



Faculty Feature

Dr. Charles Lam

Professor of Mathematics, CSUB



Dr. Charles Lam has been a dedicated member of the Roadrunner community for more than 23 years, shaping the academic journeys of countless students and championing opportunities that extend far beyond the classroom.

Originally from Hong Kong, Dr. Lam completed his high school education there before pursuing his higher education in Canada at the University of Waterloo. He earned his Ph.D. in combinatorics and optimization, a field grounded in mathematical structures, problem-solving and efficiency. During his undergraduate years, a coding theory course — focused on secret codes and the mathematics behind them sparked a deeper appreciation for how abstract concepts could have powerful real-world applications.

Dr. Lam discovered his passion for teaching in the early 2000s and knew he wanted to pursue a faculty career. After completing his Ph.D. in 2003, he joined CSUB as an Assistant Professor of Mathematics — beginning a journey that would intertwine teaching, research, service and philanthropy.

Championing Student Success Through Innovation

Dr. Lam began exploring federal grant opportunities nearly 15 years ago with encouragement from former Dean Dr. Julio Blanco. That effort opened the door to new possibilities — not just for research advancement, but for expanding student support.

Dr. Lam gained a clearer understanding of the financial realities facing higher education through his involvement with the Academic Senate at both the campus and systemwide levels. He quickly discovered that state funding does not adequately cover essential services such as math tutoring. These are services that are often at risk of being reduced or eliminated.

Rather than accept those limitations, Dr. Lam saw opportunity.

He recognized that tutoring programs could do more than support coursework — they could help students build soft skills, gain confidence and prepare for internships and professional pathways. Strategic funding, he believes, allows faculty to test new ideas and adapt to changing educational environments so that students graduate not only with knowledge, but with opportunity.

Dr. Lam encourages faculty and staff colleagues to invest in campus initiatives.

“When internal participation grows, so does the university’s ability to leverage private and federal funding. Collective commitment strengthens proposals, demonstrates institutional support and ultimately creates larger opportunities for students,” he said.

A Deep Sense of Belonging

Though not a CSUB alum, Dr. Lam fully embraces the Roadrunner spirit. He has even attended alumni events such as Party in the Park — a testament to the connection he feels to the university community.

What has kept him at CSUB for more than two decades? A strong sense of belonging.

He finds pride in seeing many of his former students go on to become high school math teachers right here in Kern County — multiplying his impact across the region. Through them, his dedication continues to shape future generations. Dr. Lam also personally invests in the NSME Dean’s Strategic Fund on a recurring basis. He understands firsthand the transformative power of education and believes deeply in its ability to change students’ socioeconomic outcomes over the long term.

A Valued Member of Our Community

Dr. Charles Lam exemplifies what it means to be both an educator and an advocate. His commitment to teaching, research, governance and philanthropy reflect a holistic investment in student success and institutional excellence. We cherish and value Dr. Lam for his talents, leadership and unwavering dedication to CSUB — and we are grateful for the lasting difference he continues to make in the lives of our students and our community. To learn more about the Faculty and Staff Initiative at CSUB and how you can get involved, visit csub.edu/studentsuccess.