



Jackie Lamb

President

The Renaissance Society
of Sacramento
288jac@gmail.com

Renaissance Website:
<https://csus.edu/rensoc>

Key Dates

November 6th
First Friday Pizza

November 6th
Spring 2027 Application
submission deadline

November 13th
Spring 2027 Photo
submission deadline

ASI Friendsgiving Feast

Nov. 24th and 25th

- Serve Food
- Setup Decorations
- Bake a Pie



THE RENAISSANCE RECORDER

California State University, Sacramento

Lifelong Learning Since 1986

SO, WHAT'S BEEN HAPPENING??

by Jackie Lamb

Your Board of Directors held a reception for New Members at the end of September. It was very well attended and gave us a chance to meet these members and to answer lots of questions. We want to say **WELCOME** to all our new members. We hope you are enjoying your classes and will want to become more active in the organization. The picture shows all the new members who came to the reception.



On October 23rd we hosted a speaker and reception event in coordination with Sac State. The speaker was the very well known lawyer Neal Katyal who spoke on “Protecting Democracy”. Drinks and appetizers preceded the speaker so once again our members had the opportunity to meet one another, faculty and students from Sac State.

On October 28th, from 9 to 3, on campus in the Student Union we hosted in cooperation with Sac State a series of workshops, seminars and discussions on our Rights and Democracy. Both of these events were unique because we had the young and older meeting together. We hope to find more ways for us to hold intergenerational experiences.

MARK YOUR CALENDARS FOR WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 12TH!!!

We will be kicking off the holiday season with a “**Holiday Cabaret**” with drinks and small plates. We have invited the students to come and perform. We will have Opera, Chorus, Solos and more, all performed by the Sac State students. They are amazing and it will be a wonderful way to start your holiday celebration. It will be held in the Ballroom in the Student Union on campus. Watch for the announcements and reservations will be made on Eventbrite. This event will take the place of past holiday dinners. It will be a celebration with all of us supporting the student performers. It will be fun to see you there.

Friday Forums – November 2026

Mendocino Hall, Room 1005, 3-4 pm

Forum Committee Co-Chairs: Sigrid Bathen and Anne Rewell

Nov. 6: Sonia Martinez-Satchell, Assistant Chief Deputy District Attorney

Inside the Sacramento County District Attorney's Office

Assistant Chief Deputy DA Sonia Martinez-Satchell has served in a wide variety of positions over her 20-year career with the Sacramento County District Attorney's office, which she began in the Misdemeanor Unit before moving to Juvenile Hall and Felony Trial teams, as well as handling cases involving child abuse, human trafficking, domestic violence, community prosecution and adult sexual assault. She will describe the path to her current role and responsibilities, as head of the DA's Community, Collaboration and Legislation Bureau, which includes community outreach, media relations and collaborative courts. She will detail major cases, accomplishments and challenges .

Nov. 13: Dana Nuccitelli, Research Manager and Climate Journalist, Citizens Climate Lobby – ***What's Happening with Climate Policy and Pollution***

Environmental scientist and climate journalist Dana Nuccitelli will examine the progress and setbacks in climate pollution and policies in the US and around the world. Although the climate news has seemed bleak over the past two years, he explains why the global clean energy transition is unstoppable, with many prospects for climate policy progress. An award-winning writer who has written extensively for major publications, he is the author of "Climatology versus Pseudoscience: Exposing the Failed Predictions of Global Warming Skeptics." He holds a Master's degree in Physics and speaks widely on climate change impacts such as wildfires and droughts.

Nov. 20: Kim Nalder, PhD, Professor of Political Science, CSUS

The November Elections: Post-Election Analysis

CSUS Political Science Professor Dr. Kim Nalder will discuss the results of the November elections, including the California governor's race and the midterm US Congressional elections. Dr. Nalder heads the CSUS Project for an Informed Electorate and is the director of the CALSPEAKS research and survey initiative, which monitors the state's citizen perspectives. Distinctive in its California focus, CALSPEAKS combines scientific rigor with a commitment to informed and responsive public policy. Widely recognized as a political analyst and frequently quoted in major media. Dr. Nalder holds Master's and Doctoral degrees from UC-Davis and has taught political science at CSUS for more than 20 years.

Benefits of volunteering

1. Provides you with a sense of purpose

You may be able to find your purpose through volunteering and becoming part of something greater than yourself. For instance, if you're retired, or have lost a loved one, helping others can give your life new meaning.

2. Provides a sense of community

Volunteering can help you feel connected to those you are helping in the community. This experience may make you want to get involved with other aspects of your community, such as advocating for programs you believe are important.

3. Helps you meet new friends

As a volunteer, you'll typically interact with people from diverse backgrounds, which allows you to learn other perspectives.

A Meaningful Voice Through Voting

By Darryl Freeman

With the opportunity to vote this November, I thought it would be useful to consider what voting means in different parts of the world. A ballot can give citizens a meaningful voice in their government, but holding an election does not, by itself, make a country democratic.

My primary source is Democracy Report 2026: Unraveling the Democratic Era, published by the V-Dem Institute at the University of Gothenburg in Sweden. Its assessment of conditions at the end of 2025 identifies 87 democracies and 92 autocracies among 179 political systems. These totals are not a count of all United Nations members. The UN has 193 member states, with the Holy See and Palestine holding nonmember observer status. The UN does not require members to classify its political system of government.

The report uses four categories to describe different types of political government systems.

Liberal democracies combine competitive elections with protections for civil liberties, equality before the law, and checks on executive power. Denmark and Sweden are examples. Here, “liberal” refers to civil liberties and limits on government power, rather than a political party or ideology.

Electoral democracies have meaningful, competitive elections but do not meet the same standard for those additional protections. Ghana and South Africa are examples. due to their competitive multiparty elections that give voters meaningful choices, but weakness in judicial independence and the rule of law limit the broader safeguards of democracy

Electoral autocracies hold presidential and parliamentary elections, but genuine opposition candidates are excluded or suppressed and the government controls much of the media environment. Russia and Hungary are examples of this type of political system,

Closed autocracies, offer one political party or absolute monarchy preventing its citizens from choosing the national government through competitive political party elections. Political rights and civil liberties are severely restricted. As an example, the Vatican City is an absolute monarchy. The pope governs as sovereign, and citizens do not choose their government through popular elections, although cardinals elect the pope, that limit

According to the report, 74 percent of the world’s population lived in autocracies at the end of 2025. That figure gives us reason to reflect on the value of meaningful participation in government. For me, the central distinction between systems to consider is whether citizens can use their votes to hold leaders accountable. That requires more than access to a polling place. People must also be able to learn about competing candidates, discuss public issues, organize with others, and criticize those in power without fear.

Our own country brings together people with different backgrounds, beliefs, and interests. Rural and urban communities do not always see issues the same way, neither do people whose families have lived here for generations and those who arrived more recently. Voting gives us a peaceful way to express those differences and help determine our shared governing direction.

We need not agree on a candidate or a party to recognize the value of that opportunity. This November, taking time to become informed and cast a ballot is one practical way to make our voices heard.

About the source and references

V-Dem stands for Varieties of Democracy. The 2026 report is its tenth annual edition. Its classifications are research judgments, and the report acknowledges uncertainty in some cases; they should not be treated as undisputed labels.

Nord, Marina, David Altman, Tiago Fernandes, Ana Good God, and Staffan I. Lindberg. 2026. *Democracy Report 2026: Unraveling the Democratic Era?* University of Gothenburg: V-Dem Institute. See the executive summary and the regime definitions and country classifications. v-dem.net/publications/democracy-reports/

United Nations. “Introduction — UN Membership” and “Non-Member States.” research.un.org/en/unmembers/intro; un.org/en/about-us/non-member-states

Vatican City State. “Government bodies.” vaticanstate.va/en/state-and-government/government-bodies.html



AI-generated illustration created with ChatGPT.”

A TRIBUTE TO RENAISSANCE MEMBER, DENNIS MANGERS

By Deanna Hanson

Recently, a long-time very generous Renaissance member, Dennis Mangers, received the prestigious Mort Friedman Civic Leadership Award. His public service has made a lasting impact on the Sacramento region in many ways, especially as an advocate for Sacramento's arts and LGBTQ communities.

The award comes with \$25,000 from a Friedman family fund at the Sacramento Region Community Foundation, and Mangers is spreading it across several local arts groups. The list includes the Sacramento Ballet, the Broadway Sacramento Youth Conservatory, the Dennis Mangers Fund for Young Performing Artists, the Sacramento Symphony, Mandarins Drum and Bugle Corps, B Street Theatre, Capital Stage and the Sacramento Gay Men's Chorus.

Manger's fingerprints are on some of the region's biggest arts victories. During the pandemic, while volunteering in then-Mayor Darrell Steinberg's office, he pushed to make sure arts and culture groups received a meaningful slice of COVID relief dollars, which helped pave the way for the \$100 million renovation of the SAFE Credit Union Performing Arts Center.

Denny has had many and varied careers, from elementary school teacher to CA Assembly member, President of the California Cable and Telecommunications Commission, and Senior Advisor to California Senate pro Tempore and later Mayor, Darrell Steinberg. He is also an incredible singer.

Dennis has helped with a myriad of Renaissance projects. He also has been a Forum speaker multiple times. He has been ready and willing to help any time we ask. We are proud to say 'Thank you and Congratulations', Denny.



TERI STONE - KEEPING US CURRENT

Submitted by Andi Murphy

When it comes to serving up the weekly (Update) and monthly (Recorder) digital bites that keep members engaged and up-to-date on the perks and issues we might otherwise miss, Teri Stone is the "host with the most". Like the uncredited player or ghost writer that keeps things interesting, she keeps the website reliable and relatable while keeping herself invisible. Balancing the need for messaging within the design requirements of the CSUS "common look and feel" website might at times feel limiting. Nevertheless, Teri is up to the task, and enjoys the work. In addition to the Weekly Update and posting the Recorder, she is teaching her first class on Chat GPT, and attends classes too, so her plate is pretty full.

I met up with Teri to find out more about her thoughts on AI, how she became the web person for the Renaissance Society and any advice she might have for future instructors.

For Teri, it was not a straight path to managing the website, but she has always been a sort of STEM girl. Science and Technology has long held appeal for her. She grew up in rural Central California, graduating high school as one of 89 students. She initially pursued graduate studies in Psychology at Stanislaus State, but as she was obtaining her MA,

(Continued on Page 5)

she recognized that it was not her calling. She earned her BS in biology and a minor in chemistry before moving to Sacramento and began a career with an environmental testing agency as an analytical chemist for 16 years. Teaching was her first love, but finding the compensation inadequate, she set it aside for a time.

After leaving the environmental testing agency, Teri earned her teaching credential at CSUS and began working at St Francis High School. This also began her foray into webwork, as the administration required teachers to maintain and update their class webpages, a task she enjoyed and appreciated. Blending her two preferences for science and teaching was her ultimate goal and she taught biology and biotechnology for another 16 years before retiring.

Upon retiring from St. Francis, Teri immediately joined the Renaissance Society on the recommendation of her mother-in-law, Irene Stone, herself a long-time member. Over time, she has become more involved with the RS, joining first as a member five years ago, then contributor through web work, and now as an instructor for Chat GPT. In some respects, she has come full circle only her students are a little older and she doesn't have to grade them.

As an early adopter of Chat GPT, Teri finds it an extremely useful and efficient tool for most things in everyday life. Teri appreciates the tool that Chat GPT is, and enjoys demystifying it for the RS members in her class. Demonstrating its benefits—time saved, knowledge gained, and efficient planning for events and projects helps ease apprehensions users might feel exploring the relatively new technology. Expanding on other aspects of technology that may be new to seniors, Teri will also be the first RS instructor to offer a class through a new partnership between AARP's Senior Planet and the Renaissance Society. Her course, "Emojis, GIFs & Bitmojis: Modern Messaging and Staying Connected," will keep participants up-to-date on some of the communication tools favored by younger people.

In respect to advice she might offer other potential instructors, she, not surprisingly, suggests using Chat GPT to query on how to set up a class, how long the sessions should be, what should be included, and how to organize individual components of the class. Also, definitely attend the tech classes held for instructors to familiarize themselves with Zoom hosting, and also HOW to present your information on Zoom effectively. Teri also encourages members to attend the open house each year to meet new members and make them comfortable in the new environment.

Teri has introduced more graphics to the website to make it more colorful and engaging, testing design boundaries as she moves forward and she finds the webwork very satisfying. She was recruited out of her Music of Your Life Zoom class by one of her classmates, Loretta Burdeaux, to start helping out with the Weekly Update, and has since branched out to include posting the Monthly Recorder, web updates, the Chat GPT class, and the upcoming Emojis, GIFs & Bitmojis class.

Teri is quick to point out that the webwork is a team project that relies on the active support of each member. The small group she works with to coordinate their individual tasks that keep us all informed is Loretta Burdeaux, (Weekly Update Production/Copy Editor), Kathy Hart (Facebook), Hollis Kulwin, (Weekly Update Copy Editor), and Carolyn Monson (Recorder Newsletter). It's a lot of work to keep things timely, reliable and coordinated for its distribution to all of us via email, Facebook, and web updates. They are actively recruiting for help for anyone who is interested. It is a great way to get involved and you are always the first to know what's up!

Spring semester is just around the corner,
what will YOUR schedule look like?



Ten Years of Full Plates: Friendsgiving Feast 2026

Serve, decorate, or bake a pie, and help feed 700 student families this Thanksgiving



Photo 1: Renaissance Society volunteers in their festive aprons with ASI Food Pantry and KSSU staff at a past Friendsgiving Feast.

What does Thanksgiving look like when you are far from home, or stretching every dollar to the end of the semester? For many Sac State students, it is one more meal to figure out. For ten years, the ASI Food Pantry has worked to change that, and the Renaissance Society has been with us since Day 1.

This Fall marks our 10-Year Anniversary. We have been part of the Renaissance Society's story for 10 of its 40 years, and we are grateful for every hour volunteered, every pie baked, and every dollar given. Last year alone, members raised \$50,820, all of it going straight to feeding students.

Friendsgiving Feast returns Nov. 24 and 25

On Tuesday, Nov. 24 and Wednesday, Nov. 25, we will host our third annual Friendsgiving Feast in the University Union: a free holiday buffet, music from KSSU, Human Bingo, and a raffle. Last year, 207 students joined us over two days, 79 of them were new students we hadn't met before, and 16 Renaissance Society volunteers welcomed every one of them. We need you again!

Three ways to help:

- **Serve food:** help on the buffet line and welcome students to the table.
- **Set up decorations:** turn the room into a warm, festive space before doors open.
- **Bake a pie:** homemade pies are the sweetest part of the day! Drop off the Monday before.

Sign up: <https://asi.csus.edu/post/asi-food-pantry-volunteer-sign-ups> Festive aprons encouraged!

Donate to the ASI Food Pantry's Thanksgiving Drive

Our donation campaign aims to raise \$26,000 so that 700 student families can share a holiday meal at home. Each gift adds a turkey, ham, alongside a week's worth of groceries.

\$30 feeds one student family · **\$60** feeds two families · **\$300** feeds ten · **\$1,200** feeds forty

Give online: <https://asi.csus.edu/asi-food-pantry-donations> - help Renaissance Society win the Golden Plate Award this year!

By mail: checks payable to "ASI Food Pantry" with "Thanksgiving 2026" in the memo line, to University Foundation at Sacramento State, PO Box 845004, Los Angeles, CA 90084-5004. The campaign runs through Dec. 31.

Ten years in, we are still building this together, one student at a time. Thank you, Renaissance Society. We're making our community one worth celebrating!

(Continued on page 11 with additional photos)

CHECK OUT NEW RENAISSANCE SOCIETY WEBSITE UPDATES

By Deanna Hanson

You may not have noticed but our website has some new and updated information. Please pay particular attention to the “Partnerships and Member Benefits”, our “CSUS Campus Volunteer Services”, and “Join Our RS Volunteer” pages. We want to keep our members updated on all the opportunities beyond attending our wonderful classes that membership in Renaissance offers. If any of you have other organizations or suggestions for additions, please let us know.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Deanna Hanson, Renaissance Society
deannahanson@gmail.com

Sacramento State and the Renaissance Society Host Free Symposium on Democracy, Rights, and Freedom in the United States

A day of intergenerational dialogue marks 250 years since 1776
SACRAMENTO, Calif. – Sacramento State University and the Renaissance Society will present a free public symposium, *Democracy, Rights, and Freedom in the United States: 1776–2026*, on Wednesday, October 28, from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. at the University Union on the Sacramento State campus.

As the nation marks its 250th anniversary, the symposium brings together faculty, students, and Renaissance Society members for a day of intergenerational dialogue on the rights and freedoms that have shaped American democracy and the challenges that remain. Sessions will cover:

- Immigration
- Polling
- Vote counting
- Women's right to vote
- Women's bodily autonomy
- The Project for an Informed Electorate

The symposium is free and open to the public. Community members of all ages are invited to attend any or all sessions.

About the Renaissance Society

The Renaissance Society is a lifelong learning membership organization affiliated with Sacramento State, offering classes, presentations, and various interactive activities for adult learners.

Event Details

What: Symposium on Democracy, Rights, and Freedom in the United States: 1776–2026

When: Wednesday, October 28, 9:00 a.m.–3:00 p.m.

Where: University Union, Sacramento State

Cost: Free and open to the public

More Information: Deanna Hanson, deannahanson@gmail.com





SACRAMENTO STATE & THE RENAISSANCE SOCIETY

Symposium on

Democracy, Rights, and Freedom

in the United States

1776 – 2026

A day of intergenerational dialogue with faculty, students, and members of the Renaissance Society.

FREE AND OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

WHEN Wednesday, October 28 9:00 am – 3:00 pm	WHERE University Union Sacramento State
---	--

FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT
Dr. Tristan Josephson · tristan.josephson@csus.edu, Sacramento State
Catherine Minicucci · cminicucci978@gmail.com, Renaissance Society

The Renaissance Society turns 40 this year! 🎉

We kicked off our anniversary celebrations with an October 1 bus trip to Iron Hub Winery. Members enjoyed a beautiful day connecting with friends, along with a fabulous wine tasting and delicious lunch at the winery. It was a wonderful way to begin celebrating our 40th anniversary!



Connect with other RS members for lunch on Friday between classes. You can find them all over campus!



Iron Hub Winery Invasion

On Oct 1 twenty-four members joined forces to invade Iron Hub Winery in Shenandoah Valley for an afternoon lunch and tasting of seven wines. We learned about the history of the winery, the specifics of growing grapes and making wines, and what to look for as we tasted each variety. Spectacular views, sunny weather, and knowledgeable hosts



QCDs & RMDs: Making Your IRA Work Smarter

Webinar | November 12, 2026, at 10:00 AM

How can you make your retirement savings work smarter while supporting the charitable causes you care about? Join the Renaissance Society and Wealth Strategies for an informative webinar exploring **Qualified Charitable Distributions (QCDs)** and **Required Minimum Distributions (RMDs)**.

Presented by **Nashoba Bailey, Chartered Financial Consultant® (ChFC®)**, who specializes in customized retirement solutions, this class will explain how eligible retirees may make charitable gifts directly from an IRA while potentially reducing taxable income. Topics include eligibility requirements, QCD rules, tax benefits, RMD considerations, common mistakes, and how QCDs compare with other charitable giving strategies. Practical examples will help you understand how these tools may fit into your broader retirement and tax planning.

MARK YOUR CALENDAR!

Thursday, November 12, 2026, at 10:00 AM

Registration and the Zoom link will be announced soon. Watch for additional information and be ready to sign up for this valuable opportunity to learn, ask questions, and make more informed retirement planning decisions.



RENAISSANCE SOCIETY

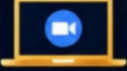
RMDs & Your Retirement
Investment Questions Answered

Gain clarity, confidence, and *greater insight* into your retirement.

 **Thursday, November 12, 2026**
10:00 AM

 **ZOOM Webinar**
A joint presentation offered by
The Renaissance Society and Wealth Strategies

Hosted by Lisa Eckert-Minchau
Presented by Nashoba Bailey — Wealth Strategies


Sign up and
login information
will be announced soon.

 **WEALTH STRATEGIES**
RETIREMENT ASSET MANAGEMENT

(916) 863-1266 / (800) 603-1393 | www.WealthStrategiesRetirement.com
7509 Madison Avenue, Suite 107 | Citrus Heights, CA 95610
134 East Main Street | Grass Valley, CA 95945



Photo 2: A Renaissance volunteer chats with students at their table about their studies and hobbies.



Photo 3: Renaissance Society members sharing the delicious holiday meal with students.



Photo 4: Deanna H. answers students' questions about how to play Human Bingo.

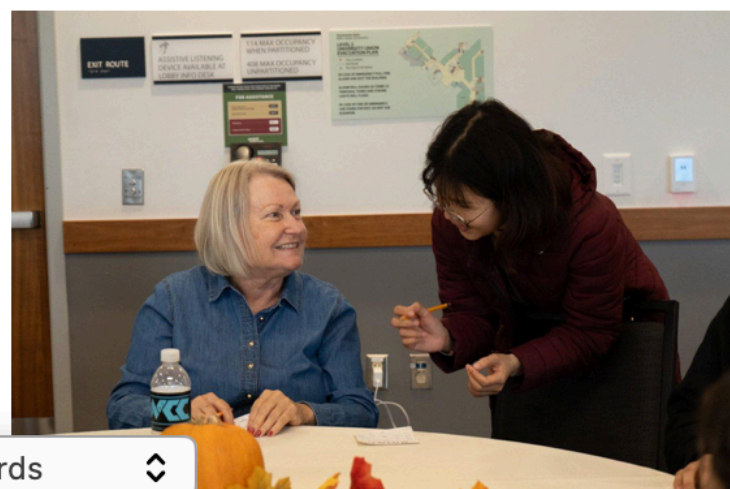


Photo 5: Carol B. and an eager student compare Human Bingo cards. "How are you! What's your name?"



Photo 6: Students and volunteers fill their plates at the buffet line. Renaissance Volunteer Cary S. helps keep the food pans full and appetizing.



Photo 7: Fall centerpieces like this one greet students at every table. Volunteers help set the room the morning of the Friendsgiving Feast.

Photo Gallery

Welcoming New Members, Followed by Candid Moments from the Reception.



