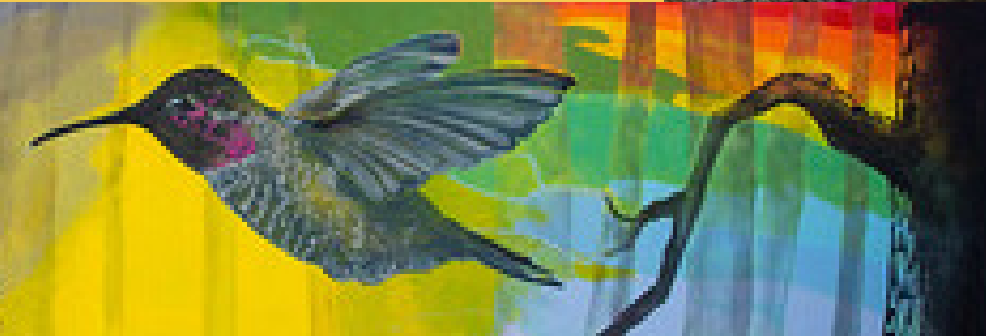




Renaissance Society Annual Report 2022–2023

Prepared By Debbie Martinez and Amber Korb



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Renaissance Society of Sacramento
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(2022–2023)

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Deborah Seiler
RS President 2022-23

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Renaissance Society of Sacramento Fiscal Year 2022–2023

The year July 1, 2022 to June 30, 2023 was a time of innovation and change for our Renaissance Society.

For the first time since March 2019, we returned to some in-person Board meetings, alternating every other month between Zoom and the Dunbarton Cabana Clubhouse in Campus Commons courtesy of Board Secretary, Robert Benedetti. For many Board members, the July 11, 2022, Board meeting was their first opportunity to meet fellow Board members in person.

We also returned to on-campus events which necessitated re-learning the old ways and re-imagining new ones to conduct them. On-campus events had been shuttered in recent years due to COVID-19, but by the Spring of 2022, we had begun a slow

return to campus. I convened a working group to examine and make improvements to all our workshops, including our semi-annual Orientation and Rendezvous events.

For the first time, our August 12, 2022, Orientation was conducted simultaneously in person and online. We changed the little understood “Rendezvous” to “Open House” with a greater focus on campus and community partners. Both events were streamlined, and we placed greater emphasis on the many benefits of membership in the Renaissance Society.

Our Annual Meeting on May 12, 2023 recognized the scholarship winners and Diversity and Inclusion Award recipient. It also honored retiring Sac State President Robert S. Nelsen.

I also convened a working group to examine how we manage our member database. This working group looked at the long-standing problem with our registration— a two-month gap when new members could not join. Working with the Sac State Information Resources and Technology department (IRT), we established continuous registration between the Fall and Spring semesters. On November 15, 2022, new members could register for the remainder of the Fall semester and the Spring 2023 semester for the bargain price of \$60. It was a win for Renaissance and for new members.

Prior to the existence of the Database Working Group, Renaissance had never in 36 years collected demographic information about our members. We knew nothing about our members’ age, gender breakdown, or racial or ethnic makeup. Working with Steve Grondin of the College of Continuing Education (CCE) and beginning with the Spring 2023 semester, we added new fields to our registration database to collect demographic information from new members.

The Spring 2023 registrations gave us a first glimpse of our members. The data illustrated our lack of membership ethnic diversity. As part of a diversity outreach initiative, we went to work creating a Summer Program to honor and celebrate the diversity of our Sacramento community and to attract members from those communities.

One of our most exciting innovations resulted in the creation of our first endowed scholarship. At a July 2022 meeting, our Resource Development Committee met with Dr. Lisa Cardoza and Tina Treis of the University Foundation, and Rebekah Rabirotff, Director of Development in the College of SSIS. They explained how we could create endowed scholarships. Our first endowed scholarship honors retiring Sac State President Robert S. Nelsen and his wife, Jody. Additional funds were added to create an endowment in honor of past Sac State President Donald R. Gerth and his wife, Beverly. Our goal is to eventually endow all seven of the \$3,000 scholarships that Renaissance awards annually. These endowments will ensure that our scholarships are funded in perpetuity.

To further our philanthropic efforts, we created a “Donate” button on our website. This will facilitate online giving to our scholarship and special programs funds as well as the ASI Food Pantry. For the second consecutive year, the ASI Food Pantry presented the Golden Plate Award to Renaissance as the highest donor during the 2022 Thanksgiving Food Basket Drive. Our overall giving to the ASI Food Pantry exceeded \$40,000 for the year.

Other major accomplishments included—

- A return to ushering for on-campus student theater performances
- Creation of a new Volunteer Services Committee to oversee our ushering, mentoring, and donating to the ASI Food Pantry
- Development of a revised five-year Strategic Plan
- A first-ever Major Donor Recognition event for those who donated \$500 or more to our scholarship fund
- Acquired 75 free Music Circus tickets for the final dress rehearsal performance of *Ragtime*

In this year of new beginnings, we also saw the retirement of President Robert S. Nelsen and the appointment of Sac State alumnus Dr. Luke Wood as his replacement. We look forward to building on our relationship with and contributing to the Sac State Community. We will continue our efforts to revive past practices and forge innovative ways to Learn, Connect, and Share.



Deborah Seiler
Renaissance Society President

INTRODUCTION

It is my pleasure to be the editor of the Renaissance Society 2022–2023 Annual Report. This report provides an overview of the Renaissance Society’s accomplishments and activities for the fiscal year 2022–2023. Whether this is your first introduction to the Renaissance Society, or you are well acquainted with us, please take some time to review it. You will see that we are not only a premier continuous learning organization, but that we also have a strong tradition of philanthropy at Sac State. In addition, we hold social events for our members throughout the year and engage with the Sacramento community as ambassadors for the Renaissance Society.

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 site [csus.edu/rensoc](https://www.csus.edu/rensoc) . Follow us on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/rensocietysac> or X (aka Twitter) <https://twitter.com/RenaissanceSoc1>

Debbie Martinez
Editor
Renaissance Society Vice President

RENAISSANCE HONORS UNIVERSITY LEADERSHIP TRANSITION

President Robert S. Nelsen, the eighth permanent president of Sacramento State University retired in July of 2023. The Renaissance Society honored him at our Annual Meeting, held at the university on May 12, 2023.

President Deborah Seiler thanked President Nelsen for his active support of the Renaissance Society over his eight years at Sac State. A contribution to the Seth Nelsen Student Emergency Grant Fund was made in his honor. In addition, both President Nelsen and his wife, Jodi, were given Lifetime Membership in the Renaissance Society.

The Renaissance Society also named an endowed scholarship in honor of President Nelsen and his wife, Jodi. President Nelsen said, “I have come to love the Renaissance Society and what you represent to this university. Jodi and I are deeply moved; not because of our names on the scholarship, but for what it will do for the student who receives it.”

The Renaissance Society is excited to welcome President Luke Wood, the newly appointed ninth permanent president of Sacramento State University. President Wood, an alumnus of Sac State, has deep roots in Northern California. We look forward to learning more about his goals and ambitions for Sac State and supporting his endeavors. We hope that this Annual Report and our future interactions will demonstrate how the Renaissance Society is and will continue to be a robust ally and partner for Sacramento State University.



*California State University, Sacramento
President 2015-2023 Robert S. Nelsen*



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



SEMINARS, LECTURES, AND SHARED INTEREST GROUPS

This was the third year of COVID and its aftermath of challenges for the Renaissance Society. While many members were eager to return to in-person learning on the Sac State campus, others were still being cautious about gathering in large groups. To meet these divergent needs, Renaissance offered programs in a variety of formats. Traditional classes were offered on campus, mid-week classes were delivered via Zoom and some Friday classes were simulcast on Zoom with in-person attendees. The hybrid and Zoom sessions were also recorded for viewing at the member’s convenience.

Renaissance Society programs come in a variety of styles:

- Seminars — led by one or more members, range from 3-12 weeks, and focus on one subject
- Shared Interest Groups (SIGs) — facilitated by members, offer activities centered on what people enjoy doing together
- One-Time Presentations — feature a variety of speakers by member and guest presenters
- Forums — this Friday speaker series features exceptional and engaging thought leaders who discuss topics from their areas of expertise

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.

Renaissance Society increased its efforts to offer more programs that recognize diversity, equity, and inclusion. Our catalogs included pages highlighting the Diversity, Inclusion, and Social Justice programs offered each semester to bring focus to this important initiative.

2022–2023 Academic Year Programs by the Numbers

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|---|
| ☞ Seminars- 84 | ☞ SIGs-61 |
| ☞ One Time Presentations- 103 | ☞ Forums- 25 |
| ☞ Total Programs- 276 | ☞ Diversity, Inclusion & Social Justice- 47 |
| ☞ Total Program Enrollments- 26,277 | ☞ Day Trips- 3 |

We increased our program offerings by 28% over the 2021–2022 academic year. While our membership remained about the same in 2022–2023, our program enrollments increased by a remarkable 25%. This reflects our members enthusiasm for additional programs and expanded participation after COVID.



Summer Series Celebrates Diversity

Our Summer 2023 series, “Celebrating Diversity—Telling Stories That Haven’t Been Told,” was designed to explore the rich diversity of cultures and ethnicities represented in our Sacramento communities.

Over eight Fridays, we brought together historians, community organizers, and business leaders to tell us their stories as we gathered Friday mornings on campus in Del Norte Hall. The programs covered a wide variety of topics from contemporary Native American life to Juneteenth to the experiences of military veterans of color, past and present. After a lunch break in the shade of the River Front Arbor picnic tables, we traveled together to visit inspirational cultural sites on campus or in Sacramento. We did additional advertising and outreach to diverse populations in the Sacramento area to promote the Renaissance Society to new audiences. Over the eight sessions, 748 people attended either in person or on Zoom. Many others were able to view recordings of these sessions on our YouTube channel.



Field trip to State Indian Museum with guide, Al Striplen.

Photo by Debbie Martinez

The Summer Series was capped by a joyous celebration of gospel music in collaboration with St. Andrew’s AME Church, the oldest historically black church on the Pacific Coast. They welcomed Renaissance at their sanctuary where we enjoyed performances by St. Andrew’s magnificent choir, along with recording artist and opera singer, Marlynn Smith. Afterwards, RS members and the congregation shared a communal lunch.



Alfred Lee, retired Sac State professor’s topic was, “What Happened to Sacramento’s Japantown and Chinatown?”

Photo by Debbie Martinez

EDUCATIONAL PARTNERSHIPS WITH SACRAMENTO STATE



*RS Secretary Susan Brackenhoff, Dean Dianne Hyson, RS President Deborah Seiler
Photo by Debbie Martinez*

The Renaissance Society has nurtured a strong partnership with the Sac State community over the last 36 years. Our members devote thousands of hours volunteering in a variety of Sac State programs. They offer themselves as patients to students training in medical specialties, as subjects for student and faculty led research, serve as mentors to students and as ushers at student performances.

GERONTOLOGY DEPARTMENT

The partnership between the Renaissance Society and the Gerontology Department has never been more relevant, with the demand for specialists continuing to increase as the surge of aging Baby Boomers impacts communities. The Renaissance Society presence on campus continues to challenge the myths around aging and train the next generation of professionals who will provide services to seniors.

Renaissance Society members have served as mentors to Gerontology students since 1996, including dedicated support and interaction with their students during the pandemic. Renaissance members and students alike pivoted to virtual classes, and the mentor meetings with students migrated to the Zoom platform as well. Mentors were able to offer a little perspective and hope to students, and the students lit up our screens and our lives with their energy.

The return to in-person student meetings was welcome. Renaissance Society members served once again as subjects for the students in the Strategies for Optimal Aging (Gerontology 121) course. Students gain real world information from their RS mentors while allowing RS members the satisfaction of sharing their life experiences with these future gerontology professionals. The end of semester get-together for students and mentors is full of testimonials of new understandings and new friendships.

The RS volunteer hours for the 2022–2023 academic year totaled 1,920 hours, with 160 mentors volunteering approximately 12 hours per student per semester.



*RS member Deborah Maciejewski with her student
Photo by Andrea Price*

PHYSICAL THERAPY

The importance of maintaining our physical flexibility and balance as we age is well documented. Renaissance Society members are invited to visit a free clinic run by the Department of Physical Therapy. They are seen by doctoral students under the supervision of licensed Physical Therapists. Close to 50 participants took advantage of the program this year which also helped the 32 PT students. RS members leave with a personalized treatment and home exercise plan and the knowledge that they are on the path to improving their health and well-being.



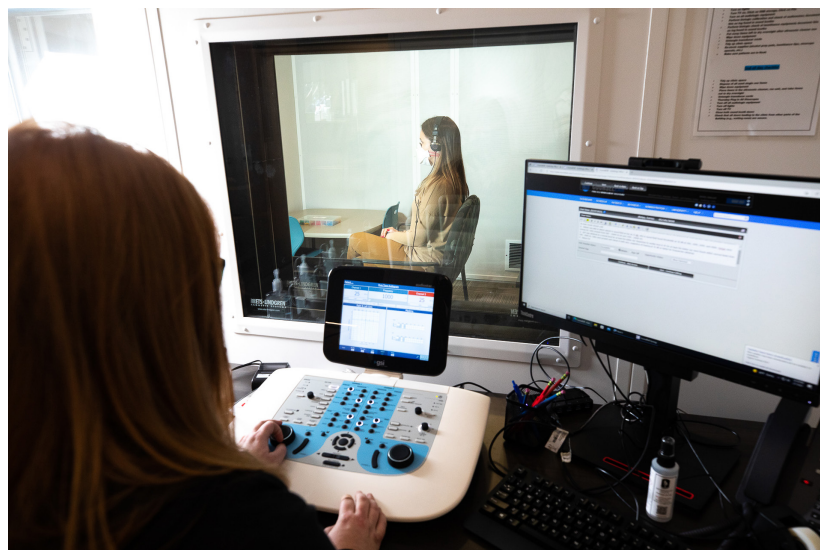
Physical Therapy Students at RS Open House



Maryjane Rees Audiology Clinic

AUDIOLOGY

Every year, the Maryjane Rees Language, Speech, and Hearing Center Audiology Clinic invites RS members to come in for hearing evaluations, ear molds, and other related services. After a comprehensive exam, RS members receive a written report they can share with their doctor. Renaissance Society member participation enables 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.



Audiology students conduct hearing exams under supervision

PSYCHOLOGY

Renaissance Society members once again participated in studies in the Department of Psychology. The most recent study, “Experiences with Aging and Participation in The Renaissance Society of Sacramento,” was conducted by Dr. Rachel A. August and her students.

Fifty-nine RS members participated in an evaluation of Renaissance Society programs in the post pandemic period. The results of the study validated the extensive benefits our members enjoy from belonging to the Renaissance Society and participating in lifelong learning. Three areas were identified to enhance the experience for our members: increasing in-person programs, developing more hands on and novel learning activities, and increasing the diversity of our membership. These findings are guiding and informing our strategic goals and long-range planning efforts. The partnership between the Psychology Department and the Renaissance Society provides validation of the relevance of the Renaissance Society in the lives of our members.



Dr. Rachel A. August



The Laramie Project

Photo by Brenna Dunivan

Photos Courtesy of Sac State

THEATER DEPARTMENT

Ushering for student dance and theater performances is always a popular volunteer activity for RS members. This year, the Department of Theater and Dance produced a robust and entertaining schedule of performances, including *The Laramie Project*, *The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee*, *Everybody*, and *Untitled Devised*, along with various dance performances. RS society provided 95 ushers to 37 performances totaling 285 volunteer hours.



Everybody

Photo by Madelaine Church

THE RENAISSANCE TRADITION OF GENEROSITY



Lisa Cardoza at the Major Donor Recognition Event

ed RS participation. RS set a goal of \$5,000. It surpassed that goal with a total of \$11,795 pledged over the 36-hour donation period. During the event, Dr. Dianne Hyson, Dean of the College of Social Sciences and Interdisciplinary Studies and RS liaison, was monitoring donations and texted RS President Deborah Seiler to tell her, “Renaissance is on fire!”

The Resource Development Committee has focused its efforts on increasing both the amount of donations to RS and to Sac State programs as well as increasing the number of participating member-donors. Participation tracking began in 2018 with 60 donors. Since then, participation has multiplied even during the COVID pandemic and continues to grow, reaching 482 for the 2021–2022 fiscal year. Overall donors dipped to 396 in fiscal year 2022–2023 but clearly the RS commitment to support Sac State and its students remains a cornerstone of RS community engagement.

Throughout the year, RS reminds its members about the importance of contributing and educating them on ways they can make that happen. To achieve this, Renaissance Society partnered with attorney Mark Drobny, a Certified Estate Planning Specialist, to provide complimentary seminars to RS members on estate planning law and ways to structure a legacy gift for Sac State. These seminars are given in the Fall and Spring via Zoom so they can be viewed by a wide audience.

This year we introduced innovations that made our Philanthropy efforts more robust.

We added a “Donate” button on our webpage, to create an easy way for our members to make their donations online.

While some donors wish to remain anonymous, RS believes that recognition encourages participation and camaraderie. RS held its first ever Major Donor Recognition event in November of 2022 at the home of President Deborah Seiler, with plans to expand recognition to all donors in future years.

Renaissance Society members have historically given generously not only to support RS programs but also to support Sac State programs and scholarships. The 2022–2023 fiscal year was no exception. Renaissance members contributed \$45,815, with \$21,104 going to fund scholarships and \$4,611 going to sponsor joint RS–Sac State special programs. Forty-six members contributed \$11,795 for scholarships during the Give Sac State Day fundraiser. During the year, RS members also contributed \$19,600 to Renaissance Society program support through the “Give Something Extra” feature of membership registration. In recognition of RS’ generosity on Give Sac State Day, the University Foundation made a \$500 contribution on behalf of the Renaissance Society.

Renaissance proudly participates annually in “Give Sac State Day,” where its members provide support to its Sac State Scholarship Program. Michael Pidd, RS Resource Committee Chair, was the RS Ambassador for the 2023 Give Sac State Day and he energetically promoted



Scholarship Recipients at the Major Donor Recognition Event

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 40 qualified applicants. These awards bring the total number of scholarships awarded by RS to 121, for a cumulative amount of \$269,000 to support academic excellence. All scholarship funding is provided by voluntary contributions from individual members.

This year's winners and their majors are—

Emily Bolas - Doctor of Physical Therapy
Josiah Graham - Criminal Justice
Alyssa Lee - Health Science
Kimberly Lopez-Leon - Health Science
Cesar Medina - Physical Therapy
Amanda Oakes - Physical Therapy
Michelle Silva - Gerontology

"I am beyond thankful to The Renaissance Society for seeing potential in me and for awarding me this scholarship. I want to ensure the organization that I will not take for granted being chosen as recipient of the scholarship and I will keep working hard to achieve all of my goals!" - Kimberly Lopez-Leon



Sac State President Robert Nelsen, RS President Deborah Seiler, scholarship recipients and Scholarship Chair Laurye Brownfield. (Alyssa Lee not pictured)

SETH NELSEN STUDENT EMERGENCY FUND

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

MUSIC SCHOLARSHIPS

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 scholarship program. Two \$1,000 scholarships were awarded at the end of the Spring 2023 semester to Sac State music students from the generosity of RS members.



RS members award music scholarships to students

ASI FOOD PANTRY

The ASI Food Pantry has been a designated charity for the Renaissance Society since 2017. We began by simply collecting cash and checks on the first Friday of the month by “passing the envelope,” during classes on campus. Next, we joined in the campus-wide Thanksgiving Food Basket Drive, providing food and cash donations. This year, we added the ability to donate money online through the yellow “Donate” button on our website. This makes it fast and easy for our members to donate and designate the funds to go to the ASI Food Pantry anytime!



Deborah Seiler receiving the Golden Plate award from Food Pantry Coordinator Ryan Choi

In the Spring of 2023, Renaissance Society was recognized for the second year in a row, with the ASI Food Pantry’s Golden Plate Award by raising the most funds for the 2022 Thanksgiving Food Basket drive. RS raised \$10,320 or enough to cover 137 baskets! This represents an 115% increase over our 2021 efforts.

Ryan Choi, Food Pantry Coordinator, reported that Renaissance Society member overall donations to the ASI Food pantry for the 2022–2023 academic year totaled \$40,466!

In addition to financial support, Renaissance members have also donated their time by working at the Food Pantry which they have found very fulfilling. This volunteer opportunity will continue to be promoted in RS communications such as the Weekly Update and the *Recorder*.



FINANCES

CONTINUING STABILITY

Careful financial operations ensure RS remains successful

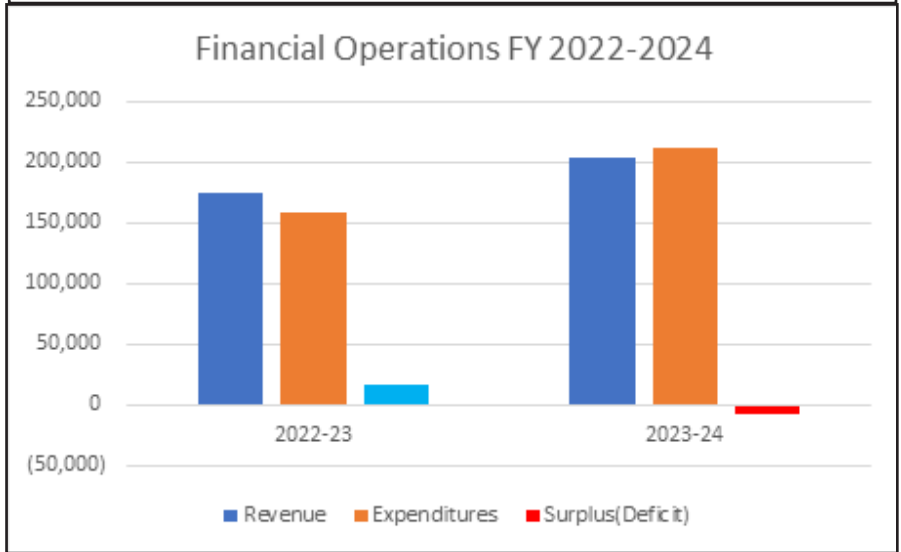
In Fiscal Year 2022–23, RS membership continued as it had in the prior year. Over 95% of RS revenues are generated solely from membership dues. Renaissance has not been able to achieve the membership levels we had prior to the COVID pandemic. Fortunately, many members contributed additional funds through the “Give Something Extra” campaign.

Renaissance adopts a conservative plan for expenditures

Expenses were reduced to the minimum necessary to carry on the program. An operational deficit of about \$22,000 was anticipated; however, a healthy reserve was available to absorb it. Several significant factors reduced expenditures:

- Salary savings due to the retirement of our long-time office manager
 - Less expensive office space
 - Costs of returning to campus were avoided as the transition was slower than expected.
- These factors as well as careful spending meant that total expenditures were only 73% of what was budgeted.

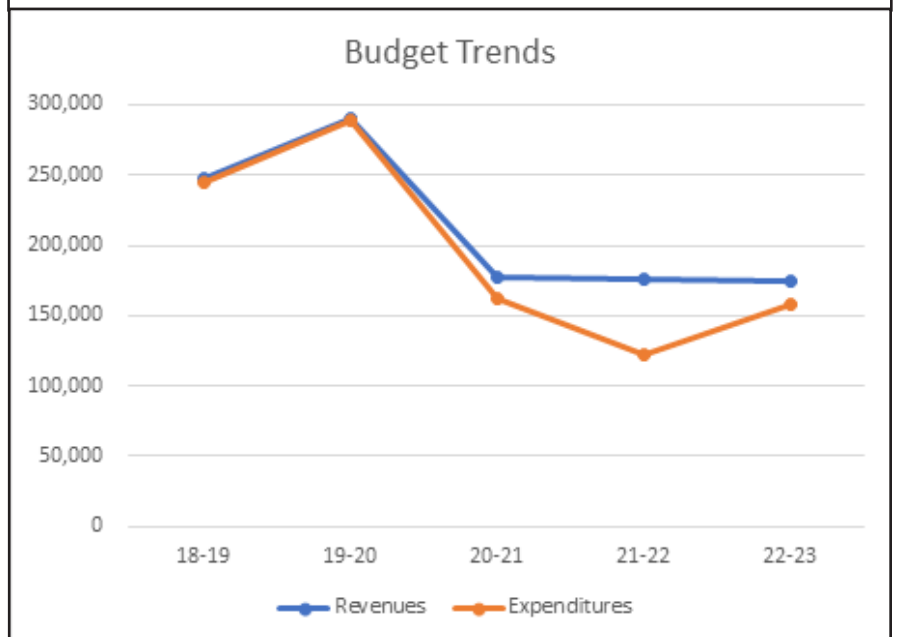
The chart below presents the planned and actual financial results of RS in Fiscal Year 2022-23. It demonstrates that revenues were higher than expected and expenditures were less than expected. This changed the outcome for the year from a planned deficit to a surplus.



Although revenues were less than anticipated, costs were also less than planned, and RS ended the year with a small surplus of \$16,656.

RS has always retained a conservative surplus to insure against financial crises. As a result of the unexpected surplus from this year, the reserve has grown slightly: the Cash Balance increased from \$238,017 at the start of the year to \$254,734 by the end. As a result of the higher Reserve Balance, RS transferred \$75,000 to its Endowment in the Sacramento State University Foundation in honor of retiring President Robert Nelsen and his wife, Jody. The Reserve ended the year at \$179,734.

The chart below presents revenues for the past four years. Revenues have decreased significantly in the past two years due to program changes necessitated by Covid; however, they have started to stabilize and recover.



FINANCIAL CONDITION

RS enters the next fiscal year with a solid financial position and finances will be closely monitored to retain this position. A strong reserve and a solid cash position will help cushion any financial pressures that may occur. RS has the flexibility and adaptability needed to face these uncertain times.

SOCIAL ACTIVITIES BRING MEMBERS TOGETHER FOR FUN AND FRIENDSHIP

Social engagement remains a critical element of belonging to Renaissance, through program participation, campus events and activities, and seasonal social gatherings. In the aftermath of the COVID pandemic, Renaissance members were thrilled about getting back together with Renaissance friends for social events. In September 2022, we kicked off the year with a fall BBQ at Arden Park. We gathered in December for a holiday dinner, held at Engrained Restaurant in the University Union. In the spring, we brought back the tradition of welcoming our new members at a casual reception held at Oak Park Brewery.



RS Members enjoying the Spring Social

Photo by Debbie Martinez

Our “End of Semester” social at Arden Park in April, recognized Asian American, Native Hawaiian, and Pacific Islanders month, including authentic foods and entertainment.

After finishing our summer program series that celebrated diversity, we closed out the summer with an evening at Music Circus, courtesy of Broadway Sacramento, who hosted several community organizations at a performance of the musical *Ragtime*. RS received 75 tickets to this performance, which were offered to our most active volunteers. This event not only provided wonderful social interaction among our members, but also provided public recognition of Renaissance Society at the event.

RS members also took their passion for lifelong learning on the road this year with three field trips. These included visits to the Sundial Bridge in Redding, the Ramses II exhibit at the De Young Museum in San Francisco and the California Youth Symphony Spring Concert at UC Berkeley. These field trips highlighted the members’ desire to venture out and engage socially in areas of common interest.



RS at Music Circus

MEMBERSHIP, DIVERSITY, AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT (MDCE)

The MDCE Committee, led by Debbie Martinez, encompasses one of the most public-facing activities of the Renaissance Society. The goal this year was to rebuild our membership after the attrition we experienced when the campus shut down due to the COVID pandemic. This closure and its impact on people's lifestyle, has had a lasting effect on their desire to return to campus. We finished the year with 1,713 members, a 2% increase from the previous year. While our membership gains seem small, the direction is positive. We are focusing our outreach effort on encouraging the return to campus, with additional outreach, particularly in diverse communities, so we can continue to grow the organization.

RS Ambassadors and Board members participated in over a dozen outreach events and speaking engagements to publicize the Renaissance Society. In each event, we received considerable name recognition and comments from former members. Some new venues this year included the HART Center Senior Pride Fair, a telethon and walkathon in partnership with A Caring Community (ACC), an information table at the Cesar Chavez Day at Southside Park, Fair Oaks Harvest Day, and the Holiday Fair at the Elk Grove Senior Center. These events provide two-fold opportunities- first, to build community name recognition leading to increased membership, and second- to provide our members with the opportunity to actively participate in promoting Renaissance.

Membership is much more than numbers. It includes providing support for our members when they renew and when they enroll in programs. This year, we proudly debuted enhanced versions of our Fall and Spring Orientation and Open House events. While these events primarily target new members, the renewed engagement of current members is substantial. Not only do we all get to see our Renaissance friends anew, but we also show our newest members our enthusiasm for our programs by volunteering at the events.



RS Members Debbie and Frank Martinez tabling at Cesar Chavez Day

Photo by Debbie Martinez



Linda Jayne and Sarah Ryan-Roberts at Fair Oaks Harvest Day

This year, we streamlined the Orientation and highlighted the many benefits of being a Renaissance Society member. This was followed by an Open House which expanded beyond program leaders to include community organizations such as "Rebuild Together Sacramento" and Sac State departments which we partner with regularly such as the Cardiovascular Wellness program. Members were excited to hear about the program offerings, volunteer opportunities and community engagement, all in one place!

THE WARREN BONTA DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION AWARD



Debbie Martinez presenting the Warren Bonta Diversity and Inclusion Award to Dr. Erik Ramirez Photo by Mike Pidd

The Renaissance Society Board approved the re-naming of our annual Diversity and Inclusion award in honor of Warren Bonta, who passed away in July of 2022. He was a founding member of the MDCE, and it is safe to say that diversity, equity, and inclusion were his passion and his life's work.

The Renaissance Society was proud to award The Warren Bonta Diversity and Inclusion Award for 2023 to Dr. Erik Ramirez the Director of the Equity and Affinity Centers in the Division of Student Affairs at Sac State.

Dr. Ramirez has partnered with the Renaissance Society on several diversity initiatives, stretching back to 2019. He welcomed Renaissance members into the Dreamer Resource Center to mentor students and to learn about becoming allies to immigrant students. He was instrumental in helping Renaissance members get connected to the U Mentor Program. In addition, Dr. Ramirez organized tours for us of the campus student

Affinity Centers and coordinated a Summer Series panel discussion featuring a highly diverse panel of Sac State students. Dr. Ramirez's efforts at Sac State and his work with the Renaissance Society demonstrate how deserving he is of the Diversity and Inclusion Award. He was presented the award at the RS Annual General Meeting held at Sac State on May 12, 2023.

RENAISSANCE SOCIETY EXPANDS DIVERSITY ENGAGEMENT

To expand its diversity engagement, Renaissance Society invited Dr. Mia Settles Tidwell, Vice President for Inclusive Excellence and University Diversity Officer at Sac State, to speak at the Forum on October 21, 2022. Her topic was "Moving the Needle on Antiracism and Inclusion." Through her presentation, she challenged RS members to review the University's Antiracism and Inclusion Campus Action Plan (AICP) and find a goal that we could support.

Renaissance Society enthusiastically accepted this challenge. Two RS members led a session at the Sac State Antiracism and Inclusion Symposium held on March 28, 2023. Dr. Stacie Walton and Gretchen Jung facilitated a workshop, called, "Using Circle Process to Foster a Sense of Belonging in Conversation About Race." The Renaissance Society also had an information table at the luncheon. In addition, RS dedicated the entire summer program to diversity and recruited session speakers to discuss topics that represented the diverse communities of Sacramento. RS promoted these free programs in diverse communities as a recruiting tool to help diversify its membership as well.

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 RS navigate the University Enterprises, Inc. (UEI) process by which RS transacts its 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—

Karen Booth, Senior Brand Officer

Lisa Cardoza, Vice President for University Advancement

Suzie Castaneda, Administrative Support Coordinator,
University Print and Mail

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

Steve Grondin, Consultant Information Technology, CCE

Ehsan Halterman, Instructional Multimedia Consultant, IRT

Mark Hendricks, Vice President & CIO, IRT

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

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

Steve Morgan, PC Technician, Information Technology, 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



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