You can even take a whole year off.

**Describe CSUF in a single pithy paragraph.**

Right now CSUF is one of the most exciting places you can be. We get

better students, and the quality of the faculty is better. They are more excited about what they are doing and they are scholars and they are very supportive of each other. So we have the mentoring program that helps faculty who are having problems. The graduate students are better than expected, and they're coming from a broader range of schools than previously.

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*"Right now CSUF is one of the most exciting places you can be. We get better students, and the quality of the faculty is better."*

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**What advice would you give newcomers to the CSUF faculty family?**

Don't take it personally when students don't do well. You can't *make* students succeed.

**What are your thoughts about the future here at CSUF?**

We will quickly become privatized. We need to go out and raise a whole lot of money.

In 43 years you have to expect there will be a lot of changes — and they've been for the better. Faculty come here now to join a community of scholars. There is more opportunity to talk to colleagues and develop professionally. ☞

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*(dates represent the beginning of CSU service)*

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Department of Theatre and Dance

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**1986**

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Systems and Decision Sciences

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**Charles Reed**  
California State University

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### Zvi Drezner

PROFESSOR  
Department of Information  
Systems and Decision Sciences

**What brought you to  
CSUF in the first place?**

Let me try to remember. That was 1985. I actually applied for a sabbatical here, and I had never heard of CSUF in Michigan, and they called and said, "Why not come on a permanent basis?" I actually had three or four offers, and in Boston they said they would pay \$10,000 more than Fullerton. But my wife said, "No, we are going to California." I didn't know about CSUF, but California was a big magnet. Growing up in Israel, California is most similar in terms of weather. We like to be outside most of the time, and I cannot stand

the humidity in Florida. There is more to life than money.

**What changes have you seen over time while working at CSUF?**

I think that my main concern or issue is research. I am very keen on research, which is the center of my life. I enjoy teaching very much and find it very exciting. But research is the center and especially when Gordon became president, the support for research became much better, I think, than it used to be. The computer facilities, the computers they give us, and so on, are much better than in many other institutions.

Class sizes are larger. When I came, they said the move from 25 to 32 is terrible, and now we do a lab and there are 40. And lectures are 70 to 80. So I saw class sizes go up.

**What were the most memorable moments for you?**

Of course, when they came to give me the Outstanding Professor Award, I didn't know. That was very memorable. And then I got the Wang Award.

I teach some classes at UCI and USC, and I have some memories that the most intelligent comments I have received were from students at CSUF and not UCI or USC. There are better students in general at those places but some of the brightest students I have had were here.

**Were there any disappointments with your time here at CSUF?**

I can't really think of any. I'm generally disappointed that we are not compensated adequately. Colleagues of mine at better universities may make three times what I make, although my resume may be better than theirs. I knew the compensation was not great when I came here.

**You have seen a lot of changes in university administration and the system as a whole. Any thoughts on those developments?**

I agree with the union that the ratio of MPP to faculty is not good. I generally like the administration. I liked Willie Hagan and President Gordon and Ephraim. I think the administration could do the same job with fewer administrators. So now I have to submit every meal receipt. There is an old saying that administrators have to justify their existence. I don't remember being upset with any administrator on campus, but they could do with fewer of them.

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**DREZNER** *continued*

**Did you ever think about leaving CSUF?**

Leaving never crossed my mind. Last 10 to 15 years I was too old to move. I didn't send resumes around.

**If you were going to leave, someone would have to recruit you.**

I sent a resume here for a sabbatical. I don't like changes in general so I wouldn't try.

**Would you move after you finish the FERP in four and a half years?**

We could move to Toronto but it's too cold. After I finish the FERP, I may still teach part-time — but just to stay in, just to have something to do.

**Describe CSUF in a single pithy paragraph.**

Our department is very collegial. And I am very happy to be in this department. We have three different groups but we don't fight. In our department, half is quantitative and half is really soft. And the quantitative people think the work of the soft people is not much, but the soft people think the quantitative people are good. But when I looked at a soft person's file, I approached it as if I were a soft person. As a quantitative person, I think only quantitative is serious, but I appreciate what others do, even if it's not quantitative.

I think the one thing that strikes me the most is that there is great support for faculty. The system supports faculty and that's different from what I hear about other institutions.

**What advice would you give newcomers to the CSUF faculty family?**

I don't think it will be different here than at any other university. Do what you like and make decisions about how to spend your time, because we have to do all three — research, teaching and service — and we have to do them well. In the first six years, focus on what you need to get tenure. And after that, continue and do what you like. In our department we have a high percentage who don't do research, but they teach and do service. So after you get tenure it's okay to focus on one.

**Are you optimistic about the future here at CSUF?**

Yes. But I'm worried about California, and not CSUF in particular. If there is a problem here, it will be because there is a problem everywhere. I think it's a good campus with a very conscientious and very participatory faculty, and I have a good feeling about it.

**If you could wave a wand, what would you change?**

Smaller class sizes. But it's not up to us. I may have a wish list, but to be realistic, let's just keep doing what we're doing. I'm an optimistic and peaceful person by nature. ☺

## Senate FORUM

The Senate Forum is a publication of the Academic Senate at California State University, Fullerton.

It is designed to stimulate discussion, debate, and understanding of a variety of important issues that the Senate addresses.

Individuals are encouraged to respond to the materials contained in the Senate Forum or to submit their own contributions.

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## Kathleen Preston

ASSISTANT PROFESSOR  
Department of Psychology

### Why did you come to CSUF?

Growing up only two miles from campus, CSUF played an integral part in many family and educational experiences. I visited the arboretum on numerous occasions with my family and as a part of elementary school fieldtrips. While in high school, I participated in science competitions hosted on campus and played in the pep band for women's basketball on a couple occasions. The out-of-the-classroom atmosphere had always been welcoming and supportive, so when it came time for college, I only applied to CSUF because I knew it was the only place I wanted to attend.

In four short years, I graduated from CSUF with Bachelor of Arts degrees in Psychology and Liberal Arts with an emphasis in Music and

after an additional two years, a Master of Arts degree in Psychological Research.

During my time as a student at CSUF, I gained a wealth of knowledge in and out of the classroom. My professors challenged me intellectually, the staff supported my educational journey, and the diverse student population enlightened me with experiences and perspectives I would not have acquired otherwise.

I continued my education at UCLA by earning another Master of Arts degree in Psychology and a Doctorate in Psychology with an emphasis in quantitative methodology, and was thrilled to see a tenure-track faculty position opening at CSUF during the final year of my doctorate program. I did not hesitate to apply for the CSUF position, and I did not apply for positions at any other institutions because I could not imagine working anywhere else.

I am deeply rooted in the Fullerton community through my lifetime membership at St. Paul Lutheran Church in Fullerton, my decade long participation in Orange County's Pacific Chorale and John Alexander Singers, and my opportunity to introduce my two year old daughter to all the wonderful experiences Fullerton has to offer. I am elated to deepen my roots by being a member of the faculty at CSUF.

### What were your expectations before you joined us?

Being a student, both at the undergraduate and graduate level, I expected to join a student-oriented environment. I expected to facilitate students' development in becoming successful in their careers and engaged members of society. I expected to be challenged to meet the expectations of my students, working to always improve my pedagogy, and produce cutting-edge research.

### How have your experiences meshed with those expectations?

I could not be happier with the way that I am settling into the life of a CSUF faculty member.

### What surprises and challenges have you experienced as a CSUF faculty member?

My biggest challenge has been tailoring lecture materials to accommodate the wide variety of student ability and learning styles.

### How are you organizing your life so that you are likely to be successful in getting promoted and tenure?



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**PRESTON** *continued*

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I am blessed to have an extremely supportive family. My husband takes care of the day-to-day household tasks such as cooking, cleaning, and laundry (he is actually vacuuming the stairs as I am writing), so I have the luxury to focus on conducting research, writing articles, revising lectures, grading exams, and providing service to the university and community.

My two-year-old daughter is extremely patient, understanding that Mommy sometimes needs to work while we play. She sometimes sits next to me with her own 'laptop' and 'answers email.' My parents have been crucial, serving as major caretakers of my daughter while I am on campus. I never have to worry that my daughter is getting anything less than the best care available, which allows me to focus all of my cognitive faculties on the tenure-related task at hand.

I have also been fortunate to recruit a few remarkable students into my research lab and as teaching assistants. These students bring excellent perspectives to the table when we discuss research projects and provide exceptional support in the classroom.

**If you could make CSUF a better place, what would you do? What would you change?**

I cannot think of anything I would change, but we can always find ways to improve. I believe university support groups are extremely important, and are becoming more so in the current state of the economy. For instance, I was recently alerted to a need of the Music Associates of an integrated database that housed all donor information, event invitees/attendees, and the general activity of donors. Unfortunately, such an integrated database did not exist for a reasonable price, so they had been resorting to using a series of redundant files that all needed to be updated whenever a donor made a donation or a patron purchased a ticket. Such redundancies led to many instances of conflicting information and great confusion when attempting to access recent donor activity. Using my skills in statistics and database management, I created an integrated database using a series of Microsoft Excel spreadsheets within one workbook that exceeds the requirements of the organization. Each donor has his or her individual page containing contact information and detailed information of past donations, membership activity, and events attended. I wrote a macro program that runs every time a new patron/donor is added to the database via a master list, which looks much like a traditional spreadsheet with listing each name and address, creating the patron's individual page and producing a link from the master list to that page. I also created self-populating spreadsheets within the workbook summarizing membership renewal activity, event invitation lists based on a variety of criteria, and event attendee lists. The database has been fully populated with current and archival information dating back to 1988, transforming the database into somewhat of a historical document that is immediately and easily accessible by the Music Associate Board members.

**Anything else we should know about the life of a new CSUF colleague and friend?**

I look forward to every Tuesday, when a very small group of faculty and staff from Psychology and Music get together and have lunch, usually at the food trucks on campus. We problem-solve our challenges and celebrate our successes that occurred over the past week in both our on- and off-campus lives. These lunches have been crucial in my adjustment to the life of a faculty member at CSUF. ☺

**Kathleen Preston**, wife of Nicholas and proud mother of Zelda Makanaaloha, is a professor in the Psychology department at California State University, Fullerton where she specializes in multivariate statistics, quantitative methodology, and Item Response Theory. Specifically, she is interested in the construction and validation of scales used to measure psychological constructs. She has published articles in *Educational and Psychological Measurement*, *Journal of Social Service Research*, *Judgment and Decision Making*, *Race and Social Problems*, and *Journal of Clinical Child and Adolescent Psychology*. Kathleen regularly presents at national conferences such as the annual conventions held by the Western Psychology Association, American Psychological Association, and Association for Psychological Science. Kathleen graduated cum laude with two Bachelor of Arts degrees in music and psychology, and a Master of Arts degree in psychological research from CSU Fullerton. After the completion of her Master of Arts degree in psychological research, she continued her education to earn a doctorate in quantitative psychology at the University of California, Los Angeles.

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### Why did you come to CSUF?

Before I accepted the position at CSUF, I had offers from other universities. Each was particularly interesting for different reasons, but CSUF stood out for two reasons: its people and students. When I came to my interview, I had to teach three distinct courses: dance technique, dance composition and dance history. I was very impressed with students' ability in each of those facets. They were great performers and technicians with a palpable hunger to improve and be exposed to new movements and performative experiences. They demonstrated a great ability to choreograph as I guided them through a compositional exercise, and in the dance history lecture, the dancers were engaged in the discussion by contributing relevant and insightful responses to the material I presented.

On the other hand, I was very impressed with the sense of community and respect among the faculty in the Department of Theatre and Dance. During the interview process there was a faculty open house, which allowed current faculty to come into a room and sit with me to ask questions and get to know me in a relaxed environment and not within the formalities that characterize a formal job interview for an academic position. Everyone seemed very enthusiastic about my previous work and for being there interviewing for the new dance position at the department. I felt welcomed in a genuine way. Also, a former guest artist in the Dance Program who I've known for years had spoken to me about the dance faculty. He said, "If you get the job you couldn't be in a better place, the faculty is wonderful and supportive." That was precisely the environment I was looking for.

When I set foot on campus for my interview, I noticed the student population and knew CSUF was the type of university I wanted to work in. I enjoy working within the diversity of cultures, socioeconomic, ethnic groups and races. CSUF was an institution where I could visualize myself not only as an employee, but also as a student. Finally, since I was born and raised in Puerto Rico, weather was an important factor in choosing Southern California.

### What were your expectations before you joined us?

In all honesty, I had no expectations. I came here with an open mind, willing to experience the new environment. Having expectations automatically makes something in your mind a destination, which is not always real. I want to learn as much as I can about living in a new city, far from friends and family, and start anew. I want to discover and learn all that CSUF has to offer. By having no expectations, I'll naturally take the world for what it is. Needless to say, I arrived with ambitious goals for my academic career.



## Alvin Rangel-Alvarado

ASSISTANT PROFESSOR  
Department of Theatre and Dance

### How have your experiences panned out so far?

So far, so good. I am enjoying this new journey.

### What surprises and challenges have you experienced so far?

When I accepted the job at CSUF, a friend who works as a college professor in another state told me, "Are you sure you want to go to California?" I say this because I didn't have a clear sense of how hard the CSU system has been affected after years of budget reductions from the state. The challenge we face, more than the limited funding for faculty develop-

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**RANGEL-ALVARADO** *continued*

ment and research, is access to higher education for more students. The CSU system was built for access, but because of cutbacks, there are students we should be educating, yet the system cannot afford for them to all come here, and to students and their families, the price tag of a college education is unaffordable. Now, the future of higher education in California may improve now that Proposition 30 has passed. Although money seems to be the predominant issue, I appreciate that CSUF has increased its commitment to educational excellence. This speaks volumes about this institution.

**How are you organizing your life so you are likely to be successful in getting promoted and tenure?**

The key to being successful in getting promoted and tenured is to be organized with my time, set ambitious yet attainable goals, and weight in all aspects of my life — basically taking a holistic approach. I am keeping in mind that I cannot achieve 100 percent in all areas of responsibility every year. It's been especially important that I focus on my strengths at the beginning because this will give me momentum for the long haul.

I consider my greatest strength to be my teaching. So I focused on really excelling there. I've planned out a timeline for my research looking at a 2-year and then a 5-year plan. Service has always been important to me, so I've already begun to do those at both university and community levels. I have been organizing my life in a way that balances my personal life and career. Because I have always been very organized, I've come up with a sort of schedule that allows me to enjoy activities that fuel me physically, mentally and spiritually, along with devoting time to scholarly writing, seeking opportunities to present my current choreographic projects and create new dance works in the United States and abroad.

Another strategy that I'm thinking will be helpful at becoming tenured is to focus slightly more on different areas of responsibility in different years, balancing out the effort spent in all areas over an extended period of time.

**If you could make CSUF a better place, what would you do? What would you change?**

I am very interested in creating a course that requires international travel. As I looked at the CSUF Study Abroad webpage, I didn't find information where there's support for faculty to develop Study Abroad Programs. Based on this, I assume that there is nothing in place at CSUF for faculty to develop their own study abroad course with university support. It's valuable for faculty to have the opportunity to develop a course of this nature because it gives us the possibility to reach students in a new and different way. It gives us a chance to be their instructors, advisor, cultural liaison, mentor and if there's a language barrier, their interpreter/translator. Study abroad helps students develop skills and experiences we could never provide in a classroom setting. Being immersed in an entirely new cultural setting offers a chance to discover new strengths and abilities, seize new challenges, and solve new problems.

**Anything else that comes to mind we should know about the life of a new CSUF colleague and friend?**

It has been a stressful transition moving alone to California, especially being distant from friends and family. Settling into the professional side has been smooth, but the personal remains a challenge. Nevertheless, blessed and happy to be where I am. ☺

*Alvin Rango-Alvarado began his professional career performing ballet and jazz in his native Puerto Rico. In 2012, the Austin Critic's Table nominated his work Tango Vesre for Best Short Work and gave Alvin the award for best dancer (2011-12). Alvin has been invited both nationally and internationally to perform Tango Vesre [Inverted Tango]. For nearly a decade, Alvin performed with the Dayton Contemporary Dance Company (DCDC) in Ohio. He has conducted master classes and workshops in the United States, Russia, Poland, Colombia, Argentina, Mexico and Puerto Rico. His choreography has been performed by Ballet New England, Stivers School for the Arts, Andanza, Ballet Señorial, NuLook Dance Theatre, Performing Arts School in San Juan, DCDC, DCDC-2 and Episcopal High School. In Puerto Rico, he taught, danced and choreographed for Andanza, and in Houston he has been guest artist with Ad Deum Dance Company (2007-08). Recently, he collaborated with Compañía de Danza 21 from Puerto Rico, and for the 2012-13 season he will perform with Dance Theatre X. Alvin holds a B.A. in Secondary Education, English as Second Language from the Inter American University of Puerto Rico, and a Master of Fine Arts in Dance from the University of Texas at Austin where he taught ballet, repertory and contemporary dance technique, as well as choreographed for its Dance Repertory Theatre.*