CSUSM RETIREES

September 2025



Message from the Chair

Fellow Retirees,

I hope you all had a safe and fun summer. As I transition to the role of Chair of the CSUSM Retirees Association Advisory Council, I am honored to take on this role knowing I have the support of a great team. Over the past two years, I have had the pleasure of serving on the council, and now I am excited to continue that service in this new way.

As we reflect on the past months, I want to express heartfelt gratitude to Pam Wells for her exceptional leadership and dedication as our former Chair. Pam's hard work and enthusiasm have strengthened our association and helped create memorable experiences for all of us.

I am also fortunate to work alongside an outstanding group of council members – Robert Carolin, Judith Downie, Helen Purcell Montag, and Paul Tiglao. Together, we look forward to continuing the fun, engaging events and programs that bring us together and make our retirees association so meaningful.

I welcome your ideas and suggestions. Please feel free to contact me at dwright@csusm.edu. I would love to hear from you.

Thank you for being such an essential part of the Retirees Association. Your participation is what keeps our group thriving. I hope to see you at upcoming events.

Warm Regards,



Danna Wright, Chair

Past Events

Lavender Farm Visit



On June 5, eleven retirees enjoyed a delightful visit to Catherine Matsumoto's Lavender Farm in Vista. Catherine, a CSUSM alumna and lecturer in Communication, warmly welcomed the group with an assortment of refreshments before sharing the history of her farm and teaching us about the different types of lavender grown there. Attendees then had the chance to stroll through the fields, pick their own lavender, and create beautiful bouquets. It was a memorable social gathering. The full photo album is available on our Facebook page: view lavender farm album.

Fallbrook Focus



On August 7, eighteen retirees gathered at the Grand Tradition in Fallbrook for a lovely al fresco lunch at the Veranda Restaurant. The beautiful garden setting provided the perfect backdrop for reconnecting with colleagues over a delicious meal. Following lunch, the group visited the Fallbrook Art Center, where fellow retiree Dr. Jennifer Jeffries graciously hosted a viewing of the Galaxy of Glass exhibit. The afternoon offered not only time to catch up with one another but also the enriching experience of exploring local art in a new setting. The full photo album is available on our Facebook page: view Fallbrook focus album.

Upcoming Events



2025 Carlsbad Beach Walk & Lunch

Wed, September 10, 2025
11:15 am

Join us for a refreshing visit to the coast! We'll take a leisurely walk along beautiful Carlsbad Beach before heading over to Dini's Bistro to enjoy lunch with fellow retirees. It's the perfect way to combine fresh ocean air, light exercise, and great conversation. Don't miss this chance to connect with friends old and new in one of North County's most scenic spots!

You're welcome to join us for just the beach walk, just the lunch afterward, or both.

Register for Carlsbad Event



Life After Retirement from CSUSM

Thursday, November 6, 2025
Noon – 1:00 pm
Commons 207 – Alumni Conference Room

We're excited to announce the return of our upcoming Life After Retiring from CSUSM panel to an in-person program. This special event will feature members of our Retirees Association Advisory Council sharing their experiences, insights, and perspectives on life after retirement. It's a wonderful opportunity to gather again, ask questions, and enjoy meaningful conversation. The program is intended for both current CSUSM employees and those who've recently retired. All members of the Retirees Association are welcome to join.

Complimentary virtual parking permit will be provided for registered members of the Retirees Association.

Register for Life After Retirement Panel



Holiday Happy Hour Bingo

December 4, 2025
4:00 – 6:00 pm

Save the date or register now for this annual, virtual event. Get festive with fellow retirees for a few games of bingo and great prizes.

Register for Holiday Bingo

Tukwut Profile: Chuck Allen



Playing at Landings in Carlsbad.



Mission Bay Yacht Club.



Playing Oktoberfest in Julian.

I started at CSUSM in 1996, initially as a multimedia consultant in IITS, an anachronism today. In those days, the internet was in its infancy and there was no YouTube, or Canva, or any of the fancy tools we have today. So you needed a guy like me to make audio, video, and animation happen online.

In 2001, I was asked to manage the first team helping create online courses at CSUSM, which we did with the relatively primitive tools that were then available. I continued in this role for many years, getting a Master's degree in 2005 for online teaching and learning.

Some months later, I was asked to manage the team that supported classroom technology and events. This was a big challenge as at that point there really was no classroom technology to speak of. We would literally roll carts with laptops and projectors on them between rooms during the ten-minute passing periods. It was nuts.

I am proud that my team designed and built the first smart classrooms in the CSU system. CSUSM was the first campus to have all smart classrooms built to a design spec. This was extended to conference rooms and event facilities like the USU ballroom, as the campus continued to grow and buildings were added. Pretty much every class and conference room on campus has my imprint.

I retired at the end of 2021, after 25 years. CSUSM was very good to me, providing opportunities for professional development, learning, and meeting lots of great people. I had not planned to retire so early, but the buyout was tempting and very rare in the system. My wife Susan and I met at CSUSM. She worked in the Career Center. Our kids are both in college these days and doing fine.

Since retirement, I have continued with my lifelong sideline as a professional musician, playing in a variety of cover bands around the San Diego area - mostly singing and playing bass. I play most weekends and do like 60 shows a year - from humble bar gigs, to big festival stages, theme parks, and yacht clubs. It's a fair amount of work, but pretty fun, and we have a fair number of fans that follow us around for dancing opportunities. Gotta keep movin'!

In my last work for CSUSM, I recently completed the layout for the accreditation report that occurs every ten years. I did the ones in 2005, and 2015, and I'm glad to still be around for 2025. Best wishes to all at CSUSM and I hope to see you dancing at my next show.

www.boogiexpress.com

Welcome New and Renewing Members

We are honored to welcome the following new and renewing members into our CSUSM Retirees Association family. We look forward to seeing and connecting with you all at an upcoming event.

Deborah Bennett
Bonnie Campbell
Amy Carney
Robert Carolin
Jeffrey Charles
Ivalee Clark
Eddie Colanter
Diana Cumming
Kimberly S. Dark
Eric Deinhardt
Sarah Derho
Michael Diehr
Marilyn Ferri
Sharon B. Hamill
Cynthia C. Hanson
Crystal Henderson
Mike Irick
Ian Irvine
Kim Kamrath
Grace Kessler
Kevin Kilpatrick
Deirdre Lowell-Caldera
Nicolas Magana
Colleen Manthey
Cyrus Masroori
Dale Metcalfe
Deborah Morton
Timothy Mosteller
Stephen Nichols
Dorlan Norman
Marian Olsen
Judith Phillips
Patricia Phillips
Elizabeth Rallos
Maria Rasimas
Teresa Roudenbush
Elias Samano
Paul Schultz
Miriam Schustack
Tom Sennhauser
Monica R. Sprague
Barbara Taylor
June M. Trudel
Wenyuh Tsay
Mary Ann Wallner
Rayanne E. Weber
Anibal Yanez-Chavez
Criselda E. Yee
Miguel Zapata

Members in the News

Judith Downie: https://news.csusm.edu/librarian-wins-award-for-service-to-local-beer-industry/

Bonnie Biggs: https://www.northcoastcurrent.com/carlsbad/2025/08/carlsbad-citizen-of-the-year-award-goes-to-three-residents/

Retirees Association Endowed Scholarship

At our April Business Meeting, we were thrilled to announce that we have reached our goal of $25,000 to fully fund the Retirees Association Endowed Scholarship! The next step is for these funds to be transferred into an investment account, and beginning next fall, we will be able to award our first scholarship to a CSUSM student.

But our work doesn't stop here. To amplify our impact, we will continue fundraising so we can increase both the number and the size of scholarships awarded each year—further supporting the success of CSUSM students. As part of these efforts, we'll be participating in Giving Day on Tuesday, November 2, 2025.

Give Now

Optimizing Donations After the 2025 Tax Law

If you're considering a charitable gift, the remaining months of 2025 are a smart time to act, before new tax laws take effect.

Beginning in 2026, charitable deductions below 0.5% of your adjusted gross income (AGI) won't count. And for those in the 37% tax bracket, charitable deductions will be valued at just 35%. Those penalties don't apply in 2025, making itemized charitable deductions more valuable now.

Accordingly, this year is also good for "bunching" your gifts. Bunching is concentrating several years of charitable giving into a target year, itemizing deductions that year, and taking the standard deduction in off years. Tools like donor-advised funds or a donor-designated fund at CSUSM make bunching easy.

Further, it's easier to exceed the standard deduction in 2025, thanks to a temporary increase in the cap for state and local taxes (up to $40,000 instead of $10,000).

Bottom line: 2025 is a high-impact year for charitable giving and a great opportunity to give wisely and generously.

For more information, contact P. Vien Walker, Director of Planned Giving, at (760) 750-8138 or vwalker@csusm.edu or go to plannedgiving.csusm.edu.

Please consult a qualified tax professional for advice regarding your specific circumstances.

Resources

Arts & Lectures Series: https://news.csusm.edu/foos-ucla-medical-students-highlight-fall-arts--lectures/

RA Advisory Council

Chair - Danna Wright
Vice Chair - Robert Carolin
Treasurer - Helen Purcell Montag
Recorder - Judith Downie
Member at Large - Paul Tiglao

CSUSM Retirees Association

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