

## President's Message



**Deborah Seiler**

President

The Renaissance Society  
of Sacramento

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**Renaissance Website:**

<https://csus.edu/rensoc>

### Key Dates

**Monday, Dec. 4**  
Board of Directors Meeting,

**Friday, Dec. 1**  
First Friday Food Pantry  
Envelopes and Pizza Party

**Friday, Dec. 8**  
Renaissance Semester Ends;  
Holiday Party

**Friday, Dec. 15**  
Program Leaders Workshop

**Friday, Jan. 5**  
At a Glance Schedule Mailed

**Monday, Jan. 8**  
Spring Catalog Posted

**Tuesday, Jan. 16**  
Program Enrollment Opens

**Friday, Jan. 26**  
Orientation & Open House

**Monday, Feb. 6**  
Renaissance Spring 2024 Classes  
Begin

## Celebrating and Giving

Christmas, Hanukkah, Kwanzaa, Dong Zhi, Las Posadas, Diwali, Yule, Chinese New Years, Bodhi Day and more, the month of December holds special meaning as a time of celebrating and giving.

On cold, dark December days, we celebrate light and birth with decorations and special foods, music and dancing.

It is also a time of year when we consider those less fortunate. For sure there are thousands of people experiencing homelessness, millions of war refugees, and hard-working persons in jobs that don't offer a decent standard of living.

Right here in Sacramento, we learn from our liaison, Dean Dianne Hyson and other administrators that Sac State students currently encounter staggering levels of food insecurity as well as a lack of housing and other basic needs.

Renaissance members are truly fortunate to have many opportunities to help Sac State students and most are tax deductible. In previous messages I have shared our collective gratitude for all the wonderful benefits of our affiliation with the university and the Hornet Family. In this season of giving I remind you of several opportunities to reciprocate by going to the yellow "Donate" button on our website:

- Renaissance Society Scholarship Fund for Sac State students
- ASI Food Pantry
- Renaissance Society Special Programs Fund for joint programs with Sac State

These opportunities are all tax-deductible.

And for those on your personal gift list, here are ways to celebrate and benefit Renaissance:

- Gift of Membership
- Gift in Memory of a Loved One
- Gift in Honor of a Person you wish to celebrate

A "Give Something Extra" gift benefits the Renaissance Society generally and can be made by sending a check to the office. Although the "Give Something Extra" and membership gifts are not tax deductible, they are sure to bring comfort and joy to the lucky recipients.

As classes wind down for the semester, I urge you to take time to embrace a new tradition, reach out to friends both old and new, and share with Sac State students and those you love and admire.

On behalf of the Renaissance Society, I wish you and yours a holiday season filled with warmth, kindness, and good health.

Deborah



## December Forums

Dec. 1

**Michael Troyan**

**Celebrating Warner Brothers 100th Anniversary**



As a former publicist and archivist at Warner Brothers, Michael Troyan will share highlights of the studio's 100 years of extraordinary filmmaking. In his role as a film historian, Troyan served as an archivist at The Walt Disney Company, Turner Entertainment, and Warner Brothers. He authored *A Rose for Mrs. Miniver*; *The Life of Greer Garson*; *MGM, Hollywood's Greatest Backlot*; and *20th Century Fox*. He recently assisted the Fairbanks family with their release of *Douglas Fairbanks: The Fourth Musketeer*.

Dec. 8

**Deborah Seiler**

**Renaissance Society End of Semester Meeting**



This Forum will be hosted by current Renaissance Society President Deborah Seiler. Deborah served as Assistant to CA Secretary of State March Fong Eu for Elections and Political Reform and many other positions related to elections and legislative committees, including an appointment to the CA Fair Political Practices Commission. This meeting will feature an update on Fall 2023 Renaissance Society activities and accomplishments, as well as a preview of the Spring 2024 semester. New Vice President for Student Affairs, Aniesha Mtichell, JD is an invited guest speaker. Following this Forum, a holiday social event will be held at Engrained restaurant in the University Union.

### ❖ Continuous Registration

*By Deborah Seiler*

Did you know? We now have continuous registration between the Fall 2023 and Spring 2024 semesters and it's great news for bargain hunters.

Beginning on November 15, 2023, Renaissance membership registration opens for the Spring semester and allows new members to take advantage of the last Fall 2023 program offerings as well as the full Spring semester.

Tell your friends. It's also a bargain if you are giving them a gift of membership. And remember, the Summer Program is free and open to the public. Help us spread the good word about Renaissance!

## The Spirit of Giving Can Ring Holiday Bells

*By Judy A. Lewis*

As the holiday seasons roll around, some Renaissance Society members comment that they really do not need any more gifts. Or more "stuff", as they put it.

One way to brighten this time of year is by donating to the scholarship program which helps students who are struggling with the high cost of their education.

Each year, the Renaissance Society funds seven \$3,000 scholarships to students in need. There are a couple of ways that donations may be made:

Send a check made payable to University Foundation at Sacramento State with Renaissance Scholarship in the notation line. Mail it to The Renaissance Society, Sacramento State, 6000 J Street, Mail Stop 6074, Sacramento, CA. 95819-6074.

Or donate online at <https://tinyurl.com/RensocFunds>.



## DINING TOGETHER

*By Cheryl Nelson*

Dining Together will meet at  
**Seasons 52**

Arden Fair Mall, 1689 Arden Way,  
[seasons52.com/locations/ca/sacramento/sacramento/4534](https://seasons52.com/locations/ca/sacramento/sacramento/4534)

at

5:30 PM on Wednesday, December 13, 2023.

**A maximum of 20 members may attend.**

Dining Together members who wish to attend should RSVP to Cheryl Nelson: [slynnsearch@yahoo.com](mailto:slynnsearch@yahoo.com), or, (916) 421-0407 no later than December 10, 2023.

Separate checks will be provided. Parking, including valet, is available.



# Lorraine Murphy

## From Migrant Farm Worker To College Grad

By Judy A. Lewis

As daughter of migrant farm laborers, Lorraine can still recall getting her own “lard bucket” for topping off the large fruit buckets her family members filled. Both her immediate and extended family followed the harvests from southern California to northern Washington. They happened to be working in the Sacramento area when Lorraine was born. She reports that her maternal family members are of Navajo heritage who once owned land, long before California was a state.

Her mother passed away when Lorraine was nine. She was separated from her brothers and was required to live with her biological father and “Auntie” in Isleton, in the Sacramento delta region. This move would prove invaluable as her family expanded to include three sisters and two additional brothers. Auntie, who was of Filipino descent, strongly urged Lorraine to attend college, telling her that she was “smart.”

When she graduated from high school, Lorraine intended to enroll at Sac State since she had won a scholarship for such use. Instead, she headed to Sacramento City College when a summer job as an administrative aide turned into a full-time grave-yard position with the Department of Motor Vehicles. Lorraine acquired an AA in Computer Science.

Lorraine transferred to Sac State where she earned a Master’s Degree in English. After being hired by Aerojet as a proofreader, she worked her way up to technical writer, becoming responsible for writing several manuals for the Director of Manufacturing. It was a job she loved. And there she met her future husband, Steve.

Eight years ago, Lorraine joined the Renaissance Society. When she noticed an ad for a volunteer position, she soon found herself editing the monthly Recorder newsletter. She describes being “self-taught

and learning on the job.” Despite being physically limited by her current health, she discovered a new-found hobby when she joined Kathleen Hart’s water color painting class.



Twenty years ago, Lorraine was rear-ended and seriously injured in an automobile accident which resulted in inexplicable pain from the waist down due to touch or cold. The condition had been diagnosed as RSD (Reflex Sympathetic Dystrophy.) For relief, Lorraine has a spinal stimulator installed along her spine that vibrates continuously. She must dress in several layers of clothing due to her cold sensitivity.

Eighteen years later, a second automobile t-boned her car, which resulted in the pain jumping from the lower half of her body to the upper half. She now has a rare and painfully debilitating condition — CRPS (Complex Regional Pain Syndrome). Unfortunately, the spinal stimulator does not provide relief for the newly acquired pain.

Lorraine and her husband Steve (also a Renaissance member) share one daughter, Lillian. Lillian is a PhD student at UC Berkeley focusing on Biological Sciences with an emphasis on chronic pain management.

Lorraine enjoys the companionship of her two dachshunds, Thor and Loki.





Dimensions of American Diversity  
**The American Jewish Community and U.S. Civil Rights**

*By Darryl O. Freeman*

Historical documents in the U.S. National Archives and the Lincoln Presidential Library and Museum in Springfield, IL reveal the significant contributions of the American Jewish community in the Civil Rights movement in the U.S. Immigration of Jewish people in the United States grew from 3,000 in 1809 (the year of Abraham Lincoln's birth) to over 150,000 in 1865. (U.S. population at that time was 31,400,000+)

President Abraham Lincoln had over 100 Jewish friends in his social-political circle. Five of those friends led by Jewish lawyer Abraham Jonas are credited with lobbying Lincoln to run for the U.S. Presidency. In 1862 Lincoln appointed the first Jewish Chaplain for the 7,000 Jews that served in the Union Army. President Lincoln intervened when General Grant issued an Order barring the military from doing business with Jewish merchants because Grant thought they were also selling to the Confederates. The President's personal physician, a Russian Jew Charles Henry Liebermann, was the attending doctor trying to save Lincoln's life after the assassination action of John Booth.

As far back as the 19th century, Jewish storekeepers were virtually the only Southern merchants who addressed black customers as "Mr." and "Mrs." and permitted them to try on clothing. By the early 20th century, a few Southern Jews bravely publicly spoke out against the evils of white supremacy. In 1929, Louis Isaac Jaffe, editorial writer for the Norfolk Virginia-Pilot won the Pulitzer Prize for his denunciation of lynching in the Southern States.

In the landmark 1954 *Brown v. Board of Education* ruling, the Supreme Court accepted the research of the black sociologist Kenneth Clark that segregation placed a stamp of inferiority on black children. Clark's study had been commissioned by the American Jewish

Committee, who also submitted an amicus curiae brief to the Court. The Anti-Defamation League and the American Jewish Congress also submitted amicus curiae briefs on behalf of the cause. Once the judgment was issued, those Jewish defense organizations continued to file legal briefs in civil rights cases dealing with housing, employment, education, and public accommodation.

American Jews played a significant role in the founding and funding of some of the most important civil rights organizations, including the NAACP, the Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights, the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC) and the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC).

From 1910 to 1940, more than 2,000 primary and secondary schools and 20 Black colleges (including Howard, Dillard and Fisk universities) were established in whole or in part by contributions from Jewish philanthropist Julius Rosenwald. At the height of the so-called "Rosenwald schools," nearly 40 percent of Black people in the south were educated at one of these institutions.

During the Civil Rights era, American Jews established themselves as social political influencers in the United States.



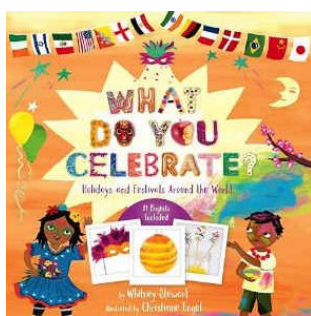
In solidarity, Rabbi Abraham Joshua Heschel (right) marched with Dr. King in his 1965 March on Selma Alabama

## READINGS ON DIVERSITY

By Robert Benedetti and Roberta Gleason

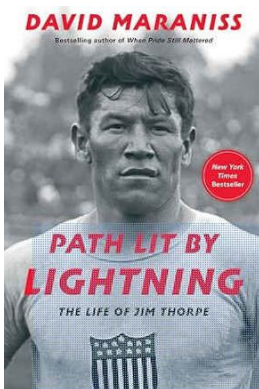
In our on-going commitment to former-President Nelsen's campus-wide plan to end discrimination and prejudice, we present our latest.

**What Do You Celebrate? Holidays and Festivals Around the World** by Whitney Stewart (Author), Christiane Engel (Illustrator) ages 5-9



Across the globe, every country has its special holidays. From Brazilian carnival and Chinese New Year to France's Bastille Day and our very own Fourth of July, *What Do You Celebrate?* presents 14 special occasions where people dance, dress up, eat yummy foods, and enjoy other fun traditions that have been passed down from generation to generation. Kids can travel the globe and learn about Fastelavn, Purim, the Cherry Blossom Festival, Holi, Eid al-Fitr, Halloween, Day of the Dead, Guy Fawkes Day, and more. Each spread showcases a different holiday, offering background and cultural context, vocabulary words, photographs, and instructions for festive projects.

**Path Lit by Lightning: The Story of Jim Thorpe** by David Maraniss



Jim Thorpe rose to world fame as a mythic talent who excelled at every sport. He won gold medals in the decathlon and pentathlon at the 1912 Stockholm Olympics, was an All-American football player at the Carlisle Indian School, the star of the first class of the Pro Football Hall of Fame, and played major league baseball for John McGraw's New York Giants. Even in a golden age of sports celebrities, he was one of a kind. But despite his colossal skills, Thorpe's life was a struggle against the odds. As a member of the Sac and Fox Nation, he encountered duplicitous authorities who turned away from him when their reputations were at risk. At Carlisle, he dealt with the racist assimilationist philosophy "Kill the Indian, save the man". His gold medals were

unfairly rescinded because he had played minor league baseball. His later life was troubled by alcohol, broken marriages, and financial distress. He roamed from state to state and took bit parts in Hollywood, but even the film of his own life failed to improve his fortunes. But Thorpe did not succumb. The man survived, complications and all, and so did the myth.

**West with Giraffes: A Novel** by Lynda Rutledge  
Woodrow Wilson Nickel, age 105, feels his life ebbing away. But when he learns giraffes are going extinct, he finds himself recalling the unforgettable experience he cannot take to his grave. It's 1938. The Great Depression lingers. Hitler is threatening Europe, and world-weary Americans long for wonder. They find it in two giraffes who miraculously survive a hurricane

while crossing the Atlantic. What follows is a twelve-day road trip in a custom truck to deliver Southern California's first giraffes to the San Diego Zoo. Behind the wheel is the young Dust Bowl rowdy Woodrow. Inspired by true events, the tale weaves real-life figures with fictional ones, including the world's first female zoo director, a crusty old man with a past, a young female photographer with a secret, and assorted reprobates as spotty as the giraffes.

Part adventure, part historical saga, and part coming-of-age love story, *West with Giraffes* explores what it means to be changed by the grace of animals, the kindness of strangers, the passing of time, and a story told before it's too late.

**Small Things Like These** by Claire Keegan



It is 1985 in a small Irish town. During the weeks leading up to Christmas, Bill Furlong, a coal merchant and family man faces into his busiest season. Early one morning, while delivering an order to the local convent, Bill makes a discovery which forces him to confront both his past and the complicit silences of a town controlled by the Catholic Church.

Already an international bestseller, *Small Things Like These* is a deeply affecting story of hope, quiet heroism, and empathy from one of our most critically lauded and iconic writers. A perfect Holiday gift.





## Volunteer Highlights

By Deborah Seiler

### Who Writes Our Weekly Update? Hollis Kulwin!

Do you ever wonder who writes the copy for our Weekly Update that arrives in your email each Wednesday morning? Hollis Kulwin answered my call last February and has dutifully written nearly every issue since.



When I first spoke with her, I was certain she was overqualified for the assignment. She most certainly is, but she seems to enjoy it and Renaissance is the lucky recipient of her many talents.

Before joining Renaissance Hollis was the Senior Assistant Dean for Student Affairs at UC Davis School of Law. After earning her BA from Georgetown University, she completed a one-year intensive Japanese language program at the Stanford Inter-University Center for Japanese Studies in Tokyo, Japan, and then earned her JD from the State University of New York at Buffalo Law School.

Hollis served as associate dean of students, instructor of law and in-house counsel at Southwestern Law School from 1991 until 2002. She joined UC Davis in 2002 where she oversaw student services in the academic program, including Academic Success, externships, Registrar, and the on-site law school psychologist. She chaired the student/faculty Loan Repayment Assistance Committee (LSAC) oversight Committee and the faculty Academic Appeals Committee, assisted students with issues that can affect academic performance, created wellness programming, and assisted the dean with special projects. Hollis has also served on several ABA accreditation site visit teams and LSAC governance committees. Prior to entering academia, she practiced law for 10 years, specializing in business litigation.

Hollis says she has gained so much through her involvement with RS. It's been a terrific way to meet wonderful folks while enjoying a wide range of Renaissance programs and giving back to Sac State. She has particularly enjoyed working with Sac State students through the mentorship opportunities available through RS. And writing the Weekly Update each week has been a really fun way to engage in her love of writing while learning more about RS.

Thank you, Hollis, for your dedication and contribution to Renaissance!



## Holiday Dinner at Engrained Restaurant

By Debbie Martinez

Gather with your Renaissance friends for some Holiday Cheer on Friday, December 8, from 4pm to 6:30pm at *Engrained Restaurant* in the University Union.



There will be a buffet dinner and no host bar. The cost is \$25 payable by check to the Renaissance Society. Checks should be mailed to the Renaissance Society c/o Amber Korb, 6000 J St., Mail Stop 6074, Sacramento, CA 95819-6074.

Hurry, as the restaurant can accommodate a maximum of 50, and there will likely be a waiting list. Questions? Contact Debbie Martinez at [Debralyn78@pacbell.net](mailto:Debralyn78@pacbell.net)



# Community Partners

## Invitations and Announcements from Our Sac State and Community Friends

### Sac State Retirees Association

#### Sac State Retirees Membership Renewal

If you haven't renewed your membership, you may do so now. Dues paid after November 15th will be credited toward the 2024 calendar year. Dues are 100% tax deductible and go to support student scholarships, faculty development awards and other campus programs.

Renew online at:

<https://commerce.cashnet.com/csusacufss?CNAME=RETIREE>

If you are not sure whether you have renewed, you can check the list of members at: <http://www.csus.edu/org/retirees/membership/index.html>.

#### Sac State Friends of the Library Book Bin

The Friends of the Library Book Bin, located on the lower level of the University Library, will be open on the following days during the fall semester from 10:00am to 3:00pm.

- Wednesday, December 6
- Thursday, December 7



With the arrival of many new book donations, you are invited to come in and browse the interesting and extensive inventory. Gently used hardback and trade paperback books are \$2 each or three for \$5. Mass paperbacks are \$1 each. They also have a collection of artworks, music scores, audio

recordings, long-playing records, CDs and DVDs and a large selection of children's books. Cash or check only. All proceeds directly support the University Library.

### Sac State Friends of the Library

#### CHARLES MARTELL AUTHOR LECTURE SERIES 23/24

Entering its 14th year, the Lecture Series offers the campus and Sacramento communities the opportunity to engage with authors whose work is timely and thought provoking. All lectures are free to the public and everyone is welcome to join us. View the 2023/24 schedule at: <https://library.csus.edu/friends-of-the-library#author-lectures>.



### League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC) 30th Annual Scholarship Fundraiser

Lorenzo Patiño Council 2862

Saturday, December 9, 2023, 10am to 1pm

**Maple Neighborhood Center**  
3301 37th Avenue, Sacramento  
(off Franklin Blvd.)

#### Dine-in

**Menudo & Tamales (2) Plate**  
\$27 Adult, \$8 Child 6-10, Under 5 Free

#### To-Go

**Tamales** (6 for \$14, 12 for \$28)  
Pork, Chicken, Vegetable (cheese/jalapeños)  
**Menudo Bowl with trimmings** (\$18)  
Submit Dine-In and/or To-Go Orders by  
November 30 at [lulac2862@gmail.com](mailto:lulac2862@gmail.com)  
(or place orders directly with a  
LULAC Council 2862 member)



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January Submissions Due: December 2

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