

President's Corner



Deborah Seiler

President

The Renaissance Society
of Sacramento

deborah.seiler2@gmail.com

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

Key Dates

Monday, Oct. 2
Board of Directors meeting

Friday, Oct. 6
**First Friday Food Pantry
collection and Pizza**

Monday, Oct. 9
Indigenous People's Day

Tuesday, Oct. 31
Halloween



The marching band played enthusiastically and cheerleaders in sparkly outfits jumped for joy as students, staff, faculty, and a few Renaissance members walked into a packed ballroom to witness new Sac State President Luke Wood's Fall Address.

President Wood touched our hearts with the story of his own youth and his days on the Sac State campus – many when he had little or nothing to eat because the ASI Food Pantry didn't exist then. He charmed us with his humor and wit, describing the children of various backgrounds in the foster home where he was raised as the “UN” went they marched off to school. He inspired us by describing how one teacher expelled him 42 times, but he went on to the next grade to a teacher who propelled him to success. He delighted us with his sneakers, a humorous response to former President Nelsen's cowboy boots.

What can we expect from our new Sac State President? Change in some departments, including University Enterprises, Inc., our fiscal sponsor, which has sometimes failed to get our bills paid on time. Listening to students, staff, and faculty, especially for the first 100 days of his tenure. He is asking where we want to be five years from now, and he will listen to the responses. Expect greater campus security as he announced plans for more digital monitors, an increase in security personnel, and seven more therapists to help students handle problems. Look for intentional strategies. “A plan without action is simply a false promise,” he stated twice during his presentation.

One of his plans is to increase the utilization rate of scholarships. He stated that only 60% of scholarships are used, in large part because they are structured in a way to be awarded to students who are like the people awarding them. “Money is being given to someone who looks like them,” he observed.

Our wonderful liaison, Dean Dianne Hyson, has raised our profile with the new president and I have sent him a letter emphasizing the generosity of our Renaissance members to Sac Students as illustrated in the 2021-2022 Annual Report. When the report is updated, we will be sure he receives a copy.

Meanwhile, I appreciate your generosity in giving to the scholarship and Seth Nelsen Emergency funds, as well as the ASI Food Pantry. As we approach the holiday season of giving, we hope you will be able to sustain this generosity and possibly even reach a higher goal.

Thank you for your wonderful contributions to Sac State students and your support for this new president's goals.

Deborah.



October Forums

Oct 6

Christine Kreuder Johnson: The Virus Chasers: Confronting Emerging Infectious Disease in the Face of Accelerating Global Change



Dr. Johnson is the UC Davis Professor of Epidemiology and Ecosystem Health, and Director of the Epicenter for Disease Dynamics. Her research has pioneered emerging threats and disease dynamics at the animal-

human interface in rapidly changing landscapes that constitute “fault lines” for disease emergence and subsequent spread. Her activities support science-based decision-making and public policy for congressional briefings, and testimony before state and federal governments, as well as intergovernmental partners. Disease outbreaks are increasingly more frequent due to accelerated global change. Her research demonstrates that the risk of virus spillover to people is linked to habitat loss and exploitation of wildlife. The COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted major limitations we must face to prepare for and ultimately prevent novel pandemics. (See the *60 Minutes* video at: <https://www.youtube.com/watchv=rb54OXZMeNs>)

Oct 13

Geoffrey Schladow: The End of Lake Tahoe as We Know It



Dr. Schladow is Professor of Water Resources and Environmental Engineering, and the founding director of the Tahoe Environmental Research Center (TERC) at Lake Tahoe. TERC conducts critical scientific research,

underpinning the restoration of Lake Tahoe and bodies of water around the world. For over 30 years, his research has focused on the interactions between complex fluid motions found in nature and their impacts on water quality, ecosystem health, and watershed processes. UC Davis has monitored Lake

Tahoe continuously since the 1960s, and data showed a decline in its famed clarity. From 2000 to 2020, despite huge expenditures, the clarity did not improve. For unknown reasons, starting in August 2022, Lake Tahoe’s clarity suddenly improved to levels not seen in 50 years.

Oct 20

Nilda Valmores: Human Trafficking: the Sacramento Connection



October is Domestic Violence Awareness Month. Nilda Valmores is Senior Program Officer for the Sierra Health Foundation. For 18 prior years, she led My Sister’s House, a non-profit providing shelter and services to victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, and human trafficking. She

continues to address human trafficking issues as a member of Soroptimists Sierra Nevada Region’s Human Trafficking Committee. Her presentation will cover aspects of trafficking and what is being done to eliminate it.

Oct 27

Larry Berman: Perfect Spy - The Arc of Pham Xuan An’s Life from War to Peace



Dr. Larry Berman (PhD, Princeton University) is Professor Emeritus at UC Davis. He has been featured on prominent programs to discuss his books on the Vietnam War. Dr. Berman received the highest career honor from the UC Davis Academic Senate, that of The Faculty Research

Award. Based upon his book entitled *Perfect Spy**, his Forum presentation will consider what is in the heart of a spy. During the Vietnam war, Pham Xuan An was employed by Time Magazine as a full-fledged correspondent. None of his colleagues knew that An was really a Vietnamese Communist Agent X6, deceiving everyone about his real identity, providing indispensable intelligence to Hanoi.

*See larrybermanperfectspy.com



Honoring Our Generous Donors to Renaissance Programs

By Mike Pidd

This list represents donors to all of our programs—scholarships, special programs, and general programs.

Fiscal Year 2022 - 2023

355 Donations (includes individuals and couples)

Total: \$70,320



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Kurt & Nancy Findeisen (donated \$10,200)



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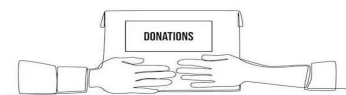
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Thank You, Donors!

We value our donors and we attempt to be accurate in recognizing your donations. If there are any inaccuracies please contact the Renaissance Society office so we can update our records.

Donations to support Sac State Student Scholarships and Renaissance programs are always welcomed.
<https://www.csus.edu/college/social-sciences-interdisciplinary-studies/renaissance-society/spotlights/donate.html>



Dimensions of American Diversity National Hispanic Heritage Month

By Darryl O. Freeman

From September 15th to October 15th is National Hispanic Heritage Month. The Smithsonian American History Museum in Washington D.C. will host a month-long series of celebratory events. I thought it would be appropriate to highlight in this Recorder some of the historical contributions by Latinx Americans to the development of our United States Society.

By the entrance into the Second World War by the United States, over 500,000 Latinx Americans (350,000 of which were Mexican Americans) had enlisted into the United States Armed services. This is a staggering commitment of patriotism from an ethnic group numbering about two million, seven hundred thousand at the time. Still facing public discrimination forcing them to occupy low wage jobs and relegated to low-income neighborhoods known as “the Barrios,” Latinx Americans seized the opportunity to demonstrate that they were proud Americans entitled to the same opportunities as other Americans.

Mexican Americans provided distinguished service to the country’s war effort both at home and abroad. By the end of the war over 200,000 bracero farm workers had harvested \$432 Million dollars of food supplies for the U.S. military. Mexican American women entertained troops in the military USOs, served in the Army medical corps and raised over a million dollars of War Bonds for the War effort. Additionally, thousands of Mexican men and women supported the war effort in skilled aircraft and other military manufacturing work. Mexican military units earned more than 30 Congressional Medals of Honor for valor under fire during the war. One of the largely unrecognized accomplishments of the war was the liberation by an all-Mexican battalion of one of the Nazi concentration camps.

Having experienced social and economic independence during the war effort, Latinx/Chicanx Americans were determined to maintain their newly earned status as equal American citizens. Providing a good education for their children was one of cherished motivations for Latinx/Chicanx Americans to live and fight for

freedom in the United States. In California, public policy allowed school districts to segregate Indian, Chinese, Japanese and Mexican children from the main classrooms. A small community of Mexican Americans in Southern California boycotted a move by the School District of Orange County to build a separate school in a refurbished barn for their children. In the 1947 court case *Mendez v. Westminster School District of Orange County*, the U.S. Circuit Court of Southern California found that the segregation of Mexican children violated their right to equal protection of the law guaranteed by the United States Constitution Fourteenth Amendment. This finding of the unconstitutionality of the State law led to a repeal by the Legislature and set a precedent for the historic U.S. Supreme Court decision in the case of *Brown v. Board of Education*. Public policy segregation of minority children was a thing of the past.

Most American citizens do not realize that many of the English words that are a part of the English Language vernacular of the United States society have Spanish origin. For example, barbecue - (la barbacoa), ranch - (el rancho), alcove - (la alcoba) and patio - (el patio)

Despite the discriminatory history and intermittent anti-immigration public policies of this country towards its Latinx/Chicanx citizens, they have managed to influence and contribute to the ever-expanding definition of what describes American culture. Musicians such as Carlos Santana and Selena, athletes such as Oscar De La Hoya and Alex Rodriguez, actors and activists like Edward James Olmos and Juan Felipe Herrera the first Latinx Poet Laureate of the United States have impacted the very character of what it means to be an American.



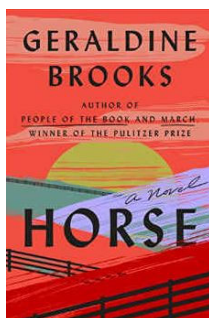
READINGS ON DIVERSITY

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.

Horse: A Novel by Geraldine Brooks

Kentucky, 1850: An enslaved groom named Jarret and a bay foal forge a bond of understanding that will carry the horse to record-setting victories across the South. When the nation erupts in civil war, an itinerant young artist who has made his name on paintings of the racehorse takes up arms for the Union. On a perilous night, he reunites with the stallion and his groom, very far from the glamor of any racetrack.



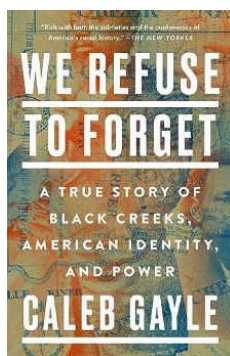
New York City, 1954: Martha Jackson, a gallery owner celebrated for taking risks on edgy contemporary painters, becomes obsessed with a nineteenth-century equestrian oil painting of mysterious provenance.

Washington, DC, 2019: Jess, a Smithsonian scientist from Australia, and Theo, a Nigerian-American art historian, find themselves unexpectedly connected through their shared interest in the horse—one studying the stallion's bones for clues to his power and endurance, the other uncovering the lost history of the unsung Black horsemen who were critical to his racing success.

Based on the remarkable true story of the record-breaking thoroughbred Lexington, *Horse* is a novel of art and science, love and obsession, and our unfinished reckoning with racism.

We Refuse to Forget: A true story of Black Creeks, American Identity and Power by Caleb Gayle

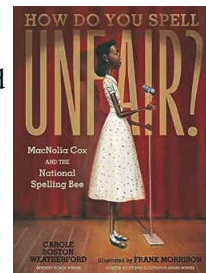
Award-winning journalist Caleb Gayle tells the extraordinary story of the Creek Nation, a Native tribe that two centuries ago both owned slaves and accepted Black people as full citizens. Thanks to the efforts of Creek leaders like Cow Tom, a Black Creek citizen who rose to become chief, the U.S. government recognized Creek citizenship in 1866 for its Black members. Yet this equality was shredded in the 1970s when tribal leaders revoked the citizenship of



Black Creeks, even those who could trace their history back generations, even to Cow Tom himself.

How do you Spell Unfair: MacNolia Cox and the National Spelling Bee by Carole Boston Weatherford (Author), Frank Morrison (Illustrator) (children's book ages 7-10)

In 1936, eighth grader MacNolia Cox became the first African American to win the Akron, Ohio, spelling bee. And with that win, she was asked to compete at the prestigious National Spelling Bee in Washington, DC, where she and a girl from New Jersey were the first African Americans invited since its founding. She left her home state a celebrity—right up there with Ohio's own Joe Louis and Jesse Owens, with a military band and a crowd of thousands to see her off at the station. But celebration turned to chill when the train crossed the state line into Maryland, where segregation was the law of the land. Prejudice and discrimination ruled, on the train, in the hotel, and, sadly, at the spelling bee itself. With a brief epilogue recounting MacNolia's further history, *How Do You Spell Unfair?* is the story of her groundbreaking achievement magnificently told by award-winning creators and frequent picture-book collaborators Carole Boston Weatherford and Frank Morrison.



DINING TOGETHER

By Cheryl Nelson

Dining Together will meet at
NOROC,
4715 Manzanita Avenue, Carmichael,
(<https://www.norocrestaurant.com>) at
5:30 PM on OCTOBER 11, 2023.

Dining Together members who wish to attend should RSVP to Marcy Dobrow: drdobrow@aol.com or (916) 715-0294 no later than October 8, 2023. Separate checks will be provided. Parking is available.



Member Profile

Could Mike Pidd Be Called a Sports Fan?

By Judy Lewis



Mike’s enthusiasm for sports blossomed in his home town of San Mateo. He played four years of football and baseball at Junipero Serra High School, followed by varsity baseball at San Francisco State.

After earning double majors in Human Performance

Kinesiology and English, as well as a teaching credential from San Jose State, Mike surveyed the employment prospects. The passage of Proposition 13 had cut funding to many government services, teaching jobs were scarce, and salaries were low.

This steered him toward a career encompassing sales and sales management, office machines, office technology, office supplies and furniture.

Reluctant to abandon his love of sports, Mike has been active as a volunteer for Serra High School baseball, Fair Oaks Little League, Jesuit High School booster board and he continues to enjoy watching baseball and rugby games. His son, Will, who lives in San Diego, played rugby at Jesuit High School and San Diego State. Daily bicycle riding also fits into Mike’s busy schedule.

An interest in photography has led him to Melissa Green’s Renaissance class, “I-phone Photography,” as well as Roger Klemm’s “Photography as Art,” class.

Mike serves as chairperson for Renaissance’s Resource Development Committee and he was recognized for the video he prepared featuring

the Renaissance’s scholarship winners. He also finds time to volunteer with the Loaves and Fishes food program for homeless individuals. Prior to its closure due to financial issues, Mike loved cooking in the kitchen of CASA Garden’s restaurant on the campus of the Sacramento Children’s Home.

He found rewarding a recent trip to Europe’s Alpine countries, including Switzerland, Austria, Italy and Germany. In Germany, he and his wife Michele Rickey-Pidd (also a Renaissance member) arranged to meet with an expert archeologist (Ludwig), who has found remnants of an airplane which was shot down during World War II. Ludwig guided them into the Black Forest, where they found additional parts of Michele’s father’s plane. Amazingly, the aviator survived the crash and lived to be 101.



In Memoriam

Denis Michael McGinty, MD,
April 7, 1943-September 3, 2023

Long-time Renaissance member Denis McGinty died September 3, 2023. Married for 55 years to retired Sac State professor and Renaissance member, Sue McGinty, Denis had a large circle of good friends and was widely admired as a scholar and a leader from his grammar school days at St. Anne’s, through St. Ignatius High School, Stanford University, and finally the University of California-San Francisco School of Medicine. He stayed connected with friends going way back from all these schools and valued these relationships.

His full obituary may be found here:
<https://www.dignitymemorial.com/obituaries/sacramento-ca/denis-mcginty-11437232>



Ohana Walk with ACC

Here are several of the 23 Renaissance members who participated in the Saturday September 16th Ohana Walk sponsored by our community partner ACC Senior Services.



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November Submissions Due: October 2

Poem: Renaissance Society Orientation & Open House

by Sheldon Yee

If your world needs a makeover
Due to unfulfilled yearning
Renaissance Society
Offers lifelong learning.

Open your calendar
Commit to a date
For a university education
Is never too late

Unlimited subjects
From literature to science

Music and travel
Even political defiance

Other areas of study
For anyone's taste
Proving that every mind
Need not go to waste.

Classes in person
With plenty of room
And for those computer savvy
There's a program called "Zoom".

A place where all students
Discover their truth
Through trial and error
Advanced age or youth.

If this verse grabs your attention
Leaves you curious and harking
Submit your forms and tuition
And don't forget parking.