

PRESIDENT'S



CORNER

Friday, Jan 6—Printed At A Glance Mailed

Monday, Jan. 9—Spring Catalog Posted

Friday, Jan. 13—Orientation & Open House

Monday, Jan. 16—Program Enrollment Opens

Friday, Jan. 20—Program Leader Workshop, Hybrid

Monday, Feb. 6—RS Classes Begin

Renaissance Website:
<https://tinyurl.com/rensociety/>

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Welcome to 2023 and the Renaissance Society Spring semester!

As we usher in the new year and new semester, we have exciting news to share about upcoming events, our programs, and some new initiatives.

During the Fall, I formed an Events Working Group to review why, how, when and where we conduct events that mark the beginning of each semester. What's the purpose of our Orientation? Who is the intended audience? What enhancements might improve it? And the old Rendezvous? Who understands the meaning of that term, and does it still describe what we need to accomplish?

Our Spring Orientation will occur on Friday, January 13 in the Hinde Auditorium on campus, starting at 10 am, just a little later than the previous start time. It will focus on the wonderful benefits of joining Renaissance and will offer new members a chance to join and ask questions.

The old Rendezvous has been reimagined and is now called Open House. It will be held immediately after Orientation at 11 am in Ballroom I. It will be a chance for old and new members to visit campus and community partner tables, Renaissance committee and SIG tables, and to learn about opportunities to volunteer with Sac State departments of Gerontology and Physical Therapy as well as UC Davis. There will be tables for socializing with other members and some seminar leaders over coffee and the ever-popular cookies from the university restaurant. There will even be a door prize!

Bring a friend to both events and spread the good news about our society. Then, take a famous Kevin Bray campus tour and be prepared to start enrolling Monday, January 16 for a veritable feast of spring programs.

The Program Leaders Workshop also has a new twist. It will be held on Friday, January 20 beginning at 9 am for leaders and tech hosts. Popular music presenter, Mike Agron, will be holding a Master Class on teaching and the event is open for the first time to all members via Zoom. Don't miss Mike's fun, engaging lesson!

Finally, consider becoming a presenter, tech host, or classroom assistant yourself. Marian Kile makes it easy to learn. Join her Zoom class on Wednesday, January 11 from 10 am until 11:30 am and then come see new classroom equipment with Sarah Ryan Roberts and Jeff Hendy on January 13 at 1 pm in ARC Room 3006. Get involved!

Ring in the New Year with all these engaging reasons to be a Renaissance member!

The Renaissance Board has been Hard at Work

By Deborah Seiler

The past six months have flown by, and your Renaissance Board members have been busy taking a fresh look at our processes and pondering new approaches. We not only want to enhance your experience, but also continue to be good members of the Hornet Family. Here's a look at some of our accomplishments.

Membership Registration

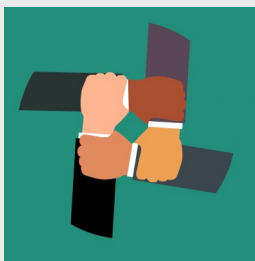
At the beginning of the year, we set a goal of 1,900 members. Currently, our membership is just over 1,450, down from a pre-pandemic peak of 2,300. Board members have reached out to various groups, private parties, and other organizations to share information about Renaissance by speaking to other organizations, distributing rack cards, writing articles for local publications, and attending community events.

One barrier to registration is the “dead period” that occurs just after the midpoint in the semester when membership registration is closed. Our amazing tech group, led by Jeff Hendy and Sarah Ryan-Roberts, has worked with the university to correct this by establishing “continuous” registration.

Beginning April 15, instead of closing, registration will be open for the remainder of the Spring semester and all the coming year. And beginning November 15, registration converts to the Spring semester for the bargain price of \$60. This arrangement enables members to take advantage of late-semester programming and sign up for the next year or semester with no break in registration and at no additional cost.

Diversity and Inclusion

As an organization, Renaissance has long recognized the desire to diversify its membership and create a welcoming atmosphere for all. But when it came time to establish a goal, we realized we had no starting point, no baseline from which to begin.



A Database Working Group, chaired by Shari Lowen with MDCE Committee chair, Debbie Martinez, and tech guru Jeff Hendy, among others, confronted the realization we know almost nothing about our members. We don't know members' ages, gender, ethnicity, or year of joining Renaissance. So, once again,

our tech folks worked with the university to update our membership database with new dropdown menus to collect basic demographic information.

Using the information we gather over the next year, we plan to measure our progress in recruiting and retaining a more diverse membership.

Donations

If you've ever tried to donate to various causes from our website, you might have seen information about volunteering opportunities before you found the fund to which you wanted to contribute. But thanks to webmaster Jennifer Kerr, there is now a large, yellow DONATE button at the top of the home page which takes you directly to the various funds. It's so easy and convenient to donate to our scholarship and special programs funds as well as the ASI Food Pantry. Eventually, we hope to have a link to be able to donate to the Renaissance “Give Something Extra” fund using this same technology. Volunteer opportunities are neatly spelled out on another page.

Student Scholarships

Renaissance members have been extremely generous, funding seven \$3,000 scholarships through individual donations. The exciting news is that with the guidance of the University Foundation working with Nancy Findeisen, Mike Pidd, Laurye Brownfield, and Norv Wellsfry, one of those seven scholarships is now endowed. What this means is that sufficient funds have been deposited with the University Foundation to ensure that first scholarship is funded forever. We are very close to being able to endow a second of the seven scholarships. With your continued generosity, we hope to endow all seven scholarships and provide even more scholarships for needy students.



Special thanks to all members of the Database Working Group, the Board of Directors, and the Executive Committee for their creativity and perseverance in making these improvements to our organization.

Want to join the fun and lend your support to future efforts? Consider joining one of our hard-working committees by applying for Member at Large and officer positions on the Board of Directors. You'll be getting more information about these opportunities soon!

Donor Recognition

By Michael Pidd

In 1993, Lou Weintraub and Doug Fulton had a dream of awarding scholarships to deserving Sac State students. They started with self-funding two \$500 scholarships. Twenty-nine years later and thanks to the generosity of our members and a \$25,000 bequest from the Doug and Gini Fulton Estate, we now award seven \$3000 scholarships annually.

On Saturday evening November 5 we held our first annual Donor Recognition event to our most generous donors from the 2022 year. President Deborah Seiler graciously hosted this wonderful evening of celebration of hors 'd'oeuvres, music and wine at her home. The celebration also was a wonderful opportunity to introduce our 2022/2023 scholarship recipients. Quenton Pham who is currently pursuing a nursing degree and Kyle Nguyen who is a computer science major represented the current scholarship group. We wish nothing but success to all students.

As we finish up the Holiday Season, please consider adding the Renaissance Scholarship Fund to your gift list. Your donation will have a long-lasting impact.

To donate online: <https://tinyurl.com/RensocFunds>
OR 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.



Program Leader Workshop

By Pam O'Brien



Are you a program leader, presenter or tech host? Or, are you just curious about how leaders prepare? Then save the date, Jan 20, 2023, 9 a.m.-12:15 p.m., for the **Program Leader Workshop**.

This is a hybrid event, with in-person attendance limited to leaders, presenters and tech hosts, but with Zoom attendance, it is open for the **first time to all RS members**. Registration begins Jan. 3.

If you're pondering leading a program but don't know where to begin, Mike Agron, the featured speaker, has generously offered to work with any attendee who wants more guidance in the weeks following the workshop.

Even if you're not a program leader or part of the support staff, you can show your appreciation for those who are by attending this event via Zoom.



SAVE THE DATE

February 6: RS Programs Begin

March 20-24: Spring Break

March 31: Cesar Chavez Day

May 12: RS Programs End;
Annual Meeting

May 19: Spring Program Leader
Workshop



Special Donations

By Martha Larkey

In Memory and in Honor donations are very special ways to acknowledge or remember the individuals who have made, and are making, a difference in our lives. the important people!

Gifts in Honor of - Honorary gifts can be made for almost any reason to acknowledge a special individual or group. Sometimes words are simply not enough. Written and public appreciation really does add just the right touch.

Gifts in Memory of - Memorial Gifts are a meaningful way to remember, and celebrate someone who has passed away. The loss of a loved one, friend or colleague often inspires us to support a cause that was important to them. Families often request memorial gifts to a cause, in lieu of flowers.

Some Opportunities for 'Honor/Memorial' Giving:

- Remember a lost loved one at the time of death, on an anniversary, or birthday
- Recognize someone special; thank an outstanding friend or relative
- Celebrate a holiday, special moment or a colleague's accomplishment
- Acknowledge a group, your co-workers, a club or organization

Please consider The Renaissance Society when you are making in Honor and in Memory gifts.

Diversity Books Reading List

By Bob Benedetti & Roberta Gleeson



⇒ **The Swimmers**, Julie Otsuka, (NY: Knopf, 2022).

The book's narrative lens zooms in on the relationship between one of the swimmers we meet on the first page.

⇒ **Black Skinhead: Reflections on Blackness and Our Political Future**, Brandi Collins-Dexter, (Celadon Books, 2022).

⇒ **The Lettered Life of a California Indian Activist**, Terri A. Castaneda, Marie Mason Potts.

The book explores the life, challenges, and accomplishments of Marie Mason Potts (1895–1978), a Mountain Maidu woman and one of the most influential California Indian political activists of the 20th century. (This book does betray a political point of view.)

⇒ **Before We Were Trans: A New History of Gender**. Kit Heyam,

Written by a British academic.

⇒ **The Loneliest Americans**, Jay Caspian, (Crown, 2022).

A fictional treatment of anti-Asian violence, equality, discrimination, and immigration.



2022 Holiday Dinner Renaissance Society Celebrates

By Lorraine Murphy

The Friday evening of December 2 was still moist from the day's rain, the air fresh and clean. I took a deep breath, buttoned my coat, and slid on my gloves. Expecting to arrive late, I was relieved to find the tables at Sac State's Engrained restaurant only half filled with the joyous conversation of Renaissance Society members. My husband Steve and I found an empty table next to an extensive table filled with catered dishes: nutty brown rice, with sweet cranberries; fresh green salad and a side of dressing; tasty potato and corn hash, fall vegetable medley, naturally sweet carrots warm and sweet; scrumptious salmon slices, and a dinner roll. Simple but amazing deserts completed our meal with a choice of either a thick chocolate brownie or a lusciously cinnamon-frosted sugar cookie.

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Grand Jury Volunteering

If you are interested in volunteering in your community, service as a Grand Juror might be right for you. Service on the Sacramento County Grand Jury is for a twelve month period. This term will begin on July 1, 2023 and end on June 30, 2024. To be considered for the Grand Jury, you must be:

- 18 or older, a United States citizen, and a resident of Sacramento County for at least one year prior to service;
- Interested in investigating the performance of local government agencies;
- Possess intelligence, sound judgment and fair character;
- Have not been convicted of a malfeasance in office, a felony, or any other high crime;
- Not be serving as an elected public officer during the term of office as a grand juror;
- Have not have served as a grand juror within the last year;
- Enthusiastic about the opportunity to work with others and recommend solutions to improve governance and services;
- A good listener, with patience, who has skill and experience in fact finding, investigative techniques, and report writing;
- Ready to invest 25 to 35 hours a week, will require attendance of at least four days a week;
- Able to communicate in English - both orally and in writing;
- Computer literate; and
- Willing to ensure your work remains absolutely confidential.



Spring Semester Orientation and Open House

By Debbie Martinez

You are invited to our annual Spring Orientation and Open House on **Friday, January 13, 2023**. You may be asking yourself, as a current member, “Why should I attend?” There are lots of good reasons, not the least of which is to come and see what is new at Renaissance. We have shortened up the program to one hour and we will focus on the benefits of being a member and more of the fun rather than the “how-to.” This is the perfect opportunity to bring a friend and introduce them to Renaissance and the Sac State campus.

Right after the Orientation we will launch our brand-new concept, “Open House”, replacing “Rendezvous.” You and your friends can stroll through the table displays and chat with various community groups and Sac State campus partners. Sign up to be a mentor to a Gerontology student, learn about Sac State’s Cardiovascular Wellness Program, what does ACC Senior Services offer our members and much more. Find out what it takes to keep Renaissance going by visiting one of our many committee tables such as Programs, Scholarships, Communications & Marketing and, my personal favorite, Membership, Diversity & Community Engagement.

New this year, will be an area set aside just for socializing, for members to connect with old friends and make new ones. Complimentary refreshments will be available and door prizes! So please, call a friend, make a date to come out to the Spring 2023 Orientation and Open House on January 13th at **10:00 am** in the Hinde Auditorium in University Union at Sac State. We can’t wait to see you there! And, if you are interested in helping to organize this event for future semesters, let our President, Deborah Seiler, know.

DINING TOGETHER

By Cheryl Nelson



Our Dining Together Group will meet on Wednesday, January 11, 2023, at 5:30PM at [Thai Chef House](#), located 2851 Fulton Ave. (just South of Marconi). ([thaichefhouse.com](#)).

Individual checks will be provided. Parking is available.

To RSVP, email Cheryl Nelson (slynnsearch@yahoo.com) no later than January 6, 2023. You will receive an email confirmation if space is available.

Reflections of American Culture

It's Now Okay for Interracial Marriage?

By Darryl Omar Freeman



It's not unusual in contemporary times to see interracial couples strolling hand in hand, eating in restaurants, and otherwise engaged openly in many other activities in the public sphere. Why is it then that the United States Congress felt it necessary to include a provision in the recently passed "Respect for Marriage Act" specifically including interracial marriages in a public policy whose initial objective was to federally recognize "gay" marriages? Subsequently, the law not only recognizes Gay marriages as legal across all 50 United States, but interracial marriages as well.

Let's review a little United States history to better understand why interracial marriages also merit the protection of federal law. In 1967 (only 55 years ago),

the United States Supreme Court held that state laws barring interracial marriage were unconstitutional in the *Loving vs Virginia* case. At the time of the Court's decision, 16 states mainly in the southern United States still retained anti-miscegenation laws. In June 1958, Virginia residents Mildred Jeter, a mixed ethnic African American/Native American woman and Richard Loving, a man of European heritage traveled to Washington D.C. to marry, thereby evading Virginia's Racial Integrity Act of 1924, which made marriage between white and non-whites a crime. The first law banning all marriage between whites and Blacks was enacted in the colony of Virginia in 1691. This example was followed by Maryland (in 1692) and several of the other thirteen colonies. By 1913, 30 out of the then 48 states (including all southern states) enforced such laws.

The U. S. Supreme Court in 1967 included in its opinion a short section holding that Virginia's Racial Integrity Act violated the Fourteenth Amendment's Due Process Clause, applying the protection of individual liberty to in that case race and sex of individuals. The Court said that the freedom to marry is a fundamental constitutional right, and it held that depriving Americans of it on an arbitrary basis such as race was unconstitutional. In the last decades the Constitution's Due Process Right has been one of the arguments made by Gay-rights activists and legal representatives in search of legal justice for LGBTQ+ members seeking the right to engage in government recognized marriage.



Early this year, the U.S. Supreme Court overturned a long-standing decision in *Roe vs Wade* which had provided among other things due process for women of this country in regard to their health decisions including abortion. Some conservative Justices led by Justice Clarence Thomas suggested that other previous decisions of the Court regarding individual liberties might be reconsidered by the court in the future. This possibility motivated the current session of the U.S. Congress to pass the bipartisan *Respect for Marriage Act* which recognizes the rights of individuals to marry regardless of race, gender and national origin. President Biden announced after the passage of the law that "For millions of Americans, this legislation will safeguard the rights and protections to which LGBTQ+ and interracial couples and their children are entitled."

As I looked around the room, I felt happy to see so many friendly faces. As my husband ran off to retrieve something from the car, I walked over to Debbie Martinez, our MDCE Chair and her husband Frank; they sat with Jeff Heady, (Technology Committee Co-Chair) and his wife Ivy. We chatted until my husband returned at which time I too returned to our table. Then as Steve sauntered off to purchase us each a beer, Pam O'Brien, Chair of the Program Committee, introduced me to a lovely friend of hers, Sigrid. I immediately welcomed Sigrid to our table. My eyes next met Joy and our table was complete. The conversation throughout the evening was steady and fascinating. Sigrid and Joy were very pleasurable table companions.

Within minutes, our dynamic President Deborah Seiler arrived in a beautiful Holiday skirt and ruffled blouse. She politely called out to the visiting Board members. And gently thanked all the members for attending our in-person Renaissance Society Holiday Dinner. I was so elated to have attended with all the great food, good company, and wonderful conversation.

Estate Planning 101

By Michael Pidd

Join expert estate planning attorney Mark S. Drobny on **January 31, 2023, at 1-2:30 pm**, as he addresses common myths and misperceptions about estate planning and answers your frequently asked questions during this webinar for the Renaissance Society:

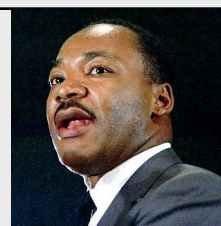
- Do I need a will or a trust?
- Who will make medical and financial decisions for me if I am unable?
- How can I leave the legacy I want for my heirs and the charities I care about?
- What are options for retirement income planning?
- How can I sell appreciated stocks or real estate, reduce capital gains taxes, and create an income stream?
- How can I donate to the CSUS Renaissance Resource Development Endowment and Scholarship fund?

Presented by **Mark S. Drobny**, Certified Specialist, Estate Planning, Trust and Probate Law, the State Bar of California of Legal Specialization. Mark is regarded as one of the region's top experts on estate planning and related topics. He is a long-time volunteer for Sacramento State and currently serves as a board member of the University Foundation at Sacramento State.

To register for this webinar: https://csus.zoom.us/join/register/WN_MWGSjQCgTNigA-XQcQchDQ

Martin Luther King Celebration

By Debbie Martinez



The annual **MLK Celebration Sacramento**, will be held on Saturday, January 28, 2023 at Sacramento State University. This is the 24th year the event will be held to honor and remember the life and work of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Sac State President, Robert Nelsen will be one of the honorees this year.

Renaissance has been a long time supporter of the **MLK Celebration Sacramento** and we want to have a strong showing of attendance this year. Tickets are \$100 each and the deadline is January 24, 2023.

Tickets are limited so purchase your ticket today at their website:

<https://www.mlkcelebrationsacramento.org/>

Let Debbie Martinez (Debralyn78@pacbell.net) know you are coming, so she can arrange to have Renaissance members seated together.



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Deadline for February issue is January 2.

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Do You Facebook?

If you are already following our Renaissance Society internet accounts, thank you! The administrators of these accounts are asking for your help in boosting our presence:

Facebook:

Private: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/renais-sancesocietysacramento>

Public: <https://www.facebook.com/rensocietysac>

On the Private, or members only, site, RS members can post comments and personal photos, making it easy to connect with other members. Yet to spread the word about our wonderful organization to all the world, go our Public site and Click on the “Like” button at the top of the page. While only the administrators, Kathy Hart and Kathy Sullivan, can post to the Public account, EVERY MEMBER can “Like, Share, or Comment.”