

President's Message



Deanna Hanson

President

The Renaissance Society
of Sacramento

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Renaissance Website:

<https://csus.edu/rensoc>

Key Dates

Saturday, Jan. 24, 2:30pm
Peter, Paul and Mary concert
Reservations required

Monday, Feb. 2, 10am
RS Board Meeting

Monday, Feb. 2
First day of Spring semester

Friday, Feb. 6
1st day of classes on campus

Friday, Feb. 6, 4:15pm
1st Friday Pizza @ Round
Table

Friday, February. 13, 4:15
New Member Pizza @
Round Table

HAPPY VALENTINE'S DAY AND WELCOME SPRING SEMESTER

There are oh so many things happening in 2026! We have a great line up of new classes, seminars, speakers, and events planned for and with so many of you. I am so grateful for the incredible work of so many of you in planning for this semester and beyond.

I recently saw an interview with Dr. Ezekial Emanuel, an oncologist and bioethicist. He also happens to be the brother of both Ali and Rahm Emanuel. He has a new book, entitled Eat Your Ice Cream: Six Simple Rules for a Long and Healthy Life. It was no surprise that Dr. Emanuel's advice goes beyond just food and exercise to include the importance of social engagement, purpose, and mental well-being. We, in the Renaissance Society have been stressing the importance of social engagement to our mental and physical well-being. My question to all of you is how can we do more to foster social engagement?

2026 is Renaissance Society's 40 Anniversary! There will be much more information about how we will celebrate this all year. We welcome all your ideas. In fact, we are developing an ad hoc committee to plan events and activities. Would you like to be involved? Do you have ideas? Please call me!

There is an article in this newsletter asking for your input. Please read "Inclusion and Interaction." We want more inclusion and social involvement from and for our members. I recognize some of you may not be able to or want to be physically involved but I will bet many of you have ideas, right?

Please do not forget First Friday Pizza at Round Table in the Student Union after the Forum on 2/6 and the Second Friday New Member Pizza, also at Round Table on 2/13. This is Involvement! And maybe a Valentine's date night??

Enjoy your new classes as well as the continuation of many of your favorites. Spring and sunshine are almost here!



Happy New Year Again

By Darryl Freeman

Lunar New, also called Chinese New Year or the Spring Festival—is one of the world’s oldest continuously celebrated holidays, with a history of over 3000 years. The festival traces back to the *Chinese* Shang Dynasty (c. 1600–1046 BCE), when people held annual ceremonies to honor ancestors and deities at the start of the agricultural year. It marked the end of winter and the beginning of spring, a crucial moment in a farming community

Chinese New Year follows the traditional lunisolar Chinese calendar, not the Gregorian calendar. It begins on the new moon between January 21 and February 20, and celebrations last 15 days, ending with the Lantern Festival. Each year is associated with one of the 12 Chinese zodiac animals (Rat, Ox, Tiger, etc.), a system that developed during the Han Dynasty (206 BCE–220 CE). The zodiac is tied to folk beliefs about personality traits and fortune.

This year is the year of the Fire Horse. The last Fire Horse year was 1966, which some cultures historically viewed as powerful and disruptive—though today it’s generally seen as a symbol of drive and transformation. Today, Chinese New Year is celebrated not only in China but across East and Southeast Asia and by Chinese communities worldwide. It remains a period focused on family, luck, renewal, and prosperity. The Lunar New Year begins: February 17, 2026, and ends on February 5, 2027

In the United States there are many Asian cultures that recognize the Lunar New Year. From about 1975, two distinctive waves of Asian immigrant movements appeared in the United States. Unlike ethnic Asian immigrants in the past, Hmong and Vietnamese immigrants did not come to America on their own accord as Japanese, Chinese and Filipino immigrants did. As a result of eleven years of civil war supported by the United States, the South Vietnamese were defeated by Communist forces of the north. Almost two hundred thousand Vietnamese refugees found a safe haven by immigrating to the United States.

More than 200,000 Hmong people have immigrated to the United States due to their involvement with the United States in its efforts to stymie the takeover of Communism in Indochina especially Vietnam and Laos. Many of the Hmong had lived as refugees for over ten years in Thailand hoping to return to their homeland. In the mid-1990s, the Thai government closed the refugee camps, forcing the Hmong to immigrate to the United States. Many of the Vietnamese and Hmong immigrants have been unable to repatriate to their home

countries because they are not welcome in Vietnam and Laos due to their involvement in the U.S. led wars in those countries.

These newly landed immigrants also found themselves the subjects of a general U.S. public disdain as competitors for jobs and other economic resources. In their home countries, many of these people had been managers and professionals. In the United States, many were relegated to craft and service industry workers.

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California—USA—08/04/2010: Chinatown in San Francisco, California, the largest Chinese community outside of Asia and also the oldest in the United States. **Martina Badini / Shutterstock.com**

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As a result of the social class cation in this country, these groups formed ethnic enclaves imitating their homeland with concentrated business and residential communities. Chinatowns, Japan towns, and Korean towns are the emblematic response of Asian ethnic immigrants to the historic and contemporary systemic anti-Asian immigration disposition that has permeated the developing U.S. society. Many of these “Asian Towns” that can be found in many of the large urban cities across the United States, have become tourist meccas and a significant source of income for the immigrants and their offspring that live there. However, in almost all cases these Asian ethnic enclaves serve as a comfortable and safe spaces to raise families and maintain a living in an often not so hospitable society.

Have a Public Pension: Join Retired Public Employees Association

By Chuck Wiseley

Worried about your public pension in these uncertain times? Join us in the fights to preserve public retiree benefits by becoming active in the Retired Public Employees Association. RPEA represents all public employees (e.g., state workers, classified school staff, public agencies, etc.).

We encourage members to attend our monthly meetings where we discuss issues and events such as planned member fun events, upcoming elections, and future retiree benefits (including proposed legislation that limits or endangers benefits and current court proceedings).

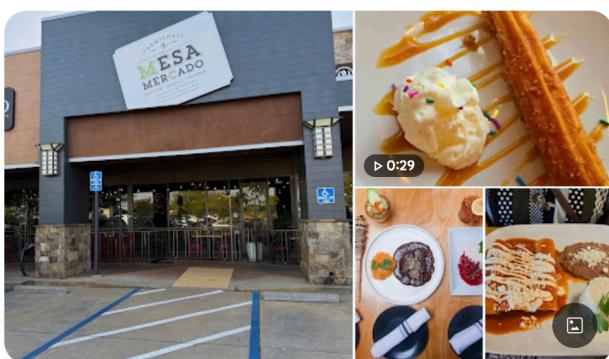
Meetings are fun and informative and a delicious hot breakfast or lunch is also available (\$10 member cost). Contact Diane Buffington at (916) 307-8228 to get the next meeting details. Membership is only \$5 per month - for more information visit www.rpea.com.



Submitted by Connie Gustafson

A friend of mine, who was the one who introduced me to the Renaissance Society in 2015, has died. Susan Leber served on the Board of Renaissance as Treasurer for several years, and her husband Richard Korff led the walk-abouts for several years. They relocated to be near to their son and family in Novato a few years ago.

Her son let me know that Sue had died on November 30, 2025 after a short illness. Richard wants to be certain that all her Renaissance friends are aware of her passing.



Dining Together - February 2026

By Marge Tarbell

Dining Together will meet at **Mesa Mercardo** located at 6241 Fair Oaks Blvd in the Mirlargo Center, Carmichael at 5:30 p.m. on Wednesday, February 11. Please **RSVP** by Feb. 7 to Marge Tarbell, mtarbell@global.net.

Cash only, ample parking, max 30 people.

President's Town Hall
Tuesday, February 10 | 8:00 - 9:30 a.m.
Hybrid or in-person at the
Harper Alumni Center, Sacramento State

Join Sacramento State President Luke Wood for a hybrid Alumni Town Hall, an opportunity for open dialogue, connection, and direct engagement with campus leadership. The Town Hall will begin with a conversation on timely topics, followed by a live Q&A session.

Registration includes coffee, pastries and event parking.
You are welcome to bring a guest, just add them to your registration.

Click here to [Register today!](#)

We are celebrating Sac State's community engagement. The Community Engagement Center (CEC) was awarded the 2026-2032 Carnegie Elective Classification for Community Engagement. Sac State students engage in 914,000 hours of community service, academic internships, clinical and school credentialed practicums, fieldwork, service-learning courses, and community-engaged research projects annually. The Community Engagement Center has served as a hub for experiential learning and partnership development with 1,280 Community partners. Learn more at csus.edu/CEC.



**Sacramento State Night
at Oracle Park**

Thursday, April 2 | 6:45 p.m.
Join fellow Hornets and cheer on your SF Giants as they take on the NY Mets.

Purchase Includes:

- Game ticket for April 2
- Sac State and SF Giants co-branded rope hat

Take the bus from Sacramento!

Buy your game ticket



**Share your Hornet experience at
Dinner with Hornets!**

Join us for an **Alumni Association tradition** where you have the opportunity to host a dinner for students. We will match you with students who are eager to learn more about your journey from Sac State and beyond. Space is limited.

Sign up to host a table by Friday, Jan. 30!

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Sac State Athletics | Catch one of the home or away games/matches this January! Sports in season include basketball, gymnastics, tennis, and track & field. So come out and cheer on our amazing student athletes as we start the season strong! [Get your basketball tickets here](#) OR [click here for other sports](#).

Other Upcoming Sac State Events

Chapters and Networks New Year Celebration | *Thursday, Jan. 22, 5:30-7:30 p.m. Harper Alumni Center, Sacramento State.* This is a fantastic opportunity to network and mingle with fellow Hornets from all chapters and networks, discover what's on the horizon for each group, and hear about upcoming events. Enjoy food, music, and prize opportunities while meeting new people, and learning more about your chapters and networks. [Register today!](#)

Business Alumni Chapter Mix, Mingle & Music | *Thursday, Feb. 12, 5:00-7:00 p.m. Good Luck Lounge, Sacramento.* Join us for a laid-back alumni social! It's the perfect opportunity to reconnect, expand your network, and enjoy a fun evening out. Enjoy light snacks, a glass of wine or a non-alcoholic beverage, and great company in a relaxed, trendy setting. [Register today!](#)

14th Annual Diamond Dinner | *Thursday, Feb. 12, 5:30 p.m. The Nest, Sacramento State.* The annual Baseball Diamond Dinner is an integral piece of our fundraising efforts to support the team. In addition to dinner, we will honor the 1986 D2 Team and hold a ring ceremony for the 2025 WAC Championship Team. [Buy your ticket today.](#)

Career Buzz: Non-Profit Edition | *Wednesday, Feb. 18, 12-1 p.m. via Zoom.* Discover meaningful careers in the nonprofit sector at our next Career Buzz! From mental health advocacy to community development, our panelists will share how they built rewarding paths in mission-driven roles that strengthen communities and make a real impact. [Register today.](#)

AN UPDATE ON A COOK'S TOUR

By Maryellen Burns and Deanna Hanson

As some of you know, A Cook's Tour does not appear in the Renaissance catalog this spring. Also, *The Adventurers* travel group has been folded into A Cook's Tour. This is an opportunity to let the group evolve into something lighter, more flexible, and better aligned with how many of us live now, especially those who've moved away but still feel connected to Sacramento.

Anyone is welcome to plan outings such as lunches, walks, road trips, dinners, or whatever feels right to them. Martha Mathison, Dan Cross, and Maryellen Burns will take responsibility for a few anchor gatherings such as Morning Coffee, at least once a month, at McClatchy Library or a favorite coffeehouse or breakfast spot; an occasional Zoom or in person Cocktail Hour, for those both near and far and a monthly lunch or happy hour gathering—or whenever the mood strikes. The website will contain an up-to-date listing of these fun events.

Martha Mathison developed a new website: **cookstoursac.com** to keep communication about these opportunities current. The website includes event notices, planning forms if you would like to plan an event, a shared calendar, photos from past outings and other useful information.

There will ultimately be a monthly A Cook's Tour newsletter. Each issue will include a short piece of writing connected to our theme for the month, a list of upcoming dates and notes on outings. These changes help our social events become even more sustainable, welcoming, and genuinely enjoyable. Whether you live nearby or far away, there are ways you can participate.

Be sure you sign up to **cookstoursac.com** to receive all the information about these ever-changing social opportunities. This greatly enhances Renaissance Society's social committee work and our goals of Sharing and Connecting with each other as we continue to Learn. It will also be an excellent way to recruit new RS members.

WONDERFUL PERFORMING ARTS PARTNERSHIPS!

By Deanna Hanson

While our website partner page is being re-designed, I wanted you all to have the complete list of community partners that have been created in this past year. The offerings from our partners vary throughout the year so we will continue to keep you informed via the Weekly Update and when complete, our website Partner page.

We plan to continue adding both partnerships as well as information about other community events we think our members would like to know. Be sure to look for current information in the Weekly Update.

Here is the list of partnerships as of January 15, 2026:

- Broadway on Tour
- Broadway Sacramento at Music Circus
- Capital Stage (currently providing ticket discounts)
- CapRadio (airing promotional spots)
- Celebration Arts
- Clara Performing Arts Studio (providing meeting space for our Board)
- El Dorado Musical Theatre (currently providing discounts)
- Folsom Concert Association (currently providing discounts)
- Harris Center
- River Fox Train in West Sacramento
- Roseville Mavericks Square Dancing
- Sacramento Ballet
- Sacramento Blues Society
- Sacramento Choral Society
- Sacramento Philharmonic and Opera (currently providing ticket discounts)
- Sacramento State Sports
- Sofia Home of the B Street Theatre (currently providing ticket discounts)

INCLUSION & INTERACTION

By Deanna Hanson

Within Renaissance, we often discuss how to become more inclusive, how to increase member diversity and how we can promote more opportunities for interaction of members. Many of our RS Committees' work centers around promoting inclusion and looking for new opportunities for social events such as:

Membership Committee promotes RS by attending many community events to attract potential members. The "social committee" within Membership initiates ways to gather to have fun - dinners, First Friday pizza, picnics, and other events for new and returning members.

Volunteer Services Committee recruits volunteers for various on-campus needs such as the ASI Food Pantry, Basic Needs Center, our semi-annual Open House, mentorships, etc.

Communications and Marketing continually look for ways and places to promote Renaissance Society. They are also responsible for coordinating our community partnership opportunities.

Resource Development focuses on ways to increase funding for RS, our scholarships, our special programs and combining this with ways for members to gather, have fun and raise money.

Forum Committee does a great job securing diverse, topical speakers to keep our members informed of issues and how they affect us – both local and beyond.

Scholarship Committee promotes and reviews student scholarship applications each year to award our seven annual scholarships.

Program Committee recruits, trains, offers support and publicizes our wonderful classes for spring, summer and fall.

Technology Committee's focus is on ensuring Tech Hosts are available to maintain the on-line and in-classroom ability for programs to be presented and maintained – very important for members to enjoy the classes.

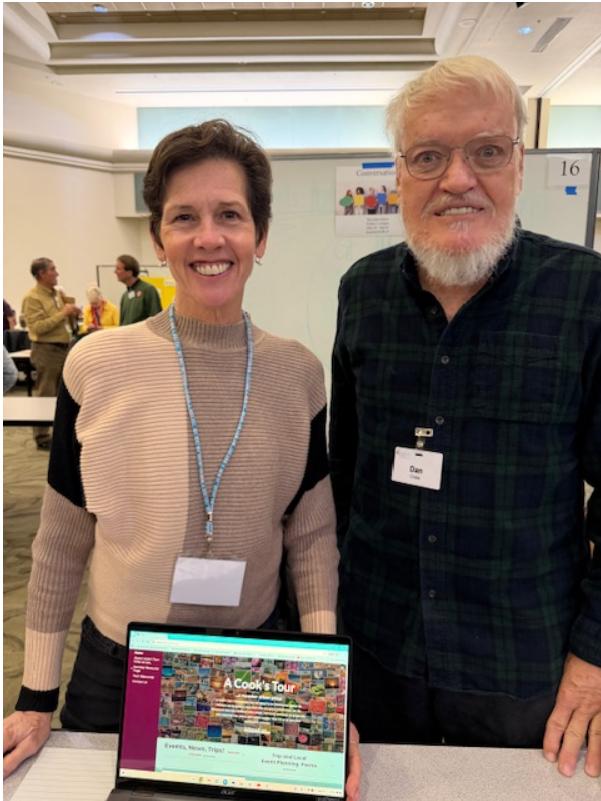
Finance/Administration Committee helps ensure we have the finances needed to fund all that we do and that your contributions are appropriately used for your benefit.

Nomination Committee recruits and interviews those interested in a leadership role. This is Very Very important to the future of the Renaissance Society

All of this is to say we need new members for leadership positions and to help with these committees. Are you involved on a committee yet? Think about your background, your interests and your curiosity. How and where can you help? The Committee Chairs for each committee are listed on our [website](#).

Together, let's continue to enhance our Inclusivity and continue to find new ways to engage with each other. Call the committee chairs or call me. We will answer your questions.

Members meeting new members at Open House



The Renaissance Membership Committee
volunteers for MLK event January 19th

