



THE PRESIDENT'S ASSOCIATES

*Recognition
Dinner*

TUESDAY, APRIL 21, 2026



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Scan for a full list of
Student Research Scholars

President's Welcome



Dear President's Associate,

When classroom learning meets practical application, a university research program is born. But even more powerfully, when a student sees the results of their research before their very eyes, a lifelong learner, thinker and leader is born.

This year, thanks to bold and relevant research, CSUB honored the vision of the earliest supporters of this university – the President's Associates – and affirmed our role as Kern County's University. But progress does not come without support, belief and effort, and I do not have to look far to find the source of that support:

You, and your fellow President's Associates.

Through the power of your philanthropy, we have set a record for the number of student research scholars: **57 incredible Roadrunners.**

CSUB's most talented students have the opportunity to leave the classroom and explore the world beyond our campus: along the banks of the Kern River, in the agriculture fields that drive our biggest industry, and in the workplaces of our top employers. What they discover advances their knowledge of the fields they will dominate after they graduate from CSUB. But they also discover something about themselves, and those lessons last forever.

As president, my primary goal is for CSUB to become the first-choice university of every high school graduate in the community, as Kern County's University. I can think of no better way to keep our best students here at home than the opportunity to do research that will benefit their own families, friends and neighbors.

Thank you, President's Associates, and may our research program welcome even more students next year!

Sincerely,
Dr. Vernon B. Harper, Jr.
President

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Vernon B. Harper, Jr.", positioned to the right of the typed name.



Social Reception

Appetizers provided by Lino's Catering

Wine provided by San Rucci and Tlo Wineries

Event Welcome

Heath Niemeyer, Vice President for University Advancement

Video: SRS Faculty Mentors

Dr. Deborah Thien, Provost

Dinner

Citrus Fennel Salad

*Lemon Pecorino Crusted Chicken with Heirloom Carrots
and Roasted Gold Potatoes*

***OR** Ratatouille (vegan)*

President's Remarks

Dr. Vernon B. Harper, Jr.

President's Medal Presentation

Dr. Vernon B. Harper, Jr.

Video: Student Research Scholars

Dr. Deborah Thien, Provost

Frederick S. Macomber Research Award

Heath Niemeyer, Vice President for University Advancement

Closing

Heath Niemeyer, Vice President for University Advancement

Dessert Social

Dessert, Coffee and Espresso Martinis from Dirt Surf Coffee



Support

the most prestigious and longest-standing giving society at California State University, Bakersfield.

High Impact

learning experiences for students via one-on-one research with faculty.

Research Projects

address regional issues in fields such as medicine, sustainability and mental health.

2026 Sponsorship Opportunities

President's Circle - \$10,000 or more

Supports multiple high-impact, student-faculty research projects.

Mentor - \$5,000

Supports two student-faculty research projects.

Advocate - \$2,500

Supports one student-faculty research project.

Associate - \$1,000

Supports the programming of the President's Associates.



2026 Membership



THE
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ASSOCIATES

President's Associates provide philanthropic support from \$1,000 to \$10,000-plus. A full membership listing will be shared at csub.edu/pa on or before June 30, 2026.

President's Circle: \$10,000 and above

Greg and Mary Bynum
Chevron U.S.A. Inc.
Dr. Brian Nowlin

Mentor: \$5,000 - \$9,999

Dick and Sammi Wurster
Valley Strong Credit Union

Advocate: \$2,500 - \$4,999

Sheryl and Louis Barbich
Dr. Rhonda Dugan
Catherine and David Gay
Mikie and Dan Hay
Angelo and Mary Mazzei
CSUB Management and Marketing Department

Associate: \$1,000 - \$2,499

Dr. Elizabeth Adams
Dr. Supratim and Mrs. Shilpi Banerjee
Dr. Bernard and Mrs. Bee Barmann
Charlotte and Bob Brandt
Dr. Morgan and Mrs. Gloria Clayton
Dean Deborah Cours, College of Business and Public Administration
Erika Delamar
Chris and Liz Diniz
Ellie and Ryan Fergon
Jassica Gauna and Andrew Suter
Pierre and Ana Igoa
Dr. Jackie Kegley
Geoff and Lisa King
Marina G. Manzano
Judy and Mike Neal
Heath and Georgina Niemeyer
Jacob and Nicole Panero
Heather Pennella and Cesar Orozco
Mike and Nancy Russo
Dr. John and Dr. Janet Tarjan
Dorothy Tuttle
Dr. Kristen and Mr. Ray Watson
Eric and Emily Weis
Johnny P. Zaninovich

Dr. Zachary Zenko and Ms. Magdalena Mrozik-Zenko
CSUB College of Arts and Humanities
CSUB College of Natural Sciences, Mathematics
and Engineering
CSUB College of Social Sciences and Education
CSUB Extended Education and Global Outreach
CSUB Walter W. Stiern Library

NOTE: Gifts received after April 15 will be added to the donor wall on the President's Associates website at csub.edu/pa.



Past Recipients

Millie Ablin*	1997	David H. Murdock*	2007
George Martin	1997	Evangeline Myles*	2007
Jimmie Icardo*	1998	Dr. Homer Myles*	2007
Milton Younger*	1998	The Honorable	
Dr. Kelly Blanton*	1999	William M. Thomas	2007
Bruce Bunker*	1999	Audrey Cochran*	2008
Joan Dezember*	1999	Warner Williams	2008
Gregory Bynum	2000	Gaurdie Banister	2008
Virginia Church*	2000	Bruce Johnson	2012
Helen Windes*	2000	Dr. Girish Patel	2012
Curtis Darling*	2001	Dr. Pragati Patel	2012
Dr. Hans Einstein*	2001	Buck Owens*	2013
John Giumarra*	2001	Dr. Julio Blanco	2013
Sheryl Barbich	2002	Greta Lydecker	2014
E.L. Skeet Varner*	2002	Mayor Harvey Hall*	2014
Gene Voiland	2002	Dr. Soraya Coley	2014
Beverly Dukes*	2003	Michael Neal	2014
Fred Dukes*	2003	Barbara J.B. Mitchell	2015
Judy Fritch	2003	Gayle Batey	2015
Bill Hatcher*	2004	Dr. Jacquelyn Kegley	2015
Bob Karpe*	2004	Dr. Kim Flachmann	2018
Dr. Robert Sheldon*	2004	Dolores Huerta	2018
Morgan Clayton	2005	Steve Renock	2018
Dr. George Hibbard*	2005	John Nilon	2019
Dr. Jim George	2005	Barbara Grimm-Marshall	2020
Dr. Robert Marshall*	2005	Lavonne Hall	2021
Vince Rojas	2006	Shelly Carlin	2022
Dr. Ed Sasaki*	2006	Tom Hardt	2023
Michael Chertok	2007	Erik Bartsch	2024
		Phil and Lisa Cerro	2025

*Deceased



"I am incredibly grateful for the opportunities that have been afforded to me through the generosity of the President's Associates and the Student Research Scholars Program. Visiting archives to access unpublished materials is an indispensable aspect of conducting historical research that has enriched my project and my personal growth as an aspiring historian. The sources I obtained better illuminate forgotten voices and figures of the past that critically shaped the present we live in today, and I gained a direct understanding of the rigors and challenges of the historical profession. Though historians are unable to uncover every detail of the past, this program has enabled me to expand our collective knowledge of local history and has prepared me for further research projects."

Kayla Kiefer, *College of Arts and Humanities*



"Being a Student Research Scholar has been an extraordinary learning experience. The Student Research Scholarship has given me the opportunity to further pursue and study the fields of microbiology and virology. It has helped me cement my passion for research which I plan to continue to a doctoral program after graduating from CSUB with the goal to become a professor. I am grateful for the support I have received from my faculty mentor and the President's Associates which has allowed me to hone my skills as a researcher inside and outside the laboratory."

Manuel Quintanilla, *College of Natural Sciences, Mathematics and Engineering*



"Being a Student Research Scholar has been a truly transformative experience for me. This program challenged me to go beyond the classroom and apply my coursework to real-world research by developing an interactive dashboard that visualizes and forecasts agricultural production in Kern County. Through this journey, I strengthened my skills in R programming and data visualization while exploring ARIMA forecasting methods I had never used before. What made this experience even more meaningful was managing this project while working full-time, which taught me discipline, time management, and the importance of perseverance. This opportunity has strengthened my confidence, broadened my perspective on what I can achieve, and reinforced my passion for data and solving real problems that impact communities. I am deeply grateful to the President's Associates for their generous support, which makes experiences like this possible for students like me. I am also thankful to my faculty mentor, Dr. Zhenning Xu, for his encouragement, patience, and guidance throughout this journey."

Simranjeet Kaur, *College of Business and Public Administration*



Why It Matters (continued)



“Participating in the Student Research Scholars Program has been such an incredible opportunity! Through this program’s support, I’ve gained invaluable research experiences such as presenting at a major international psychology conference and networking with top scholars in my field. In addition, I’ve developed critical life skills—both professional and personal—such as leadership, time management and public speaking. Lastly, being in this program has greatly helped me grow as a person and has taught me that I am capable of so much more than I could have ever imagined. My deepest gratitude goes out to the President’s Associates for their generosity, as well as the Student Research Scholars staff and my faculty mentor. Without all of your support, none of this would be possible.”

Christine Ziemann, College of Social Sciences and Education



“I have been fortunate to witness transformative student experiences facilitated by the Student Research Scholars Program. Through sustained engagement in scholarship, students build critical thinking skills, refine their intellectual interests, and begin to see themselves as contributors to their fields. One-on-one student-faculty collaborations elevate the undergraduate experience at CSUB, making it commensurate with leading liberal arts institutions nationwide. The opportunity to present their work also adds meaningful experiences to their CVs as they prepare for life after graduation.

Most importantly, the program’s funding plays a crucial role in expanding access to these high-impact experiences. At an institution like ours—where many students come from historically underserved backgrounds—paid research opportunities ensure that students who might not otherwise have the privilege to participate are able to do so. These students will go on to enrich the broader Kern County community and beyond, in part due to opportunities made possible by the Student Research Scholars Program.”

Dr. Jake Womick, Assistant Professor of Psychology



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