

President's Message



The Renaissance Society
of Sacramento
288jac@gmail.com
Renaissance Website:
<https://csus.edu/rensoc>

Key Dates

Friday, July 10
Sacramento Zoo Tour - **FREE**

Friday, July 17
Sac State Planetarium Show,
10am & 1:30pm

Friday, July 24
The Magic of Motown with
Mike Agron

Friday, August 7
Backstage Tour of Harris
Center with EDM
10am

August 14
Fall 2026 Discovery Day
& Open House

August 31; Fall Semester
Programs begin

NEW PRESIDENT'S REPORT

I am excited about the upcoming semester and the current Summer Program. The goal of leadership is to continue to offer popular programs and also new and different ways to learn. As the new president I am fortunate to have wonderful members who have stepped up to provide leadership and wonderful ideas.

Before talking about the next year I want to acknowledge the work of Deanna Hanson who provided outstanding leadership. One of her major accomplishments is one you can benefit from all year long. That is our partnerships with many of the most popular theatre and music and sports groups which gives our members discounted tickets to performances. She worked hard to grow our membership and to add diversity. Additionally, she introduced many of the Deans and campus leaders to our organization. She had many other accomplishments for which we all say

“THANK YOU”!!

This is the 40th anniversary of Renaissance Society and there are plans in the making to celebrate it all year long. The plan is to offer a special event in each quarter starting in September with a Wine Tour. Stay tuned for further details. Throughout the year historical information will be shared that helps us all understand how the organization has developed over the years to what it currently is.

Program Leaders have submitted their applications to teach and staff is busy building the catalogue. We hope to be able to offer more in-person classes through a collaborative effort with Eskaton in Carmichael. Members have indicated that they would like more in person classes so we hope to provide them Monday through Thursday at Eskaton.

MARK YOUR CALENDARS NOW for the DISCOVERY DAY AND OPEN HOUSE ON AUGUST 14TH. We are changing the name from Orientation to Discovery as we hope to provide an event that allows new and continuing members to learn more from various leaders and partners through video interviews. Our goal is for everyone to feel a personal connection to ALL that Renaissance offers and to feel more connected to the organization. Watch the Weekly Update for more details. The Open House provides the opportunity for each member to visit the tables of Program Leaders to ask about their classes, and to become more acquainted with other Renaissance activities and our Partners.

We thank you for being a member and look forward to a wonderful new year of programs, social activities and friendships.

YOUR BOARD OF DIRECTORS FOR 2026/27

As you know they say it takes a Village to raise a child! Well it takes many Renaissance Members to give you what you want from our group. In order to have a wide range of interesting topics for learning it takes recruiting Program Leaders, design and implementation of a Program At A Glance and a Catalogue. It also requires a registration system that can accommodate 13 week, 3 week session and speaker series. Oh yes, also how did we get all the rooms on campus? And who makes the Zoom technology work for us? A Summer Program requires a group to create ideas about what we can offer identifying local sources, planning dates and times, Eventbrite, etc. And these are just some of what your Board and Committees do with assistance from our staff.

Therefore I would like to recognize and thank three who are leaving the Board of Directors. They are **Deborah Seiler, Carol Baracke, and Susan Brackenhoff**. Deborah has served 7 years on the Board in many different roles but most know her as the President. Carol Baracke chaired the Volunteer Committee which required recruiting members to help out at the Food Pantry, usher at campus productions and the Thanksgiving Dinner for students. Susan also served in several roles both as Vice President and Secretary. This meant she had to record accurately what the Board did in its meetings. She also was the one who notified us of the passing of members and sent condolences to the families. **SO PLEASE OFFER YOUR THANKS WHEN YOU SEE THESE THREE WONDERFUL MEMBERS.**

THE BOARD MEMBERS for 2026/27 ARE:

President –	Jackie Lamb
Secretary –	Janet Heath
Controller –	Dave Ferguson
Asst. Controller	Thom Gilbert
Past President –	Deanna Hanson

Member-at-Large, Co-Chair Membership Committee	Mike Blixt
Member at Large, Co-Chair Technology Committee	Kevin Collins
Member at Large, Co-Chair Forum Committee	Anne Rewell
Member at Large	Mahnaz Khazari
Member at Large	Bob Silva
Member at Large	Carol Stanford

OTHER COMMITTEE CHAIRS

Communications & Marketing	Rick Atkinson
Membership	Susan Wheeler
Program	Debbie Martinez and Sandy Britton
Resource Development	Mike Pidd
Scholarship	Sue McGinty
Technology	Tom Nelson
Volunteer Services	Pam O'Brien

When you see the members above, please talk with them about ways you can help. Every contribution makes a difference — WE NEED YOU!

Summer Program Update

by Kathy Hart

Members have been delighted by the behind-the-scenes tours in our 2026 Summer Program Series. The first event was a visit to the River Cats' home, Sutter Health Park. In addition to a tour of the venue, members learned about all the food concessions and how ticketing works.



The following week, a group of members experienced a wonderful tour of the Capitol building. They were led by an enthusiastic and experienced docent guide and learned about the Capitol's influential role in shaping the state's past, present, and future.

Week three took members to the CSUS Aquatic Center to learn about its history, and all the programs it offers the greater Sacramento community. We had an inside look at the boathouses and were told that the Greek Olympic Rowing Team will practice there a few weeks prior to the 2028 Olympic Summer Games in Los Angeles.

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On June 17, both tours of the California Auto Museum were informative as our members were led on a special tour by experienced docents and vintage car enthusiasts.

Registration has been robust for all our programs, and there are more events and special programs to come! Watch the Weekly Update email for details, or click the link to check our [Webpage](#) to register for a specific program.

CA Auto Museum

Renaissance members experienced this guided tour through the eyes of auto enthusiasts who gave interesting insight on many of the cars.



Thanks to everyone who participated and made this such a fun outing.

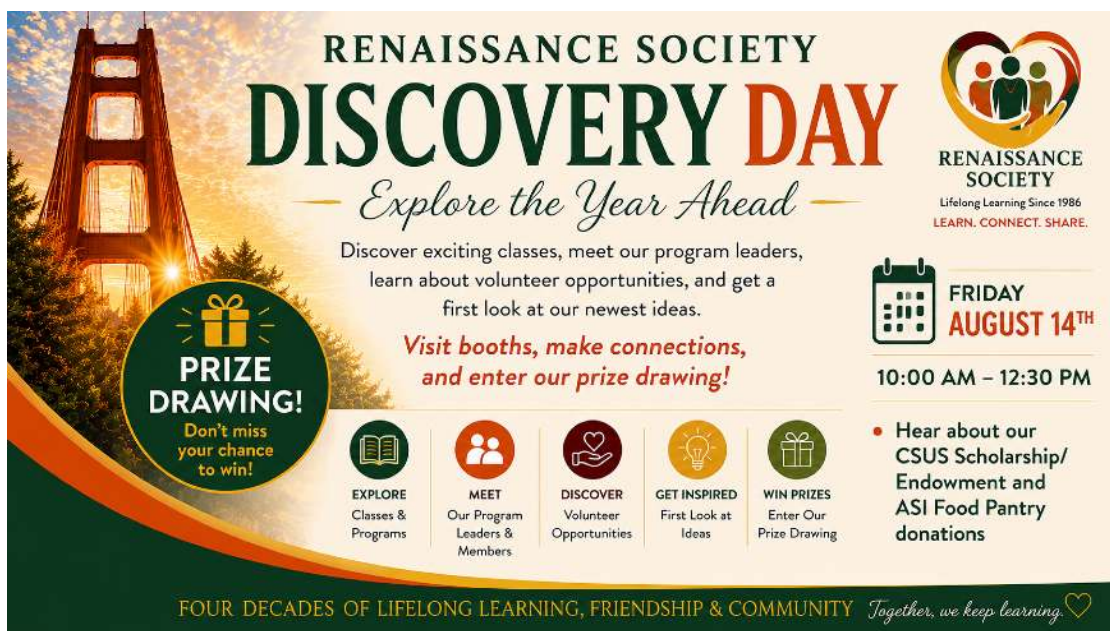


Follow RS on [Facebook](#) to see more photos and other details

2026 Summer Program

Friday, July 10; Sacramento Zoo Tour - **FEE**
Friday, July 17; Sac State Planetarium Show, 10am & 1:30pm, (1 show per member)
Friday, July 24; The Magic of Motown with Mike Agron
Friday, August 7; Backstage Tour of Harris Center with EDMT
August 14; Fall 2026 Discovery Day & Open House
August 31; Fall Semester Programs begin

Details here: <https://csus.edu/rensoc>



RENAISSANCE SOCIETY
DISCOVERY DAY
Explore the Year Ahead

Discover exciting classes, meet our program leaders, learn about volunteer opportunities, and get a first look at our newest ideas.

Visit booths, make connections, and enter our prize drawing!

PRIZE DRAWING!
Don't miss your chance to win!

EXPLORE Classes & Programs
MEET Our Program Leaders & Members
DISCOVER Volunteer Opportunities
GET INSPIRED First Look at Ideas
WIN PRIZES Enter Our Prize Drawing

FRIDAY AUGUST 14TH
10:00 AM – 12:30 PM

- Hear about our CSUS Scholarship/ Endowment and ASI Food Pantry donations

RENAISSANCE SOCIETY
Lifelong Learning Since 1986
LEARN. CONNECT. SHARE.

FOUR DECADES OF LIFELONG LEARNING, FRIENDSHIP & COMMUNITY *Together, we keep learning.*

Sports, the DEI Champion of American Society

by Darryl Freeman

Since the very beginning of the 250 years of this country's existence, issues of race, gender and ethnicity have had a significant impact on the social and political development of the United States of America. In contemporary times, controversy over challenges of governmental policy changes regarding immigration, race, ethnicity and gender issues demonstrate that our society has yet to come to grips with the reality that our society is truly a multicultural society. Our diverse native and immigrant population has made this country the great country that it is. There is one social aspect of this society that has managed to continuously demonstrate the value of the integration efforts of our growing population.

Sports have long served as a powerful platform for advancing Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) in societies across the United States and around the world. Through their universal appeal and ability to unite people of different backgrounds, sports foster environments where barriers are broken, and social progress is achieved. This article explores how sports act as a DEI engine, shaping cultures and communities on local, national and global scales.

In this country athletes have used their sports platforms to advocate for social justice and challenge the status quo. Icons such as Jackie Robinson, Muhammad Ali, Billie Jean King, and Colin Kaepernick have sparked national and international conversations about equality and human rights. Their actions demonstrate how sports can inspire societal change and mobilize collective action for DEI causes. Public examples of the successful life stories of individual athletes remind us of the microcosm of society, reflecting broader trends and struggles. When progress is made in sports, it often influences public attitudes and governmental policies amplifying the impact of DEI initiatives beyond the playing field.

On the global stage, events like the Olympics and FIFA World Cup highlight the importance of diversity by featuring athletes from nearly every nation, transcending political and cultural boundaries. These competitions provide platforms for individuals to celebrate their unique contribution to our society. During conflicts and peace, participation in international sports challenges the tendency of nations to isolate themselves in the cloak of nationalism. The Federation of International Football Association (FIFA) has for the first time qualified 48 national soccer teams to play in the Soccer World Cup Tournament.

The island country of Curaçao, located just off the north coast of Venezuela with a population of approximately 185,000 people, is the country with the smallest population ever to qualify for the FIFA World Cup. Other small nations such as Cape Verde, Iceland, Trinidad and Tobago and Northern Ireland are competing on equal footing with the world's largest countries with surprising success. In international football and other sports like track and field, success is not determined by population, wealth, race, ethnicity, or geography. Nations with fewer than 200,000 people can earn a place on the same field as countries with populations exceeding one billion. Sport has become one of the world's great meritocratic institutions, creating opportunities for individuals and societies that transcend traditional demographic barriers.

Diversity in sports is evident in the wide range of participants, fans, and leaders representing various races, ethnicities, genders, ages, abilities, and socioeconomic backgrounds. Athletic organizations and events often bring together people from disparate communities, creating opportunities for interaction and mutual understanding. In the United States, leagues such as the NBA, NFL, and WNBA have become a salad bowl of talent from around the world, showcasing the value of multiculturalism and promoting diverse role models.

Professional sports in the United States are an excellent, yet somewhat unappreciated example of individual athletes transcending demographic barriers. Thirty percent of the players on Major League Baseball rosters are foreign-born. Approximately 30% of the National Hockey League players are foreign born (majority from

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Canada and Europe). Not too surprising, between 55% and 60% of the athletes in U.S. Major League Soccer are foreign-born.

The National Basketball Association has a little over 20% of players from foreign countries playing in the league. The 2026 NBA Championship Finals the NY Knicks and the San Antonio Spurs each had 3 starting foreign born players. In U.S. women's professional sports, the Women's National Basketball Association has 21% of their team rosters filled by foreign-born players. The National Women's Soccer League has roughly 35% international players. Meanwhile, the Ladies Professional Golf Association has regular participation by 60% international players, making it the most international major sports league in the U.S. Many of these foreign-born players are now naturalized United States citizens.

Sports initiatives address systemic inequities by empowering marginalized groups. Programs that promote adaptive sports for people with disabilities or provide access to sports in underprivileged communities illustrate how athletics can be leveraged to combat social disparities and foster inclusivity. Sports organizations often collaborate to promote inclusive values, often working with state and local governments and NGOs to address issues like racism, sexism, and xenophobia. The power of sports to unite people around common goals helps break down stereotypes and build bridges between communities, making inclusion a lived reality rather than just an idea.

While professional sports have made significant strides in promoting DEI, challenges remain. Issues such as pay inequality, lack of representation in leadership, and team ownership require ongoing attention. However, the adaptability and visibility of sports offer unique opportunities to address these challenges, set new standards, and lead by example. Sports are more than games—they are social engines that drive Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion in American and world societies. By bringing people together, promoting fairness, and fostering belonging, sports help build stronger, more inclusive communities. As our society continues to evolve, the role of sports in advancing DEI will remain vital, inspiring generations to pursue equality and celebrate diversity both on and off the field.



Salute to Jennifer Kerr

by Loretta Burdeaux

One day about twenty years ago, Jennifer Kerr was surfing the internet when the Renaissance Society popped up on her screen. It piqued her interest, so she clicked to learn more, and liked what she saw! Its programs sounded interesting, she lived near the Sac State campus, and she became a Renaissance Society member. It wasn't long before Jennifer became one of the dedicated technology volunteers who have helped The Renaissance Society grow into the organization it is today.

Prior to The Renaissance Society having an official presence on Sac State's website, Jennifer took classes to be able to help create and manage an independent Renaissance Society website. Later she learned the Sac State website system and served as the Renaissance Society Webmaster. Catalog coordinator Lorene Sarne credits Jennifer with being "instrumental in making sure that our catalog was posted to the website on time, every time. Even late into the evening the night before publication when there were last minute changes. "I really could not have done it without her". Rumor has it that at times she even took her laptop along on out-of-town adventures in order to meet important deadlines!

Jennifer also played a key role in member communications. Before we had The Weekly Update, Jennifer helped operate a Yahoo Group that The Renaissance Society members joined to stay up to date with Renaissance Society announcements and happenings. When we grew into the use of Constant Contact, our current platform for member communications, Jennifer learned that system and trained a number of other users who have followed in her footsteps.

Jennifer has served as tech host for a number of programs and presenters - both on campus and during the pandemic era when everything was on Zoom. She was part of the team of dedicated Renaissance Society volunteers who took crash cour-

ses to learn all about Zoom and develop the skills needed to continue delivering programs to our members. Jennifer credits past and current members of our own Renaissance Society Tech Committee with making it easy to learn these new skills, along with being a terrific bunch of people to be around.

The Renaissance Society has benefitted for many years from Jennifer's dedication, expertise, and willingness to learn new technologies. As she steps away from her website and Weekly Update responsibilities, we thank her for her many contributions to The Renaissance Society and wish her the best. We look forward to seeing her on campus and on Zoom for many years to come.



Bob Lang - Robert Henry Lang passed away on May 31, 2026, at the age of 79. Bob was a beloved RS presenter. He had been a popular disc jockey for years. Condolences were sent to 1206 Marian Way, Sacramento, CA 95818

Alan Candee died May 28, 2026. Condolences were sent to his wife Nancy at 3249 Brother Island Road, West Sacramento, CA 95691 He had been sick for a while but came to Singing for Fun until last month. His wife has communicated that she will continue to sing with us.

Kay Cawood passed on June 15, 2026. Her class was titled The Great Books Seminar. Gary Cawood stated that she oversaw the "book group." She was last active in 2025. Condolences to 8736 Shelborn Court, Fair Oaks, 95628.

Thoughts about the Emotion “Awe”

by Allan Keown

On Sunday, May 17 at our annual picnic we enjoyed an informal 45-minute discussion of the emotion of Awe. Here is a very brief summary of Berkeley Psychology Professor and founder of the Greater Good Science Center at UC Berkeley Dacher Keltner's research “awe.” It is based upon excerpts from his 2023 book "Awe: The New Science of Everyday Wonder and How It Can Transform Your Life.”

Dacher defines "awe" as "the feeling of being in the presence of something vast that transcends your current understanding of the world." Vastness can be physical, temporal, semantic, or about ideas such as an epiphany that integrates scattered beliefs and unknowns into a coherent thesis about the world. His research of awe in 26 countries based on 2,600 narratives and resulted in what he refers to as a "taxonomy of awe" ranking them in eight "wonders of life." They are, in order, the following:

- 1) moral beauty: others' kindness, courage, and overcoming;
- 2) collective effervescence: moving in unison, thus stirring the awe of ritual, sport, dance, religion, and public life;
- 3) wild awe that becomes spiritual and thus heals bodies and minds;
- 4) musical awe that embraces us in community;
- 5) sacred geometries: how visual designs help us understand the wonders and horrors of life;
- 6) the fundamental IT: how spiritual and religious life grows out of awe;
- 7) life and death: how awe helps us understand the cycle of life and death; and
- 8) epiphanies, when we suddenly understand essential truths of life.

Dacher concludes by noting that "awe integrates us into the systems of life -- communities, collectives, the natural environment; forms of culture such as music, art, religion; and our mind's efforts to make sense of all its webs of ideas.”

The epiphany of awe, he notes, is that the experience connects our individual selves with the vast forces of life. In awe, he states, we understand that we are part of many things that are much larger than the self."

So, how would "awe" be as an epic topic/theme for RS's focused pursuit of excellent lifelong learning opportunities to serve our members? Great lifelong learning opportunities rock!!

DINING TOGETHER

On July 8 at 5:30 p.m.

we will meet at

[Ming Dynasty](#)

1211 Broadway

Dim Sum and Cantonese Cuisine. 24 people max, ample parking.

Please RSVP to Marge by July 5

mtarbell@sbcglobal.net



After July 8 . . . Susan, Marge, and Susie will no longer be hosting *Dining Together*. Since no one has volunteered to lead the program for the fall semester, *Dining Together* has been canceled. The Renaissance Society is seeking one or more volunteers to revive the program in the spring. Plenty of support will be available to help get it started again, if needed.

BUSY PLANNING FOR 2026/27

To prepare for the upcoming year the incoming President Jackie Lamb has pulled together 21 members to look ahead and provide observations and ideas for the upcoming year. The group met on June 19 and developed goals and objectives for the development for the President's 2026/27.

The group reviewed the past Long-Range Plans developed in 2022 and used them as a foundation for making their recommendations. We figured there was no sense in reinventing the wheel.

Renaissance is a strong organization due to its leadership and members. However, we must keep looking forward, retaining what is good and wonderful while addressing where there is a need for new leaders, programs, policies, and procedures to keep us strong and successful. The group is pictured below.

Jackie Lamb wants to acknowledge the group members and thank them for their creativity and time.

Photo Gallery

