

Response letters in support of President Virjee from the Cal State Fullerton Community:

To whom it may concern,

My name is Shelby Rae Martin, and I am a recent graduate of Cal State Fullerton and a President's Scholar alumna. It is with utmost sincerity that I hope you take my statement into account. From my time at CSUF, there is one thing of which I am certain: President Framroze M. Virjee has my complete trust, confidence, and support, both in his character and his ability to serve as a university leader.

Fram and his wife, Julie Virjee, are two of the kindest people I have ever had the privilege of knowing . When I joined President's Scholars, Fram and Julie welcomed me with open arms and treated me like a daughter. My own parents have had solely wonderful experiences with them, and they are confident and blessed in knowing that the Virjees have remained by my side throughout my four years at Cal State Fullerton.

To say that Fram has gone above and beyond to ensure that I have felt comfortable and supported throughout college is an understatement. Over the years, the Virjees have rallied behind me in my proudest moments and picked me up when I was at rock bottom. They made it clear from the very start that I could approach them for anything. Through their kindness and comforting presence, I felt safe enough to do so.

During my junior year of college, I was the victim of a crime that required me to meet with a Title IX caseworker. On the day of my meeting, Fram saw me in the elevator, fully prepared to engage in small talk, as we always did. He asked me where I was going, and I casually told him I was meeting with a Title IX caseworker. I will never forget the expression on his face upon hearing the news - a mix of shock, devastation, and horror typically reserved for when a traumatic event occurs to one's own children. He assured me that if there was anything I needed, anything at all, I could always come to him. That day, the crime bulletin about the incident was sent to all students, staff, and faculty, and I knew he had to have seen it. A week later, I went to his office to update him on how I was coping.

"You know, I was worried sick about you, kid!" He had told me, shaking his head.

At this point in my life, I had been at my absolute lowest - unrelenting anxiety, a depressive episode, a death in my family, and now a Title IX case that left me terrified to walk to my night class or even leave my apartment. I had never felt so numb. Though I had the support of my friends, my anxiety about going to campus persisted. However, with Fram's help, I finally began to feel safe again.

As we sat in his office, I will never forget how he gave me the space to say as much or as little as I wanted. Fram asked me if there were any improvements he could make on campus to ensure my safety, and I have never seen any other campus figure go to such lengths to protect students. Even in a situation that left me powerless, Fram ensured I was seen, heard, and understood. For this, I cannot even begin to express my gratitude.

President Fram Virjee strongly advocates for Title IX, and I know deep in my heart that his actions are sincere. I have only ever seen him conduct himself with grace and integrity, and I have witnessed firsthand that he supports all students from all walks of life in their academic and personal journeys. Fram is a genuine individual whose empathy is limitless. The content of his character is exemplary, and he serves as a role model to all. The passion that Fram and Julie have for fostering an inclusive and comfortable environment is evident in both their achievements and the manner in which they carry themselves.

Fram and Julie have made CSUF another home for me in every sense of the word. Their guidance and mentorship allowed me to thrive in college, fostering personal and professional growth. They have supported me in all endeavors, whether big or small. Without their help, I genuinely don't know where I'd be. Whenever I needed a shoulder to cry on, advice for the future, a cup of tea, or a quiet place to study away from the chaos of my apartment building, the Virjees opened their office to me as a safe space. For this, I have never been more grateful. It is because of Fram and Julie that I understand the true definition of the "Titan Family," as they have become my family away from home.

I am proud to be a Titan. I am proud to have attended a university that fosters a safe and inclusive environment. Most of all, I am proud to rally behind Fram and Julie Virjee, just as they have for me.

Sincerely,
Shelby Rae Martin

To the Chancellor and Trustees of the CSU, via the Trustee Secretariat:

I waited until today, when I retired from Cal State Fullerton and am no longer Daily Titan's faculty adviser, before saying what should be obvious:

The Los Angeles Times article of May 21, 2023, was so far below The Times's standards that I find it difficult to imagine how it cleared their editing process.

Anyone familiar with CSU and who is reading this story with a critical eye will see that President Virjee was wronged. In my 50-year career as a journalist, including 27 years as an editor at The New York Times, I think I know a half-baked news story when I see one.

A tale that should have centered on a systemwide failure instead seems to have relied on a cabal of leakers and misbegotten sources (Mr. Castro? Really?), abetted by hearsay and innuendo.

If this appalling story had been written by one of my Cal State Fullerton journalism students, it would have earned a D; I routinely give credit for using proper Associated Press writing style, thus not an F.

The bylines of a highly respected Pulitzer winner and a Pulitzer finalist may have varnished this lamentable piece, but the underpinnings are still flimsy,

This should have been a story about a broken system for reporting wrongdoing, which is clearly failing students, faculty and taxpayers from kindergarten all the way to post-graduate work. Instead, it plumbs new depths of irrelevancy and serves only to give cover to state leaders who have so far evaded opprobrium for failing to mandate a centralized, independent and auditable system for reporting Title IX and related violations in public education.

It also advanced the agenda of whoever leaked these ancient and uncorroborated accounts, which do not even rise to the level of “allegation.”

Revenge is a frequent motivator for leakers, which reporters should be vigilant to detect. Clearly, the ear-piercing din of grinding axes somehow evaded The Times’s reporters.

There is something very wrong when, for 30 years, Californians have been able to report official financial skullduggery to the state auditor — but there is no equivalent centralized way to confidentially report sexual predations inflicted upon students or employees of the public education system. The Times story missed this core issue.

The old saying that a grand jury can be talked into indicting a ham sandwich also applies to the public when they are spoon-fed shallow journalism and ill-conceived headlines. I can only image the devastating effect this had on President Virjee and his loved ones.

Sincerely,

Walt Baranger
Newly retired lecturer in journalism
Cal State Fullerton

Mr. Lopez,

I have read your recent article concerning President Virjee at California State University Fullerton. I found it interesting for several reasons.

1. While the head line was accusatory, your reporting was clear that there was no evidence that President Virjee did anything wrong. The three female students never made a complaint at any time, even when questioned. The report of sexual misconduct was allegedly reported by someone across the room that apparently had neither the courage nor integrity to identify themselves. There were known people in the vicinity, in two cases a State Assemblyman in a responsible position related to California institutions of higher learning—whom, as you reported, never saw anything inappropriate.
2. Given that there was “no there there” related to facts or even innuendo, one has to wonder why a Pulitzer prize winning journalist would be interested in such a nothing story. It would appear that this article was written, not because there was a story, but for the purpose of embarrassing President Virjee. Of course, that raises the question of “why would Robert Lopez want to embarrass the President of CSUF?”
3. Fortunately, like any good puzzle, you provided the pieces which answered that question in the very article you used to defame Fram Virjee, a good man who is a great inspiration to tens of thousands of people and families at CSUF, the largest State University in California. In the article, you referred to Joseph I. Castro, past Chancellor for the State University system who resigned under pressure related to a sexual harassment controversy when Castro was President of Fresno State. You go on to imply that Castro was unseated as Chancellor because President Virjee, along with Presidents of other schools, complained to the Board of Trustees that they had lost confidence in Castro. Why this Castro event was even relevant to the non-facts reported about the non-events at CSUF is not clear but, ironically, I believe it provides the first clue as to why you wrote this article.
4. Let me now get to the real point of your article and the reason you wrote it. To quote your article-- “I should have been informed,” Castro told The Times, adding that he would have “immediately gone to the Board of Trustees with a recommendation to investigate the complaints and to place the president on leave while the investigation was completed.” As a Pulitzer Prize winning author, you made the journalistic decision to seek the professional opinion, regarding the right way to handle sexual harassment claims, from--and then quote--a dishonored and disenfranchised former State University

Chancellor whom was forced to resign for suppressing evidence of sexual harassment when he was President of Fresno State. Wow!!! More importantly—Why??? Besides the fact that his self-serving quote was the only quote you had that inferred any wrongdoing as to President Virjee, this was an obvious attempt to revive Castro's already destroyed reputation and credibility. I am certain Mr. Castro was grinning ear to ear when you sent him the article. Unfortunately, based on Mr. Castro's apparent reputation, it was probably the grin of a person who enjoys pulling the wings off flies.

5. But I have to give you credit. Your timing was superb. After President Virjee announced his retirement so he and his wife could pursue their philanthropic goals, and just before his final graduation ceremonies at CSUF, you release this article which has no supporting facts. The article tells me everything about your character. Your timing tells me about your soul.
6. So now.....please stay with me as I summarize. I believe it is crystal clear that the real purpose behind this article was to embarrass President Virjee and to provide an opportunity for Joe Castro to get a lot of revenge and a bit of rehabilitation. But we are still left with the WHY! Why would a Pulitzer prize winning author write an article knowing he was tarnishing a good man's well-earned reputation while so ridiculously propping up a well-documented and admitted scoundrel?
7. I bet an investigative reporter of your stature knows exactly where I am headed. What if this article was written for the real purpose of you propping up a friend, while allowing you and your friend to take revenge upon a perceived enemy by way of the same superficial article? Breath deep--is that the acid smell of malice, that I detect? Remember that the first amendment right you have to swing your journalistic arm, stops where an innocent man's wrongfully accused nose begins!
8. All that remains now is to prove your friendship with Castro and close the circle. By the way, did I mention that in the paragraph about yourself at the end of your article, you go all the way back to 2011 in describing your career. Yet, you accidentally left out that from 2014 to 2021 you were an employee—wait for it—of the California State University system. For 7 years you were a co-employee with Mr. Castro. Maybe the connection and friendship will not be as hard to prove as I first imagined.

Now, let me be straight. I hope you will do the right thing and retract this article about President Virjee and indicate that upon reflection and reviewing your notes that there was nothing wrong in his actions (which you know to be the truth). If you do the right thing, then I will have been proven wrong and I will apologize to you for my not very flattering suspicions. Otherwise, for the pure joy of it, I believe I will take the time and effort to find out everything I can about

the relationship I referenced above—and just see where it goes. I also hope the LA Times still has the courage and journalistic integrity to print this letter in their editorial page.

Oh, one other thing. I am a lawyer and a great admirer of both Fram and his incredible wife, Julie, and I cannot imagine the grief you have wrongfully caused President Virjee's children, his wife, his friends and colleagues—but I am not Mr. Virjee's lawyer. I am on the Board of Governors at CSUF, the College of Business and Economics Dean's Advisory Board, a graduate of CSUF, and you have wrongfully attacked a wonderful administration in a way that is truly evil—but I am not representing CSUF. You may find this hard to believe, but this letter is not about defending CSUF or President Virjee. They did nothing wrong and they need no defending. This is about journalistic integrity and "so called reporters" using their platform to push their own narratives. I am sickened by what I see as the destruction of our once great press, and you may have provided me the perfect opportunity to do something about it. I represent Americans that are mourning the death of true journalistic integrity in this country. I am 74 years old and I now have the time, the energy, and the wherewithal to try to right wrongs that I see in this world—and, unless corrected, your article is one of them.

Thank you for your time and attention. I very much appreciate it. Please prove me wrong and do the right thing. Believe me, Joe Castro—even if he is a friend—is not worth it.

Terry Giles

What a shameful article you both signed your names to regarding President Fram Virjee. If this is how Pulitzer Prize journalists spend their time, then a Pulitzer can't be worth much. But, you have a jobs to do, and since most newspaper business models have been blown to bits by the online world, it does not surprise me that this kind of vacuous, and sensationalist headline journalism exists at the Times right on par with the National Enquirer. You start with a big headline and then go on to acknowledge that these alleged incidents occurred in public places in front of several people, none of whom seem to confirm that anything untoward happened and the Chancellor's office confirmed this:

"No other individuals came forward to report misconduct during the tour, the statement said. System officials said the Title IX officer determined that for all three reports, "even if true, the reported conduct would not be considered severe or pervasive, as defined in CSU policy."

Not only that, you quote former Chancellor Castro in your article, a man who allegedly covered up sexual harassment complaints from his time at Fresno State and then, of course, resigned as Chancellor over these allegations. He was a credible source for you to include in your article?

“I should have been informed,” Castro told The Times, adding that he would have “immediately gone to the Board of Trustees with a recommendation to investigate the complaints and to place the president on leave while the investigation was completed.”

The irony is just so stunning it makes your article laughable. He would have gone to the Board of Trustees and put a president on leave over events that the Chancellor’s office determined were not considered "severe or pervasive"? That judgment alone is questionable and perhaps reinforces why he may not have been the brightest Chancellor the CSU has ever had. This was a credible person to quote given his past history??!! I’m speechless...but at the same time, your reporting is so bad that I’m laughing out loud as I write this.

The real story, should you ever choose to do real reporting, is that Fram and Julie did wonders for CSUF and worked tirelessly over the 5+ years we were fortunate to have them. Their accomplishments are endless, and the Titan community is forever grateful to them, and your article will never change that. We know exactly who they are—kind and giving people that believe in higher ed and equal opportunity for students of all backgrounds and given that we award more undergraduate degrees to women and under-represented students in the State of California, they probably had something to do with that. What exactly your intention is with this kind of reporting is unclear to me. If I see more of this garbage from your paper, maybe it will become clear. Public service is hard enough without this kind of reporting. Tearing down good people and besmirching an excellent university's reputation is just shameful. Real journalism is supposed to be truthful and unbiased. Do you think you did that here? Are you proud of this article?

Warmly,

Jeff Van Harte
Governor, Cal State Fullerton Philanthropic Foundation

May 29th, 2023
Mr. Merida,

Sadness looms when one of the largest newspapers in America writes an unsubstantiated, untrue and highly unethical article in an obvious attempt to smear the good name of Cal. State Fullerton’s President, Fram Virjee. Though I’m certain that because of the loose and random nature of the narrative that even someone unfamiliar with Mr. Virjee’s character would easily

see that this claim is both unmerited and an obvious & failed attempt at tarnishing Fram's impeccable and well-earned reputation.

Look no further than the fact that CSUF is one of the top universities in the world in serving the 1st generation students, offering a hand up to minority students, LGBTQ students, and numerous other under-represented communities. What is clear is that Robert Lopez and Colleen Shalby failed epically at grounding their highly misguided assessment. The timing as well of the release of this fraudulent narrative can't be lost on anyone. It can't be a coincidence that this darkness & deceit was released the day before, four consecutive days of graduation ceremonies. Again, in a juvenile & hurtful attempt at tarnishing Mr. Virjee.

The primary reason for my letter today is to counter the absurdity of these baseless claims with some truth telling. People outside the grounds of CSUF may not know just how special both Farm and his bride Julie are as true servants. They have far exceeded what anyone's expectations could possibly be of a university president and his partner, his best friend and co-worker at CSUF. They both engage, love, encourage and support their student body in ways that have truly never been seen before. Both Fram and Julie "Lead with Love" in every single moment. Fram is the safest, most loyal and most loving human I have ever known. Fram literally would give the shirt off his back to someone in need. It is because of these facts that these baseless accusations are more egregious than anyone who actually knows the character and integrity of Fram could possibly understand.

I beg you, Mr. Merida, to right this wrong by publishing the actual truth about who Fram Virjee is. Please state that this was all a mistake and miscalculation. That this was a campaign based on a very intentional attempt at harming Fram Virjee by slandering his good name. The need for sound journalism is no different than the need for each of us to live our lives in integrity and to promptly make amends when we have wronged someone else. Please make the right choice here and clarify this madness. It is wrong on every level.

Sincerely,

Dirk Eldredge

I was appalled when I read the article in the Los Angeles Times about our beloved university president at a time when we are all celebrating the amazing 5 years he has so generously given to our Titan Family!

This is such nonsense and feels totally scandalous. My first suspicion is Los Angeles Times picking up the story versus our local Orange County Register, who wouldn't fall for this kind of

rhetoric and know the reputation of our outstanding president and the great work he's done for our campus and community.

Since I first met him when he arrived to our campus, I've been amazed at how wonder he interacts with everyone - faculty, staff, and students. He goes above and beyond in those moments with him, where I feel like I am the most important person in the world to him. And I know, he has a thousand things on his mind. Fram is so full of love and joy that it fills the room whenever he enters. He always greets people personally, warmly and always with a smile. I personally look forward to my hugs from him because that's the kind of bond we formed immediately when we met.

Unlike any other president I've seen at this campus (and I've been here since my student day 2006-2011), I've never seen the kind of support and engagement with our students at every level, in every major, across every race, gender, and sexual orientation, Fram shows up to offer this support and to cheer them on towards success. He only wants the best for our students.

I just find the story by the Los Angeles Times to be out of character for the man I know.

Dr. Austin Nation
R. Austin Nation, PhD, RN, PHN (he/him/his)
Assistant Professor
Assistant Pre-Licensure Coordinator
School of Nursing
Health and Human Development

Mr. Merida:

It was incredibly disappointing to see the LA Times sink to a new low of journalistic ethics. Robert Lopez and Colleen Shalby's smear article on Sunday's front page of the Times was an unprofessional and biased attempt to tarnish President Fram Virjee's extraordinary career at Cal State University Fullerton.

First, it was abundantly clear that Mr. Lopez and Ms. Shalby did zero background research about CSUF President Fram Virjee. The slightest effort would have made it extremely clear that Fram is far and away the most popular CSU President among students in the history of the entire CSU system. Fram has championed women, people of color and DEI issues at every step of the way. He focused his entire tenure at CSUF on making students, faculty and staff feel included and valued. His tireless efforts have helped make CSUF a model of helping students from under-represented communities thrive and succeed on a myriad of measures. CSUF is one of the top

universities in the world in the advancement of minority students, working students, 1st generation students, military veteran students, previously incarcerated students, female students, LGBTQ students and students from countless other under-represented communities.

Second, the timing of the article, released one day before CSUF began four days of graduation ceremonies, was clearly intended to embarrass and hurt Fram. That the LA Times would stoop to such a cheap shot is a sad commentary on what was once one of the leading American newspapers. It seems clear that Mr. Lopez and Ms Shalby were writing on behalf of a former CSU employee who had been terminated for significant problems and lapses of judgment. Not only did Mr. Lopez and Ms. Shalby fail to research the subject of their article, they apparently took at face value the word of a malicious and discredited source with a very substantial grudge against Fram. "Pathetic" does not even begin to capture the LA Times' lack of journalistic integrity in this instance.

Third, the headline and the article just don't match. "CSU didn't investigate claims that Fullerton president inappropriately touched students" suggests that a student was sexually assaulted or that there was an intentional coverup of terrible misdeeds. The article did not back that implication up and offered no evidence of any intentional misconduct. In the text of the article, Fram was alleged by an unnamed individual (not a student) to have touched a student on the shoulder, hugged a student, rubbed a student on the back and kissed a student on the forehead. No student ever made any complaint about any of the alleged conduct - which allegedly took place years ago. The salacious headline is completely unsupported by the contents of the article. One can only conclude that the headline was written with a specific intent to harm Fram. Shame.

I respectfully suggest that the LA Times issue Fram an apology (on the front page). I've known Fram Virjee for 25+ years. His character and behavior have consistently demonstrated the strongest commitment to service and the highest concern about students' well being. While the damage can not be undone, readers of your newspaper deserve better than this article. As Executive Editor, I hope that you have the integrity to do everything within your power to right this wrong.

Thank you for your consideration.

Dave Bartholomew

Dear Editor:

My first observation of your article, "Claims against CSU Official were not investigated," made my heart sink. The further I read into the article, the more perplexed and angry I became with the picture that you attempted to paint of our beloved President, Fram Virjee. For the past 33 years I have sat on multiple boards, in leadership capacities at CSUF and have experienced the tenure of five different presidents. From my lengthy experience, I can wholeheartedly state that Fram has been a phenomenal leader of our Titan Family for over five years. Over his tenure, I have personally observed Fram's interactions with students in a variety of settings. He has always acted with respect, class and the utmost professionalism. The students and alumni with whom I frequently interact are pleased beyond measure of the job Fram has done at our beloved CSU Fullerton. We are so very saddened by his announcement to retire as there will never be anyone that can lead our campus as well as Fram.

The article published is absolutely misleading and disgusting in the way that it forced readers to think that our administration failed to protect our students. No one, and I mean no one, on our campus day in and day out protects the students of CSUF more than Fram. He gives more of his time than any president that I have observed.

How your paper can fault his actions in an isolated incident from years ago that was not filed or brought to his attention at the time, is incomprehensible to me. The allegations that were made in your paper stated this incident happened in a public place, with visiting dignitaries from our state legislature. Wouldn't one expect our State Representative to have taken action on this supposed bad behavior if it truly did take place? The article states the students were contacted and given ample guidance to file a complaint, but they chose did not do so. To use past Chancellor Castro as an authoritative expert on this subject makes me question the accuracy of this article. Castro prematurely left this office due to his failure to act on multiple sexual harassment charges while serving as President of CSU Fresno. Castro's opinion as a guide in such matter should make anyone question the validity of this article.

Fram, along with his wife Julie, have worked diligently to make our campus one of excellence in every category. Titans are proud, we have so many wonderful accomplishments that you could report. We are seventh in the nation for providing upward mobility to our students, we are second in the nation for graduating students of color and women, we have one of the best business schools not only in the state but in the nation, most of our students are first gen. It is sad that you, LA Times, would not report on all our positive accomplishments during the time our campus celebrates our graduates of the Class of 2023.

Verne Wagner
A Proud Titan Alum

I am the Head Softball Coach here at Cal State University Fullerton and I am writing a letter in support of President Fram Virjee. He and his wife Julie Virjee have poured their heart and souls, without reservation, into this University. I have experienced their love and compassion for the students firsthand. Our 31 female student-athletes and staff have been around both President Virjee and Julie numerous times, over many years, always being greeted with a heartwarming hug and thoughtful words. Their support for our team and Athletics has been second to none.

As I read the LA Times article and Fram's public statement, I am appalled that the LA Times would report such nonsense. The incident was uninvestigated, unsubstantiated, unverified third-party intake reports. No complaint was ever filed. No actions by the students identified despite repeated emails to them offering assistance, services and help in filing a complaint. A specific determination by the Title IX coordinator that the reports, even if true, did not amount to a violation of any policy, and closed files. Closed files that sat dormant for years, until the LA Times mysteriously asked for them. And, that when they learned of them, years later, where they were provided to the times with a stale record, no witnesses identified, no students identified, no reporters identified, and he is supposed to rebut the accusations? On top of that, the conduct – two hugs and a shoulder pat – occurred in public areas in front of multiple people, including State Assemblymember Medina, who specifically told the LA Times he saw nothing inappropriate.

It is important to myself, my staff and our team that we show support for President Virjee and speak on his character. To let everyone know that we stand firm with him and that these accusations are unjust.

We stand behind Fram Virjee!

Kelly Ford, Head Softball Coach
Jorge Araujo, Associate Head Coach
Caitlin Grimes, Assistant Coach
Bret Clemetson, Director of Operations

June 12, 2023

To Whom It May Concern,

I am writing to address the recent LA Times article that contains baseless allegations against President Fram Virjee. Having personally known Fram for the past four years, during which he has served as an exceptional President of Cal State Fullerton, I feel compelled to offer my perspective.

As a fellow alumnus of CSUF and a member of the Board of Directors for the CSUF Alumni Association, I have had numerous opportunities to witness Fram's leadership firsthand at various university events. His unwavering dedication to the success of Cal State Fullerton, his commitment to supporting students academically, and his genuine concern for the welfare of the community are truly remarkable.

Furthermore, every encounter I have had with Fram has left me with the impression of a consummate professional who remains grounded and approachable. His ability to inspire those around him is truly remarkable. Under his presidency, the university has experienced unprecedented growth, boasting an exceptional faculty, improved academic programs, and an overall elevated status.

I stand firmly behind Fram, knowing him to be a person of utmost integrity, trustworthiness, and compassion. His contributions to our institution have been invaluable, and I wholeheartedly believe in his character and leadership.

Thank you for considering my perspective on this matter.

Sincerely,

Kevin Bui

June 12, 2023

To Whom It May Concern,

I am writing in response to the LA Times article regarding the absurd allegations towards President Fram Virjee. I have known Fram for the last five years that he has been President of Cal State Fullerton. In his position as the President, he has made the effort to be accessible to the students as well as creating meaningful relationships in the community. This has resulted in making CSUF a University that stands out and excels because of his time, efforts and ability to make others feel inclusive and seen. I am an alumni and community member who is involved in the Dean's Advisory Board, Center for Leadership and Center for Family Business and I have attended many events and see that when Fram is in attendance, you can see that his warm nature is part of why he is so beloved by everyone. There is absolutely no instance where he has ever made me feel uncomfortable.

Both Fram and Julie have shown their heartfelt love and commitment to the school, students and community and it has always been genuine whether it is a short interaction or you have known them a long time. I wholeheartedly stand by Fram and know his character to be a respectable, trustworthy and caring individual.

Sincerely,

Linh Nguyen

July 27, 2023

I write this letter exclusively on my own behalf in this space, to thank President Fram Virjee for his authentic, sincere, and grounded leadership as CSUF's President for the past five years. As a sociologist for 25 years at CSU Fullerton, with specialties in critical race studies, social justice, indigenous studies, social inequalities, and youth risk, my entire career and adult life has been guided by a social justice lens, with the endeavor of helping to enhance the voices of marginalized communities.

I have come to know President Virjee for five years, especially in my position as a Faculty member and the Faculty Athletics Representative (FAR) at CSUF. A key role and responsibility as FAR is student athlete well-being, in which I provide a resource as an ombudsperson and key point of contact, with respect to the advocacy of student athletes and academic integrity. I carry this responsibility more generally as a faculty member in support of all students and my colleagues. In light of my roles and critical perspective, I wish to comment specifically on my direct and extensive interactions with and observations of President Virjee on campus at countless events, meetings, and organic encounters.

In my opinion, a cornerstone of President Virjee's leadership is community-building especially by being physically present and consistently engaging on the ground of the University in all corners of campus. I have frequently observed President Virjee greet, address, and gesture to students, staff, faculty, and administrators with warmth, sincerity and endearment. He has been remarkable in building rapport with his personable nature, in which he often communicates and listens with sincerity and intention to understand and empathize with others, especially those he does not share a social location and lived experience with. To me, this has been a foundation of his success in not only promoting social justice on campus, but institutionalizing authentic allyship through systematic efforts, programs, curricula, and training with respect to diversity, social justice, and anti-racism. This is possible especially when you meet community members where they are, within their immediate and nuanced spaces. Again, I thank President Fram for his courageous leadership and sincere warmth.

Sincerely,

Dr. Michael P. Perez