With the legislative session ending and the school year beginning, it must be the end of summer. It’s been another productive season for us as we conducted symposia, released reports from our Faculty Research Fellows Program, conducted (with our partners at USC’s Price School) another annual management institute for the National Council of State Legislatures, released (with our partners at the Institute for Social Research) the latest local elections data through the California Elections Data Archive, and held LegiSchool events and contests. In addition to all this and other programming, we are proud to be sending the 2013-14 class of Capital Fellows out into the world. It’s inspiring to see their enthusiasm and commitment, and I know our state will benefit from their future contributions.

We look forward to continued robust programming this fall. I’m especially pleased that the Center will be cosponsoring a debate between Congressional District 7 candidates Ami Bera and Doug Ose (on October 8). Both candidates are to be commended for agreeing to this public debate, which will be broadcast and covered through a variety of media outlets. This is one of the most closely watched Congressional races in the country, and voters will benefit from hearing directly from the candidates about the issues.

We also will soon begin orientation for our 2014-15 Fellows, who were selected last spring from among many hundreds of applicants. (And please note that we will start accepting applications for the 2015-16 fellowship year starting in early October.) Also in October we will be holding our annual Envisioning California Conference. This year’s conference focuses on California transportation, and I encourage everyone to attend this event which promises to be highly entertaining and informative. The conference will also include presentations of our California Journalism awards, which will honor reporting related to California transportation. As always, I am deeply thankful for the support and assistance of our many partners and colleagues. Thank you for helping to advance the Center’s mission of strengthening democratic governance in California.

~ Steve Boilard

REGISTER NOW! 25th annual Envisioning California Conference
Friday, October 3, 2014 at the Sacramento Public Library Tsakopoulos Galleria
Register online at: http://www.eventbrite.com/e/25th-annual-envisioning-california-conference-tickets-12277715979

Join us, Friday, October 3, 2014, at the Sacramento Public Library, Tsakopoulos Galleria, for the 25th Annual Envisioning California Conference- Moving On: Transforming Transportation in California. In the tradition of past Envisioning California Conferences, this conference will include an accessible and open forum where policy makers, academics, students, community activists, business people and those who are interested in California studies, will discuss California in its many facets. This year’s conference will focus on how transportation has shaped us, and the challenges and policy options we are facing for the future. With over 800 miles of coastline and 160,000 square miles of land, California has enormous challenges to move its people and transport its goods, and conference panel topics will include discussions on infrastructure, security, the environment, transportation’s influence on California’s population, and of course, California’s love affair with the car. Registration information and more details coming soon! We hope you will join us in October for this exciting event!
Center Brings National State Politics Conference to Sacramento State

Next Spring the 15th annual State Politics and Policy conference of the American Political Science Association will be held at Sacramento State. The three-day event will bring together political scientists who specialize in state politics from all across the country. This is the first time the conference has been held in California.

The Center is working with Sacramento State’s President’s office, the SSIS Dean’s office, and the Departments of Government, Public Policy and Administration, and History to make this a successful and rewarding event. The conference will include academic panels, presentations by key government officials, receptions, and other special events. It will be a good opportunity to show off Sacramento State, the State Capitol, and Sacramento to the rest of the country. For more information on the State Politics and Policy Conference contact Steve Boilard at 916-278-6906.

The LegiSchool Project: Fall Update

The 2013-14 school year was very successful for LegiSchool. We went on the road in December, bringing our Town Hall to students in Los Angeles who learned about online learning and its role in higher education. Our Legislative Summit featured in-depth discussions between essay contest winners and state lawmakers on the hotly debated topic of gun control in California. LegiSchool also presented our inaugural Teacher of the Year award to Mr. Stephen White of Marysville High School. And finally, our essay, art, and photo contests saw record-breaking numbers of submissions.

This year, LegiSchool will continue to engage students in matters of public policy and state government. We are partnering with KQED’s The Lowdown to put a twist on our art contest, asking students to create a political cartoon representing their opinion on current issues in California. Winning cartoons will be featured on the KQED website and displayed at the State Capitol. October’s town hall will bring students together to learn about the parties, politics, and players involved in this year’s election. At the conclusion of the town hall, students will vote for their favorite candidates. In December, LegiSchool is back on the road with a High-Speed Rail Summit in Fresno. Students along the proposed rail line will be invited to attend this town hall to learn about the topic from state and local officials. This year’s essay contest is on climate change. Juniors and seniors are invited to investigate what their communities are doing to address the issue (and what more could be done). For more information on the LegiSchool Project please visit: csus.edu/calst/legischool_project.html.

The Hodson Endowment

The Timothy A. Hodson Capital Fellows Assistance Fund was established in 2012 after the passing of longtime Center Executive Director, Tim Hodson. The Fund continues Tim’s vision of nurturing young public servants who may not otherwise have the means to participate in the program. Since its inception, awards totaling $11,780 have provided 19 Capital Fellows with the critical financial bridge needed to start the fellowship, covering costs ranging from housing deposit to professional wardrobe. As we prepare for the 2015-16 application period, we once again look to the generous support of Center friends and supporters to help replenish the Timothy A. Hodson Capital Fellows Assistance Fund in support of future Capital Fellows.

The Fund continues Tim’s vision of nurturing young public servants who may not otherwise have the means to participate in the program. Since its inception, awards totaling $11,780 have provided 19 Capital Fellows with the critical financial bridge needed to start the fellowship, covering costs ranging from housing deposit to professional wardrobe. As we prepare for the 2015-16 application period, we once again look to the generous support of Center friends and supporters to help replenish the Timothy A. Hodson Capital Fellows Assistance Fund in support of future Capital Fellows. Please consider donating at: https://secure.www.alumniconnections.com/olc/pub/CSN/onlengiving/showGivingForm.jsp?form_id=1562 Timothy A. Hodson Capital Fellows Assistance Fund contact: Pam Chueh, 916-278-7541 or pam.chueh@csus.edu.

AVAILABLE NOW! Preserving California’s Treasures

Learn more about our state’s rich cultural heritage and multi-faceted development through this dynamic publication!

- Highlights historical preservation projects from all 12 regions of California.
- An inspiration and a guide to learning more about California!

Purchase your copy here: https://commerce.cashnet.com/csusacevent
Kevin McCarthy, US House of Representatives Majority Leader, (Assembly Fellow, 1988-89)

“My fellowship experience was a great education in public service. There is hardly a better place to start than the CA Assembly Fellowship if you have a passion for community service and a commitment to public policy. When I participated in the Assembly Fellowship Program in 1988, I was in graduate school looking for additional ways to serve. Fourteen years later, I was back in Sacramento representing my community in the California Assembly. Today, using the skills and knowledge I gained in Sacramento, I have been fortunate to continue my public service as a fourth term Congressman in the U.S. House of Representatives and now as the Majority Leader in the House of Representatives. My advice to current fellows and future applicants is to continue to learn, always be the first one in the room and the last one to leave, and lastly decisions will be made with or without you, so always work to be at the decision making table.”

At the age of 21, Congressman Kevin McCarthy started his own small business, Kevin O’s Deli, and eventually sold his business to put himself through college and graduate school at California State University, Bakersfield. While at school, he interned for Congressman Bill Thomas and after graduation in 1988-89, served as an Assembly Fellow in Assembly Member Tom Bates Office. After the fellowship, he became a member of Congressman Thomas’s staff, and in 2000, he won his first public election as Trustee to the Kern Community College District. In 2002, he was elected to represent the 32nd Assembly District in the California State Assembly. As a freshman legislator, he was selected unanimously by his Republican colleagues to serve as the Assembly Republican Leader, becoming the first freshman legislator and the first legislator from Kern County to assume this top post in the California Legislature. In 2006, Congressman McCarthy was elected to serve California’s 23rd district and is currently the Majority Leader in the U.S. House of Representatives. He is a native of Bakersfield and a fourth-generation Kern County resident. When he is not in Washington he is home in Bakersfield with his wife Judy and two children, Connor and Meghan.

Kristin Olsen, California State Assembly Minority Leader, (Senate Fellow, 1996-97)

“Despite reports of economic recovery, manufacturers continue to flee California, leaving behind low-wage jobs with little opportunity for advancement. Year after year, our students rank among the lowest in the nation in math, reading and science. Government budgets — both municipal and state — suffer from billions of dollars in unfunded pension liabilities. Due to burdensome regulation and excessive taxation on businesses, costs on families keep rising — in the grocery store, at the gas station, and at the doctor’s office.

This is the environment in which I have been selected by my colleagues to be the next Leader of the Assembly Republican Caucus. It may sound depressing and many wonder why I would want to take on such a role during these challenging times, but the hardships we are facing in our state are exactly why I want to serve my caucus and Californians at this time. Too much is at stake for our children, our grandchildren, and our entire economy to take a back seat. Jim Collins in his book Good to Great said, “Greatness is not a function of circumstance; greatness is a matter of conscious choice and discipline.”

I truly believe that California can be great again, but it will not be by happenstance when the pendulum finally swings. On the contrary, it will require disciplined, strategic actions. It will require leaders who have the courage to represent constituents over special interests. And it will require precision focus on achieving specific goals that will shake the balance of power in Sacramento and lead to better results. My goal as Republican Leader will be to steer this effort by uniting Republicans — and all Californians — around core principles that will energize our state and restore California’s greatness. Toward that end, our state needs to invest in intelligent, determined, young leaders who will help pave the way for a better California — a California where economic prosperity and opportunity make it the Golden State once again, instead of the state of over-sized government and fiscal instability.

The Capital Fellows Programs provides an opportunity to help bring that dream closer to reality. Co-sponsored by the California Legislature and California State University, Sacramento, through the Center for California Studies, the prestigious Fellows Program is ranked one of the Top 10 Internship programs in the entire nation and continues to open doors for leaders across the state. As a 1996-97 graduate of the program myself, I highly recommend it as one of the most rewarding experiences a young professional can enjoy. Without question, my year as a Senate Associate was instrumental in providing experience and connections that have proved pivotal throughout my personal life and professional career. The information I learned about important public policy issues and the legislative process, as well as the relationships I built with legislators and staff of all political persuasions, helped me develop critical thinking skills, political acumen, and a collaborative approach to leadership. Our state can be a place of economic prosperity and opportunity once again. The task is monumental, and it will take extraordinary leadership, courage and cooperation — but it can and must be done. Thomas Jefferson once said that we do not have government by the majority, but by the majority who participate. Ask yourself what you will do to return prosperity to California.”

Former Fellow Profiles: Republican’s Rise Through the Ranks