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California State University SAN MARCOS | OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

Dear CSUSM staff and faculty,

The Harry E. Brakebill Distinguished Professor Award annually acknowledges a professor who demonstrates excellence in teaching, research, creative scholarship and service to our university and region. Upon the recommendation of the Faculty Awards Selection Committee, I am pleased to announce that the recipient this year is Dr. Marisol Clark-Ibáñez, professor of sociology, in the College of Humanities, Arts, Behavioral and Social Sciences (CHABSS).

Dr. Clark-Ibáñez joined our university community in 2003 as an assistant professor and was promoted to full professor in 2016. Over the past 21 years at CSUSM, she has exemplified excellence through her impactful teaching, innovative initiatives to bridge the gap between STEM fields and the social sciences, and dedicated service to the campus community, her colleagues and students.

In the CSUSM Sociology Department, Dr. Clark-Ibáñez serves as the associate chair of student success and student challenges, and was previously department chair, internship coordinator and graduate coordinator. She also has demonstrated exceptional service by serving on committees at the college, university and California State University system levels, including as a member of the CHABSS Chicanx studies leadership committee (2012-18) and American Indian studies curriculum committee and advisory council (2012-16), as the faculty lead for the Hispanic-Serving Institutions grant “Pathways to Academic Success and Opportunity” (2015-17) and as a reviewer of sociology course descriptors from community colleges for the CSU Chancellor’s Office Lower-Division Transfer Patterns project (2006-08).

Beyond her role as a professor and researcher, she served from 2016-20 as Faculty Center director for the National Latino Research Center, where she

and her team brought in nearly $10 million in external grants and contracts. Funded projects included civic engagement and leadership development for Latinx, immigrant and Spanish-speaking families as well as formerly incarcerated individuals.

Dr. Clark-Ibáñez has shaped her teaching philosophy around the three “P’s" – preparation, participation and perspiration – and incorporates Laura Rendón’s validation theory to ensure that students feel valued, capable and supported. Her courses are characterized by high engagement and expectations, cultural relevance and critical thinking. Her teaching evaluations consistently reflect her enthusiasm and commitment to student success, with one former student writing: "She not only challenged me academically but empowered me to grow both personally and professionally. Her commitment to uplifting students and challenging them to become better scholars was evident from the moment we began working together. She expanded my skill set, deepened my critical-thinking skills and strengthened my confidence.”

Dr. Clark-Ibáñez’s research addresses critical social issues, with two major focuses: undocumented immigration and computer science education. Her work on undocumented immigration has resulted in published books, journal articles and practical guides that illuminate the educational experiences of undocumented and mixed-status students. Through her efforts, she has secured grants to fund vital services for undocumented students, including legal support, mental health resources and leadership development.

Dr. Clark-Ibáñez’s innovative work connects technology with social justice, empowering students to address real-world challenges within their communities. She co-led, with Dr. Youwen Ouyang, a five-year, $1 million National Science Foundation grant project to provide scholarships, mentorship and career preparation for low-income computer science students, bridging gaps in student retention and social and wealth capital. Dr. Clark-Ibáñez and Dr. Ouyang conducted on-campus extended hackathons with industry partners that posed challenges that were meaningful to students’ cultural identities or communities, provided them with workshops and other resources to obtain internships, and gave each of the over 60 scholars $10,000 scholarships during their four semesters with the project.

Dr. Clark-Ibáñez’s mentorship extends beyond the classroom. She has directly impacted student success through “Major Mondays,” “Tuesday Tips” and workshops on topics ranging from navigating post-graduation life to finding internships and mentors, in the process fostering career growth and opportunities for many students beyond CSUSM. Her collaborations with community colleges, nonprofit organizations and fellow faculty have expanded

opportunities for students across the region. As one faculty colleague noted in their letter of support, “Marisol’s tendency to trailblaze, generous spirit and dedication to mentorship is a through line of every dimension of her work.” Dr. Clark-Ibáñez is a tireless advocate for equity and social mobility, embodying CSUSM’s mission to transform lives and communities.

Please join me in congratulating Dr. Marisol Clark-Ibáñez for her extraordinary contributions, which exemplify the values of the Harry E. Brakebill Distinguished Professor Award. Established in 1998, the Brakebill Award is presented to a CSUSM faculty member for exceptional accomplishments in teaching, research and service. Harry E. Brakebill, for whom the award is named, is a former executive vice chancellor of the CSU system and a valued adviser in the early years of CSUSM. The award was established by his daughter, Dr. Ann Bersi.

Enthusiastically,

Ellen J. Neufeldt