

SPRING 2016

insights

THE MAGAZINE OF SONoma STATE UNIVERSITY



SPECIAL ISSUE

Celebrating
SSU President
**Ruben
Armiñana**

insights

is produced by the
University Affairs Division

President

Ruben Armiñana

Vice President, University Affairs

Dan Condron

Vice President, University Development

Erik Greeny

Editor

Susan Kashack

Writers

Katie Beermann
Kayla Galloway
Nicolas Grizzle
Susan Kashack

Contributors

Anne Biasi
Bonnie Cormier
Sandy Destiny
Tracey Fleming
Peter Flores
Janet Hanks
Ashley Ronsse
Jessica Shipma

Art Direction and Design

Nelson Sobel Design

Send Letters to the Editor or comments to:

Sonoma Insights
Sonoma State University
Rohnert Park, CA 94928-3609

insights@sonoma.edu

707 664-2122

Join the conversation

[facebook.com/sonomastateuniversity](https://www.facebook.com/sonomastateuniversity)

[youtube.com/CSUSonoma](https://www.youtube.com/CSUSonoma)

twitter.com/ssu_1961

[tinyurl.com/ssu-linkedin](https://www.linkedin.com/company/ssu)

[instagram.com/sonomastateuniversity](https://www.instagram.com/sonomastateuniversity)

insights

THE MAGAZINE OF SONOMA STATE UNIVERSITY



Photo by Will Bucquoy

4

FEATURES

4 **Man on a Mission**

A 24-year career as president of Sonoma State University results in a multitude of growth and improvements benefitting the 9,000+ students who attend today. Starting with a campus that was on the brink of closure, today's campus is bustling with innovation and opportunities—a place alumni are proud to call their alma mater.

18 **First Lady of Sonoma State, Marne Olson**

The spouses of university presidents often don't get much attention for the work they do, but it's usually plenty. Marne Olson, Dr. Armiñana's wife, fits in that category. She has served as ambassador and cheerleader for Sonoma State University from their first day on campus. Her background in politics and government complements Armiñana's drive and strategic thinking.

On the cover
Dr. and Mrs.
Armiñana celebrate
the long-awaited
opening of the Green
Music Center on
Sept. 29, 2012.



8



13

ARTICLES

- 8 **Schulz Information Center and University Library**
The year 2000 brought innovation to the Sonoma State campus. A new “Information Center” was vastly different from the traditional library model. From day one, it has been well used as not only a place to find books and study, but a building versatile enough to encourage teaching and learning not imagined 16 years ago.
- 13 **Meeting the Needs of SSU Students and More**
As any student will say, a university is much more than classes, studying and group projects. SSU houses 3,100 students, the majority freshmen and sophomores. As residents, they need places to gather socially, areas for meetings and events, trips to gather necessities, a gym for using a treadmill and much more. Sonoma State’s residential life has risen to the challenge.
- 16 **Compact for Success**
Every university has an obligation to support upcoming K-12 students in whatever way it can. President Armiñana knows the value of a college education and made a commitment to local middle and high schools guaranteeing admission to Sonoma State, provided students meet the criteria. The promise is aimed at underserved students to inspire them to attend college.

ALUMNI

- 22 **From the Alumni Association President**
- 23 **Events**
- 25 **Classnotes**
- 29 **Memorium**



In Case you Missed it When you Were Here...

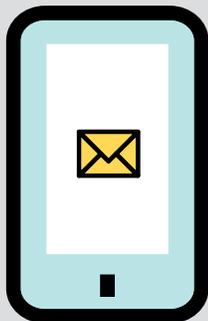
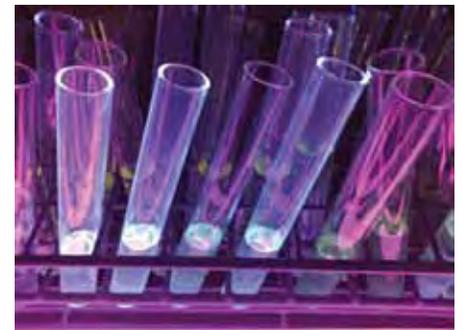
Sonoma State University is an NCAA Division II member and part of the California Collegiate Athletic Association (CCAA), Western Water Polo Association (WWPA) and the Pacific West Conference

(PacWest). Ten of SSU's sports are in the CCAA, water polo is in the WWPA, and men's and women's tennis are in the PacWest. Sonoma State athletics got its start in 1964 with the school's first men's basketball team. Through the years, the teams have had much success including national championships in 1990 (women's soccer), 2002 (men's soccer) and 2009 (men's golf). Plus, 67 students earned Student Athlete Academic Distinction this past year. In fact, more than 40 percent of SSU's 290 student-athletes had a GPA of 3.5 or higher. Smart and athletic! Drop by for a game. (Come on Cossacks. We're still great teams!) Visit sonomaseawolves.com.

Strange Chemistry

What if we told you that many of the everyday objects around you are hiding extraordinary scientific secrets? A blog by Dr. Steve Farmer, chemistry professor at Sonoma State, uncovers the strange and intriguing chemistry we unknowingly encounter every day; chemistry that can forever change our "reaction" to science. Topics include "powdered alcohol, where helium comes from and why Junior Mints are shiny."

Visit <http://chemistry.blogs.pressdemocrat.com>



SSU NewsCenter

Wonder what's going on at Sonoma State?

Subscribe to NewsCenter at www.sonoma.edu/newscenter and we'll let you know. We won't inundate you with emails and we will never share your email address.

Live-Action "Law & Order"

by Kayla Galloway

Taking the roles of defense attorneys, prosecutors and even witnesses, participating in an American Mock Trial tournament is a lot like watching an episode of "Law and Order," says Sonoma State Mock Trial Team president Michelle Arnold. "Our 10-student team does a lot of acting, so I always encourage theater majors to join our team." **Every year, the American Mock Trial Association releases a fictional case to teams across the nation.** This year, students are arguing a criminal case that deals with corporate bribery.



Professor of Sculpture Jann Nunn (left) instructs her student on the safety issues of pouring molten metals.

Inside the World of SSU Faculty

Learn about the wide-ranging scholarship of Sonoma State University faculty at www.ssufacultynews.org

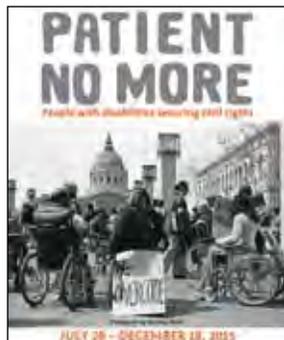
Disability Rights Pioneer

by Kayla Galloway

The founder of Sonoma State's Disability Resource Center (in 1975), Anthony Tusler, has fought for the rights of disabled Americans for more than 40 years and is now being recognized for his efforts. Photographs, papers and articles documenting Tusler's work in the disability rights movement have already been archived at UC Berkeley's Bancroft Library as part of its Disability Rights and Independent Living Movement archive. "It's humbling to be a part of Bancroft Library's collection," said Tusler. "And to think our fight for civil rights joins the papers of Mark Twain, and the nugget that launched the Gold Rush."

In the height of the disabled rights movement in April 1977, he photographed a 26-day sit-in protest outside the Federal Building in San Francisco, which served as a turning point in civil rights for disabled Americans across the nation.

Tusler went on to serve as the director of Sonoma State's Disability Resource Center for 22 years, where he fought for things like priority registration for disabled students and accessible parking spaces on campus. In his first few years as the center's director, he also raised funds to teach a disability studies course, where students learned



about the psychology of disability. Tusler later launched multiple nonprofit organizations like the Institute on Alcohol, Drugs and Disability; Community Resources for Independence; Disability Associates; and the National Center on Disability and Journalism.



Unfolding Earth's Natural History

Geologists study the Earth around us, and there is no better way to learn than by actually looking at rocks in the field. It is for this reason Sonoma State University geology students embark regularly on excursions to remote areas, and a group of 17 students just returned from the Southern Sierras where they studied the 500 million-year-old tectonic forces that have shaped California. "These trips are the foundation of the department," says geology professor Matty Mookerjee. "They introduce students to the remarkable geology that surrounds us all."



by Nicolas Grizzle

To say the president's office at Sonoma State University has personality is an understatement.

The office held by the longest serving president in the California State University system actually has multiple personalities, all hanging silently on the walls observing the campus' change from a sleepy commuter college of mostly part-time students to a residential campus teeming with life and full of amenities to write home about.

"The masks mean change," says Ruben Armiñana, referring to the dozens of faces from different centuries of Latin American history watching over the room. "I like change." After 24 years of vision, hope and determination to give students an experience that will open their eyes to the limitless possibilities education can provide, Armiñana is retiring at the end of the 2015-2016 academic year.

Armiñana was born in Cuba in 1947. He came to the United States in 1961 as part of the U.S.-sponsored Operation Peter Pan with 14,000 other Cuban children. He went to high school in Texas, where he lived with his aunt and uncle. He didn't see his parents again for nine years, but even in their absence kept the two promises he made to his lawyer father and librarian mother: He went to college—several colleges, actually—and never let anyone bully him into doing something.

"Part of my maturity has been to learn to trust my gut," he says. "Sometimes we let the elegance of the brain overcome the viscosity of the gut. For some people that works out—for me it usually does not work well."

Sonoma State Vice President for Administration and Finance Larry Furukawa-Schlereth says the president was never nervous or fearful to push the envelope. "I think that's a quality that has helped him be successful," he says. "He told me many times, that when he came here from Cuba as a young boy, he made up his mind that he would never

Man on a Mission

"We don't evolve because we're comfortable, we evolve because there are some new challenges and new threats, and we need to innovate and adapt to a new reality."

—Ruben Armiñana

**SSU's President
Ruben Armiñana
Leaves a Legacy**

be intimidated again because he was forced to leave his country, and that has stuck with him throughout his life.”

He has pushed the envelope in many facets of his varied career as a professor, university administrator, businessman and television news reporter, but ultimately stuck with academia. “He’s a smart guy, could have done any job he wanted to, but he chose to do this job,” says Congressman Mike Thompson, Sonoma State’s 2015 commencement speaker. “It’s a combination of his love for education, love for students and love for community. It’s a rare time when someone comes into a job and all the stars line up. I think he’s going to be greatly missed.”

Reality Check

Two weeks before he was to take the reins at Sonoma State, Armiñana was greeted with a stark reality check—the budget was in far worse condition than he was led to believe, and it was not projected to get much better anytime soon. “We did not have enough money to buy toilet paper or to buy gasoline for the lawnmowers,” he says. “We had enough money to pay salaries, and that was basically it.”

At that time, Armiñana was vice president of administration and finance at Cal Poly Pomona. Furukawa-Schlereth, who was hired less than a year before Armiñana and holds the same post to this day, had gotten to know Armiñana and the two had quickly become friends. When Armiñana arrived on campus, his friend informed him of the financial crisis he was unknowingly stepping into.

“Our job, basically, was to figure out a strategy, not only to stay open, but to change the nature of the university in such a way that it would never be on the table as a possible closure again.”

—Ruben Armiñana

“The toilet paper story? It’s actually accurate,” Furukawa-Schlereth says when asked about finances in the early days of his tenure at Sonoma State. “The institution had enough money to pretty much pay its employees but virtually no money to do much of anything else in Ruben’s first year.”

Things got worse. Two months into the semester, the CSU announced that Sonoma State was on the shortlist of campuses considered for closure due to low enrollment.

“There were not enough students to fill the residence halls,” says Susan Kashack, associate vice president for marketing and communications, who has worked at SSU for 32 years. “He walked in the door, and we were in the midst of the largest financial crisis the CSU had ever seen.”

Still, Armiñana was not deterred. “Our job, basically, was to figure out a strategy, not only to stay open, but to change the nature of the university in such a way that it would never be on the table as a possible closure again,” he says. “That meant a new and different approach about what we were, who we are and what we could be.”

The university did not close, and permanent employees kept their jobs. Rather than imposing massive layoffs, Armiñana focused on changing the student population to one that would support the new

economic reality of education.

“The first order of business for the first 20 months or so was to stop the bleeding and stabilize—basically putting a Band-Aid on things,” says Furukawa Schlereth. “The next phase was fundamentally transforming the institution’s personality in order for it to become more healthy financially. That required transitioning away from being a largely commuter institution and transforming in order to grow and stabilize the enrollment to become a more residential campus.”

Armiñana was proposing a fundamental change in the makeup of the student body, which would, in turn, necessitate a change in teaching style. “In order to attract new students we had to re-envision the institution and its population,” he says.

Faculty were skeptical. “The things he was suggesting were shaking things up a bit,” says Furukawa-Schlereth. “I’m not so sure he was so popular on campus at that time.”

Not Just a Library

One of the first upgrades Armiñana identified was the need for a new library on campus, calling it a “highly symbolic thing that would show long-term survival.” In order for the campus to grow, Ruben Salazar Library,



Students make good use of Schulz Information Center's technologies. Studying in a quiet library environment enhances study time.



which had served the campus since 1970, had to expand. The problem was space and weight. The original engineers and architects didn't consider the weight of books, furniture, etc. when building the original library, and by the mid 1990s it was at capacity. If Sonoma State was going to add more students, it needed a larger library.

But this was during a budget crunch and the CSU had put a halt on building new libraries on every campus, not just at Sonoma State. "One of our strategies was to convince the chancellor to make an exception at Sonoma and allow the library to be built as a symbol of permanence," says Armiñana.

"It would be a very different library than your normal library, and that's where the idea of an automatic retrieval system came in, and the fact that it was built also with a computer center, and it was not even called a library, per se, but it was called an information

center." With a smile, he adds, "It was very different, including a restaurant—which my mother, as a librarian, thought was a blasphemy; to have food in a library."

Armiñana convinced the chancellor by proposing a public-private partnership, in which the university would raise money through private donations to supplement the State's investment. But it would take millions of dollars before the first blueprint would even be printed, and at the time Sonoma State's largest gift ever received had been a \$2.2 million endowment from Norma and Evert Person, which helped build Person Theatre. The president was undaunted, for he had a plan. Armiñana turned to the funny pages for a spark of inspiration.



He rallied "Peanuts" creator Charles Schulz, known as "Sparky" to his friends, along with his wife, Jean, to donate \$5 million toward what would be called the Jean and Charles Schulz Information Center when it was completed in 2001.

"I felt that it was a good match because Sparky and I both love books," says Jean Schulz. "So I kept saying things like, 'Information sminformation, it's a library to me!'" She is glad to see it still serving the needs of students in the digital age, and downplays her role in its

continued on page 9

Schulz Information Center and University Library

By Nicolas Grizzle

One of the largest buildings on campus at 215,000 square feet, the Jean and Charles Schulz Information Center opened in August 2000 as a resource for the Sonoma State and North Bay communities. Its three floors house the University Library, Information Technology department, Center for Distributed Learning, Writing Center, Faculty Center, Center for Community Engagement and Charlie Brown's Cafe.

Its opening also marked the first 24-hour computer lab at Sonoma State at a time when the Internet was still in its infancy. But still, one of its largest, most useful and innovative features is, to this day, rarely seen in action.

The Automated Retrieval System is a 750,000-volume capacity backroom storage space that houses archived journals, theses and lesser-used items. Its contents can be obtained in 10 minutes with a request through the Library's website, delivered via robotic cart to the front desk. Sonoma State's is one of the few such systems in California, and it was built to exceed earthquake safety building standards and allow for expansion of the Library well into the future.

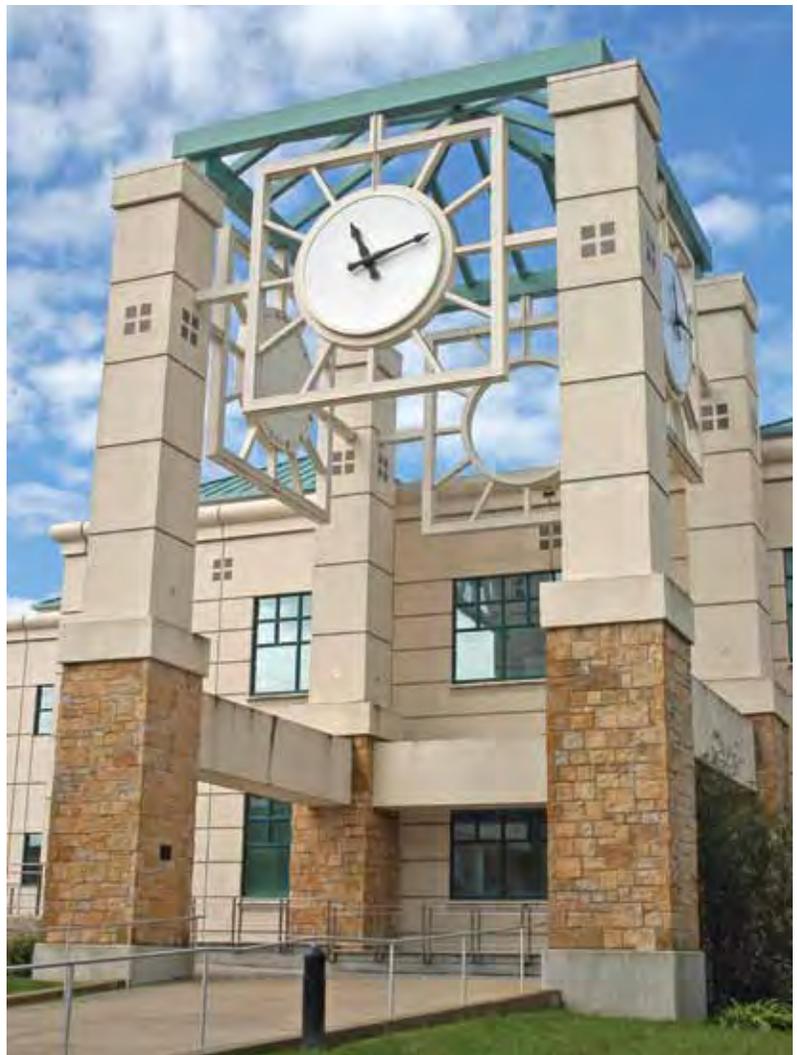
The Information Center houses the university's Special Collections, featuring 53 collections (40 print, 13 digital) of original works and items of historical significance including the extensive Jack London Collection, Lynn Woolsey Congressional

Papers, Gaye LeBaron Collection and Ernest Hemmingway Letters. Art exhibitions rotate through the Center in two locations on the Library's second floor, accessible any time the Library is open.

The facility was made possible thanks to \$7.5 million from private endowments and donations from SSU faculty, staff and students, including \$5 million from "Peanuts" creator Charles Schulz and his wife

Jean. The public-private partnership that helped pave the way for future projects included \$5 million from Cotati-Rohnert Park Unified School District and \$32 million in state funding. Construction of the new facility coincided with the renovation of Salazar Hall, the library's former home, to accommodate classrooms, administrative offices, customer services and the school district's Technology High School.

The facility was made possible thanks to \$7.5 million from private endowments and donations from SSU faculty, staff and students, including \$5 million from "Peanuts" creator Charles Schulz and his wife Jean.



The iconic clocktower of the Schulz Information Center houses a musical carillon that plays the SSU hymn every Friday at noon, "Sonoma We Hail Thee."

continued from page 7

construction. “I always tell people, ‘You built it, you and the taxpayers of California—Sparky and I provided amenities.’”

The Cotati-Rohnert Park Unified School District also committed \$5 million to the \$44 million project. With the construction of a new information center also came the renovation of Salazar Hall, which now houses administrative offices, classrooms, laboratories, customer services and the district’s 240-student Technology High School, which is continuously named a California Distinguished School and has been recognized as one of the best high schools in America by the U.S. News and World Report.

Response to the projects contained a mix of optimism, fear and anxiety. Some faculty felt a new library was too ostentatious. After all, Salazar Library had served the campus well, and why fix something if it wasn’t broken? Librarians were concerned about replacing old systems with new technology, like computers. “There were a couple of people that threatened to tie themselves to the card catalog, even though that card catalog had not been renewed in years,” says Armiñana, his voice rising in pitch, painting the incredulous picture. “They said, ‘How could you have a library depending on a virtual card catalog rather than a read card catalog? How can you store books that you cannot go out and see?’”

The latter question may have stumped other presidents at the time, but not Armiñana. His vision included a 24-hour computer lab for students, and an automated retrieval system designed to efficiently store lesser-used books and periodicals to be delivered upon

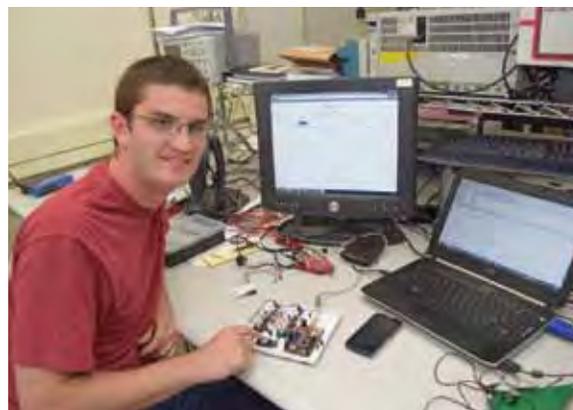
request in 10 minutes by a robotic book cart. In 1995, this had the ring of science fiction. But then again, at the time so did the idea of carrying a computer/telephone/camera in your pocket.

“It couldn’t just be any library, it had to be a state-of-the-art, top-of-the-line library,” says Furukawa-Schlereth. “He believed CSU students deserve that level of quality.”

Beta Site

In 1995, the CSU approved Armiñana’s plan to require all incoming students to have or have access to a computer, preferably a laptop. At the time, engineering-focused Cal Poly San Luis Obispo was the only other California State University to have such a requirement. The approval included a student fee that would go into rewiring the campus computer network and building a software library. “It’s a big step for SSU, for us to test the waters by getting waist deep into what I think is the way teaching and learning at universities will be in the fairly short future,” Armiñana told the Press Democrat newspaper at the time. “We are ahead of the curve in California, but right on the wave of the future.”

Reflecting on the decision, Armiñana says it was the beginning of a new era for Sonoma State as a hub for innovation. “We created this concept with the Chancellor’s Office that Sonoma was a ‘Beta Site,’ where we would try new things,” he says. “They would give us pilot programs for the system with the concept that we were large enough that if it worked, you could use it in other places, and we were small enough that if it were a failure, it wouldn’t sink the system.”



Labs in the Engineering Science department are hubs for innovation.

California State Senator Mike McGuire (‘02) is grateful for that vision. “We are so lucky to be able to have Sonoma State in the North Bay,” says the 2015 Sonoma State Distinguished Alumnus. “It has been a gathering grounds for community and a hub for innovation.”

That innovation is evident in the university’s new Engineering Science program, which has fostered a partnership with tech companies in the North Bay to prepare students for jobs after graduation. There’s also the Environmental Technology Center, completed in 2001 as a “building that teaches” by demonstrating how modern construction techniques can allow for a building that consumes less than half of the energy allowed by state building codes. It houses

“We are ahead of the curve in California, but right on the wave of the future.”

—Ruben Armiñana

classes in the university’s Environmental Studies and Planning department and features a vegetable garden that students harvest and donate to a local food bank.

Beaujolais Village, one of the most recent residential housing villages.

The willingness to adapt and the desire for change played a big role in ensuring the university not only remained in the CSU system, but became a pillar of the community. “That concept of being a beta site, a center of innovation, helped a great deal in pushing the university to become more stable,” Armiñana says.



SSU Housing

Before students could have a new place to study, they needed a place to live. One of Armiñana’s first projects when he arrived at Sonoma State in 1992 was increasing the amount of student housing. “I remember talking with him about expanding our student housing complex because we couldn’t recruit freshman students to the campus if we couldn’t have housing to accommodate them,” says Furukawa-Schlereth.

And so, Sauvignon Village became the first step in creating an atmosphere of full-time, traditional-aged, four-year students on campus, which would generate the finances necessary to become sustainable and avoid closure. The four-bedroom, four-bath apartments for upper-division students each include their own kitchen and living room and patio or balcony. Wireless Internet and upgraded appliances and fixtures give the apartments a feeling of home.

Since then the housing has only gotten better. Beaujolais Village continued the trend, with the exterior as beautiful as the interior. Tuscany Village is the most recent addition, opening in 2009. The two-story, 1,500-square-foot townhomes also include four bedrooms, each with its own bathroom, and a spacious kitchen that would make Martha Stewart salivate with excitement.

Sonoma State now has a reputation for incredible student housing. The Princeton Review ranks the university’s residential community among the top 15 in the nation, praising it as having “dorms like palaces.” Compared to traditional student living, the apartment-style communities are indeed fit for royalty.

“That would lend itself to private citizens, too, in case the enrollment became challenged,” says Furukawa-Schlereth. “They were deliberately done that way, but there never came a time when we had to do it.”

The new housing also had ripple effects. Students had come to live on campus and therefore were spending more time there. As the housing program grew, the whole texture of campus began to change. Student dollars started to be spent more on campus rather than off campus, further stabilizing the university’s finances.

“We were looking at a transformation, and you only transform by innovating,” says Armiñana. “The business model that we inherited had not been working for us. Therefore, in order to, literally, survive, it was almost like the theory of evolution. We don’t evolve because we’re comfortable, we evolve because there are some new challenges and new threats, and we need to innovate and adapt to a new reality.”

Between the library and the new student housing, the university had been turned around from being on the brink of closure to having 15 applications for every available seat just eight years after Armiñana arrived. Enrollment was stabilizing and the ship had been righted, but he wasn’t done yet. By the time the Information Center was finished, Armiñana had already set a plan in motion to cement the university’s reputation as a destination campus—all he needed was Green.

A Scholarly Man

■ **Ph.D., Political Science, University of New Orleans, New Orleans, Louisiana, 1983**

■ **M.A., Latin American Economics and Political Science, The University of Texas at Austin, Texas, 1970**

■ **B.A., Economics, Political Science and Spanish, The University of Texas at Austin, Texas, 1968**

Serves on local and regional boards including the North Bay Leadership Council and the Corporation for Education Network Initiatives in California and is a member of the Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities and the Santa Rosa Chamber Business Education Leaders Committee. His work at the California State University system level includes leadership roles in technology and finance.

Green Music Center

It was a telecom engineer who originally proposed the idea for a proper concert hall at Sonoma State. Don Green and his wife Maureen had long been community members of the university's Bach Choir, and longed for a performance venue befitting

mean to students and the future of the university.

When he presented the idea to them, Armiñana's vice presidents thought it was crazy. Even at the original \$10 million price tag, and even with \$1 million already pledged, how would this be possible? But by

It was during this time when faculty began to question the need for the Green Music Center, and newspapers were joining them. Was the project taking money away from academics? Was it a distraction from other areas of the university that needed attention? Why not consider a scaled-down version to fit the new economic reality?

"We were never willing to compromise," Armiñana told the North Bay Bohemian newspaper when the \$165 million Green Music Center opened in 2012. "There were chances, and requests, to compromise the quality, and the answer was absolutely no. Once we made the decision of what the full scope of the project was, there was never a doubt to do it all."

Congressman Thompson, who considers the New Orleans transplant a friend and has made several visits to campus, attended the inaugural concert in 2012 and was impressed by its impact on the region. Other attendees included California Governor Jerry Brown, House Majority Leader Nancy Pelosi and other leaders from the worlds of politics, business, the arts and more, both local and national. "It established the campus as a top line school," Thompson says. "People pay attention to that sort of thing."

During the tough times of fundraising during the Great Recession, he was impressed with Armiñana's persistence. "Everything he did, he was 100 percent engaged in the project because of what it would mean for the students at the university," says Thompson. "He's really grown the campus and his efforts have contributed to a better institution of higher education, a better campus for the community and better opportunity for students."



the great works to which they lent their voices. Don proposed the idea to choir director Bob Worth over lunch, backing it up with a \$1 million pledge toward the project if his company's debut on the stock market went as planned.

Around the same time, Armiñana and his wife, Marne Olson, visited Tanglewood in Massachusetts and saw a concert in its new, acoustically glorious Ozawa Hall. The hall opened up to a terraced lawn where thousands more could enjoy a symphony under the stars or with a picnic in the afternoon sunshine. It was as if the idea had been made for the Wine Country, but installed on the opposite coast. Armiñana, ever the dreamer, envisioned what such a facility on Sonoma State's campus could

1998, architects and acousticians were visiting Rohnert Park to grasp the concept of Armiñana's vision. Little did they know it would be another 14 years before the baton would drop on opening night.

Fundraising was going well for the project thanks in part to the economic boom of the North Bay Area's Telecom Valley. But the economic downturn that followed the 2001 World Trade Center attack in New York made it tough to find new donors, and the project began to stall.

"I was there during the lean years of the Green Music Center campaign," says CSU Monterey Bay President Eduardo Ochoa, who was provost of Sonoma State from 2003 to 2010. "My seven years were sort of the tough part."

Jean Schulz saw the value in the project as well. She and Sparky donated \$1 million to the project early on, and later gave another \$5 million toward the completion of the smaller student recital hall, which would come to be named Schroeder Hall in honor of the Beethoven – loving, piano-playing “Peanuts” character. “I thought it would be an enhancement to the university, and I’ve always enjoyed music, so I felt that it was a project that should be supported,” she says.

“I was a student there when Ives Hall, the former music building, was built and I thought Ives Hall was pretty special,” says the alumnae (‘65) who also holds an honorary doctorate from Sonoma State. “I had the sense in the beginning that it would be completed and that it would be something great. I realized that they weren’t giving up and ultimately that it would be a star in our crown and would attract students.”

More than Music

Armiñana knew that no matter how great the Green Music Center was, it would take more than music to attract residential students to stay for four years.

Rohnert Park does not have the reputation for nightlife or activity that other college towns do, so he brought the activity to campus.

The Recreation Center opened in 2004 after students passed a fee referendum to pay for the new sustainable building. Previously, students could use the weight room and pool, but there was no facility outside of the 40-year-old gymnasium and kinesiology building for keeping in shape. The new three-story facility includes weight machines, aerobic workout spaces, basketball and indoor soccer courts,



The Student Center, with the SSU bookstore at its corner, sits across from the Recreation Center, in the heart of campus.

a running track and a rock-climbing wall.

The coup-de-gras of student activity came with the grand opening of the Student Center in 2013. The Student Union, which housed a small lounge area, a pub-style restaurant and some student meeting rooms, was replaced with a three-story, all-encompassing facility in the center of campus.

Gone was the standalone, limited bookstore. Replacing it was a large, expansive university store with a beautiful, second-story view of campus through a large corner window. Five dining options are available in the same building, replacing costly and inefficient eateries scattered across campus.

“The idea of a Student Center and Rec Center came very early in my tenure here, but it took years to happen”

—Ruben Armiñana

The addition of Campus Prints enhanced the option of printing posters, flyers and banners on campus, and The HUB cemented the university’s commitment to diversity, literally, with a dedicated multicultural center on campus.

Like the Rec Center, the Student Center was funded through a fee referendum passed by a vote of the

student body. “The idea of a Student Center and Rec Center came very early in my tenure here, but it took years to happen,” says Armiñana. “That idea was very much part of moving to a residential experience for the students. It took a lot longer because California had been in a downturn economically and it took a while to put the pieces all together, and to be honest, a student center and recreation center, even though it was something we had thought about and promoted, it really had to come from the students themselves.”

After the fee referendum passed, students had input on what the facility would look and feel like. “Both of those facilities were mostly

planned, down to the color of the carpet, by the students,” says Armiñana.

One aspect that was not directly chosen by students but influenced by them is the Student Center’s pancake machine. As Armiñana tells the story, this came from his annual serving duties at the “Midnight

continued on page 14

Meeting the Needs of SSU Students and More

By Nicolas Grizzle

Student Center

When the three-story, 130,000-square-foot Student Center opened in Nov. 2013 it was hailed by many as the final piece of a 50-year puzzle.

Students and staff alike claim it's impossible not to run into a familiar face in the multipurpose facility, and those chance meetings are helping connect campus in a way never before seen.

Students, staff and visitors are greeted at the main entrance with an open-ceiling study lounge, complete with fireplace and comfortable seating. When hunger strikes, there are plenty of options within arms' reach thanks to a central kitchen that provides food preparation for the Center's student cafeteria (The Kitchens), pub (Lobo's), deli (Weyden + Brewster), coffee shop (Sip) and restaurant dining (Overlook).

New additions include a grand ballroom on the third floor, which can be used as one large venue (the largest facility of its kind in Sonoma County at 12,000 feet) or broken down into four smaller spaces with capacity for 1,000, and six different rooms on the second floor that



The Recreation Center features a 35-foot climbing wall.

in 2004 as a model of sustainability.

About 85 percent of the building receives natural

light, supplementing the energy efficient lighting systems already installed. Building materials include recycled materials, including glass and tires, which were reformed and repurposed to make up the 35-foot climbing wall.

Sustainable practices like radiant heating in the floors, ventilated cooling through skylights and grey water usage in the toilets contributed to Campus Recreation's Bay Area Green Business Program of Sonoma County Green Business Certificate in 2014.

And it gets even more impressive when one actually goes inside the building, located across from the Student Center in the heart of campus.

There's a large fitness and weight training space, a hot tub, second-floor jogging track surrounding multipurpose basketball courts on the ground floor, and two large multipurpose rooms for class instruction. The workout floor is a night-and-day transformation from the campus gymnasium, housed in one of the first buildings constructed on campus. Athletics teams now have the benefit of tailoring that facility to better suit their needs and time constraints.

Rec Center

The two-story, 53,000-square-foot Recreation Center opened

provide meeting space with technological enhancements built in. The building also houses the campus store, printing and mailing services, The HUB multicultural center, and administrative offices.

The project was partially funded by a \$150-per-semester fee passed by a student vote in 2011. The building qualifies for a LEED Silver designation, utilizing sustainable practices with an emphasis on energy efficiency.

Sonoma State students approved a fee increase in Nov., 2000 to support construction of the new Recreation Center.

Looking down on the "Livingroom" of the Student Center which opened in 2013.

Looking down on the "Livingroom" of the Student Center which opened in 2013.



continued from page 12

Breakfast” events in the former dining hall. Students would always ask for pancakes, but they took too long to make. Armiñana had seen an automatic pancake machines in boardrooms during visits to San Francisco and Los Angeles, and thought it would be good for the new Student Center—a tongue-in-cheek nod to the “beta site” moniker.

“We found what I thought was a great technological solution to it, but it took a while for the bureaucracy to accept,” says Armiñana, his wry sense of humor allowing for an uncharacteristic moment of self praise. “Therefore, it is the Armiñana Memorial Pancake Machine.” (For what it’s worth, he has eaten the pancakes. “They’re pretty good, and the machine is heavily used by the students,” he says.)

Construction of new residential housing, the Schulz Information Center, Green Music Center, Student Center, Recreation Center, Environmental Technology Center and the renovations of Salazar Hall and science and tech building Darwin Hall all happened under Armiñana’s tenure.

The Wine Business Institute, one of the only programs like it in the country, came to be under Armiñana’s watch. It has since grown into the



Top: A look inside the energy efficient Environmental Technology Center.
Bottom: “Bacon and Eggs,” erected in 1970, remains an iconic piece of Sonoma State.



fastest growing part of the School of Business and Economics, with the Institute moving into its new home on campus, the Wine Spectator Learning Center, in 2017.

And a program near and dear to the hearts of those over the age of

50, called the Osher Lifelong Learning Program, took up residence at Sonoma State in 2001. The Institute now serves more than 1,600 students each year to adults 50 and older from across Sonoma County. Armiñana was also one of OLLI’s first instructors, bringing his expertise in Cuban history to an eager and attentive audience.

But even with these great accomplishments, he feels that maybe more could have been done. “Some people have said that I have great vision,” he says. “I have great vision, but I have lousy timing. A lot of the things I have proposed have taken a little longer than I wish they had because of economic turndowns in California and reductions to the university’s funding.”



The Wine Spectator Learning Center will serve as home for the Wine Business Institute.

Preparing for the Future

Above all else, Armiñana is passionate about education.

He has made it a priority to provide opportunities to socioeconomically disadvantaged, first-generation students through the university's Compact for Success program with Santa Rosa City Schools District and by helping create the charter Roseland University Preparatory High School.

"I can still remember those conversations happening right here in this room," he says, pointing to a seat in his office. "The school district superintendent was sitting right there and I said, 'I'll tell you what we'll do, we'll guarantee admission.' At that time, they had not asked for that, it was us who offered it. Now it's a model followed by several others, and Roseland has been a great success."

Knowing they have guaranteed admission helps ease the anxiety of where or how to go to college for students who may be the first in their family to attend, he says. "It gives them a place they can walk around and see there other people who look like them. It gives them this connection, this closeness and what I call a touchable goal."

Though it is now a U.S. News and World Report Top-24 California high school, the history of Roseland University Prep is rife with controversy. Because it is in an unincorporated area of Santa Rosa, and because it is a charter school, there were some in the district who fought the school's formation. "But the fact that they had this relationship with the university gave them a lot of the credibility to forge ahead," says Armiñana, who has never been one to shy away from a project he believes in simply because it is unpopular at the time. "And it was a pleasure to do that."

"Knowing they have guaranteed admission helps ease the anxiety of where or how to go to college for students who may be the first in their family to attend"

—Ruben Armiñana

Love of Education

Armiñana has been controversial in his other careers as well. "When I was a TV news anchor and I went to Cuba, there were some threats on my life after I came back," he says. "It was in 1977, I was the first Cuban ever to go back to Cuba on a commercial mission on behalf of the United States."

It wouldn't be the last time he would risk his mortality. "My life got threatened again when we changed the school mascot from the Cossack to the Seawolf," says Armiñana. "I got this threatening email from the United Congress of Cossacks. They were going to impale me with a Cossack sword."

He takes it all in stride. "For some people, that's the only way they know how to fight," he says. "They don't know how to fight over ideas, they have to get personal and they go there very fast. But you cannot let it get to you."

Among the family photos, masks and awards in his office sits a simple framed quote. "The area in which he is most criticized is when he brings forth ideas—this is what frightens people," it reads, the comments coming from an individual quoted in the president's sixth year evaluation in 1998.

"That was a statement made by a faculty member," says Armiñana, when asked about it. "I have an idea who said it and I think he meant it as a compliment, to be honest,

but other people didn't think it was a compliment. We are very conservative institutions, universities are, and therefore when you bring forth some ideas, you get frightened about it. It's a change. But I took it as a great compliment. I like it."

Changing one's shoes takes seconds; changing one's mind can

continued on page 17



Dr. Ruben Armiñana and his wife Marne Olson.

Compact For Success

By Nicolas Grizzle

Thanks to Sonoma State University's Compact For Success program, students at Santa Rosa's Lawrence Cook Middle School and Elsie Allen High School have a leg up on the process of going to college. Beginning with the class of 2017, each student who meets the stated Compact For Success criteria is guaranteed a spot at SSU. Financial support will also be available for qualified students.

Sonoma State started the program in 2011 after a similar program between Sweetwater Union High School District and San Diego State University showed great success in the 2000s. This higher education partnership is the only one of its kind in Sonoma County.

The student population at Lawrence Cook Middle School is 79 percent Latino and 93 percent socioeconomically disadvantaged; Elsie Allen High School's population is 77 percent Latino and 87 percent socioeconomically disadvantaged. The vast majority of the program's students' parents did not attend college.

Compact For Success targets underserved students

Students from Roseland University Preparatory Academy in Santa Rosa looking forward to college.

to give them inspiration to go on to a four-year university and graduate. The middle schoolers sign the Compact before their first year at Elsie Allen to complete their part of the deal. Students take field trips to tour Sonoma State's campus while in middle and high school, giving them

level math and English placement tests, take the SAT or ACT test and declare a college major.

The offer is also extended to students at Roseland University Preparatory Academy, a predominantly Latino, 400-student charter high school in an

Compact For Success targets underserved students to give them inspiration to go on to a four-year university and graduate.

a tangible memory to motivate them through their high school career.

For their part, students must graduate from Elsie Allen with at least a 3.0 average, pass all classes in the A-G college preparatory curriculum with at least a "C" grade, pass entry-

underserved, unincorporated area of Santa Rosa. Roseland uses the A through G curriculum and boasts a 95 percent graduation rate, and 24 percent of its seniors say they plan to attend Sonoma State after graduation.



continued from page 15

take years. Part of Armiñana's vision when he first landed in Rohnert Park was changing the way people in the community viewed Sonoma State. It's why he chose to live in Santa Rosa, the economic and political center of the county, rather than Rohnert Park. It's why he fought so hard to bring a world-class music center and cutting-edge library to campus.

"I have to tell you, when I first came here, I would go to a Rotary Club or Lions Club meeting and ask how many people graduated from Sonoma State," he says, timidly raising his hand and looking around the room sheepishly as an example of a typical response. Ask the same question now, and the response is very different—hands proudly shoot up across the room, validating Armiñana's goal of raising the profile of the university within the community. "The only way this university was to survive and thrive was to be recognized as a key component of the economic and social fabric of the North Bay Area. If you didn't have that, you could not have survived in the long run."

Armiñana's wife, Marne Olson, helped achieve that vision by joining nonprofit boards like the Santa Rosa Symphony, the Luther Burbank Center for the Arts and KRCB public broadcasting (she is now vice-chair of the Green Music Center board of advisors). "One of the attributes that Ruben has is that he's not afraid of other people who are talented. I think that's an excellent quality in a leader," she says.

Ochoa, SSU's former provost who served in the U.S. Department of Education before returning to academia as president of CSU Monterey Bay in 2012, says Armiñana connects on a personal level with people. "He's very astute

about personal relationships and individuals and what makes them tick. I was always amazed how intimately he knew the personal life and circumstances of every faculty member and administrator on campus. He knew people in much more detail than most academics and administrators do," he says. "He could stop and ask somebody about their family, or whatever it was that was important in their life, and he knew about it. I always admired that because I think it's a profound truth that people are not just their jobs, they are flesh and blood human beings, and he never forgets that—he knows that people are a whole, and he cares about them."

Former Sonoma State student body president Alex Boyar ('12) met with Armiñana several times during his college career. He says

But Armiñana went beyond just political and professional advice. "He definitely helped me focus in on things I was interested in," says Boyar. "He gave me the confidence in myself to pursue all avenues available to me."

"He's always been a very high energy person, and he still is," says Olson. "If you could bottle what he has, you'd probably make a lot of money."

Despite his high energy, his penchant for quick thinking, and his uncanny confidence in trusting his gut on decisions, Armiñana takes a full minute pause when asked why, out of all pursuits, he chose to devote the bulk of his career to education.

"Because," he says, "the United States is one of the few countries in the world which, if you get the

"The United States is one of the few countries in the world which, if you get the right education and you work hard and you are disciplined, will allow you whatever success is possible—despite having a name that is very difficult to pronounce, despite having an accent, and despite having been poorer than a church mouse."

his first one-on-one meeting with the president yielded some great advice. "The first thing he ever told me was that I was the voice for the students, and that I need to focus on what's best for them," he says by phone from Washington D.C., where he works as a political consultant. "He said, 'People are going to try to pull you in different directions or convince you to do things you don't want to do. I can promise that I will never manipulate you, I will tell you exactly how I feel about something.'"

right education and you work hard and you are disciplined, will allow you whatever success is possible—despite having a name that is very difficult to pronounce, despite having an accent, and despite having been poorer than a church mouse. And I think those conditions still remain true if provided, as it was provided for me, the opportunity to take advantage of those benefits."

That's one thing Armiñana hopes will never change.

—Ruben Armiñana



Marne with her husband, SSU president Ruben Armiñana

First Lady of Sonoma State **Marne Olson**

By Susan Kashack

Unless you really get to know Marne Olson, wife of President Ruben Armiñana, you don't realize her immeasurable impact on Sonoma State University.

That's partially because she sees her role, among other things, as being supportive to SSU and its president in ways that don't garner accolades or awards.

“I see a large part of my role as helping to bring the university and the community together,” she says. In reality, she has helped do that and much more.

Marne was born and raised in Wisconsin. She experienced the world through travels with her family and lived in England during high school as her father, a doctor, was studying nuclear medicine at Hammersmith Hospital in London. Her beloved mother shepherded the family as they traveled throughout Europe, experiencing a wealth of history, music and cultures. Marne’s pride in her Norwegian heritage led her to become president of the local Sons of Norway chapter in Sonoma County, where she remains active in putting on events like Leif Erickson Day on Oct. 9 as part of Viking Fest each year.

Marne and Ruben met in New Orleans on a committee to reform the city charter when she was working as assistant to the mayor and Ruben was a vice president at Tulane University. They ended up working on other projects together, including one of the first democratic televised debates put on by the Democratic Leadership Council for the 1988 presidential election—she coordinated the security for the city; Ruben helped manage the debate.

Soon after, Ruben became vice president at Cal Poly Pomona and the couple married later that year in New Orleans. “It was just a typical New Orleans wedding,” she says, adding with a chuckle, “During the ceremony, a parade went by.”

Marne’s pride in her Norwegian heritage led her to become president of the local Sons of Norway chapter in Sonoma County, where she remains active in putting on events like Leif Erickson Day on Oct. 9 as part of Viking Fest each year.

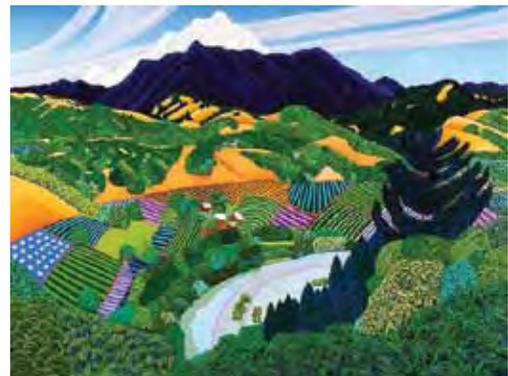
When Ruben became president of Sonoma State in 1992, Marne began her integration into the community. She served on several community boards, including the Santa Rosa Symphony. She was serving as its chair when talk first began about building a Tanglewood-type concert hall at Sonoma State. Her tastes in music are eclectic, running the gamut from opera and symphonic to folk and world music, and she wanted to bring musical experiences to Sonoma State and the community.

Over the years, Marne has felt it was important to meet those in the community who either already were or potentially would support the university. She serves as an

Her travels of the world with her family and later with Ruben gave her a keen appreciation of the arts. Marne serves as a key member of Sonoma State’s Campus Art Committee, locating and evaluating, with SSU Art Gallery Director Michael Schwager and others, art pieces, many of which have been installed permanently on campus.



Left: Cristo’s and Jeanne-Claude’s Running Fence photograph
Top: Asia 2000 sculpture
Bottom: Jack Stuppin painting



ambassador for Sonoma State in political arenas, using her political savvy gleaned from her work in the New Orleans mayor’s office. That experience has been helpful in California politics and at the national level.

Marne has been an avid and vocal supporter of visual art at SSU and a key member of the Campus Art Committee. She has enthusiastically shaped and championed her vision of a “sculpture walk” that in the future will lead visitors from the sculptures outside of the Green Music Center across the pedestrian bridge and onto campus. Marne was instrumental in shepherding the donation of Bruce Johnson’s sculpture *Asia 2000* that stands just outside of GMC and greets visitors as they drive onto campus. In addition, she played a central and very influential role in the decision to purchase—entirely with donated funds—the photographs of Christo and Jeanne-Claude’s *Running Fence Project* that have graced the hallway leading into Weill Hall since its opening in 2012. And both Marne and Ruben helped guide the donation of Sonoma County artist Jack Stuppin’s large painting that is on view in a room adjacent to Weill Hall.

In her capacity as a member of the Campus Art Committee, Marne has led many discussions during SSU’s search for public art that can be placed on campus, either temporarily—such as the works by Randy Colosky, Robert Hudson,



Philanthropist Jean Schulz sits on Bar Note Bench outside the Green Music Center.

Green Music Center. “I think it’s fair to say that growth of public art at SSU in recent years owes much to the enthusiastic support and discerning eye of Marne Olson,”

it took a long time and there were some who had doubts, she never did and neither did Ruben. She serves now with Joan Weill as co-vice chair of the Green Music Center Board of Advisors.

Marne serves as a key member of Sonoma State’s Campus Art Committee, locating and evaluating, with SSU Art Gallery Director Michael Schwager and others, art pieces, many of which have been installed permanently on campus.

“The education piece was the most important piece of it to me,” Marne says. “Whenever there was a low point in the campaign, I told everyone that we need to bring it back to the original ideas, that the educational part is the most important part.” The Green Music Center is a centerpiece of her and Ruben’s vision and work at Sonoma State.

and Kent Roberts currently on view through 2017—or permanently, like Bruce Johnson’s *Asia 2000* and Robert Ellison’s *Bar Note Bench*, donated by Jean Schulz and sited outside the education wing of the

says Michael Schwager, professor of art history and director of the University Art Gallery.

And then there’s the Green Music Center, a vision of Ruben and Marne’s from the beginning. Though

“I’m not sad we are retiring and we are not going to be there. When you take on a project like the GMC you have to know that it belongs to everyone,” she says. Marne’s

contributions as the first lady of Sonoma State are many, but she is quick to diffuse praise all around. "The commitment of the wonderful people in the community and at the university who made the Green Music Center happen deserve all the credit, as do the faculty and staff who are such important role models and guides for the students."

What's next? "We're weighing all the options. We're not in a hurry."

Roy Zajac, principal clarinetist of the Santa Rosa Symphony and SSU music faculty.



"I'm not sad we are retiring and we are not going to be there. When you take on a project like the GMC you have to know that it belongs to everyone."

—Marne Olson

Your Legacy Gift: Please Don't Keep It A Secret!

Have you included Sonoma State University in your estate plans? If you have, sharing information with us about your gift benefits Sonoma State University for three reasons. First, we want to acknowledge your generous commitment. Second, your gift encourages other donors to make the same commitment to Sonoma State's future. Finally, our knowledge of your gift helps the University protect and plan for the future of its academic programs.

I invite you to help support Sonoma State University and join the Ambrose and Barbara Nichols Legacy Society with a generous investment through your estate plans. An investment in higher education is an investment in the future of our society. Of course, you always have the option of remaining anonymous. Even if you prefer no public recognition, the information you provide will aid in the University's future planning. For all of these reasons, please consider sharing your wonderful intentions with us. Thank you for your remarkable support of Sonoma State!

For more information, please contact us at development.office@sonoma.edu. or 707-664-2712.



Alumni Association Board of Directors 2016

President
David Felte
(BA Economics &
BS Business Administration, 2001)

President-Elect
Joseph Huang
(BS Business Admin, 2002 & BA International
Economics, 2004)

Vice President/Administration
Molly Rattigan
(BA Political Science, 2002)

Vice President/Finance
James Elliott
(BS Business Administration, 2000)

Director
Amanda Burke
(BA Communications, 2012)

Director
Nate Campbell
(BA Communications, 1999;
MA Interdisciplinary Studies, 2002)

Director
Vincent Cortese
(BA Communications, 2000)

Director
Elizabeth "Libby" Dippel
(BA Environmental Studies and
BA Economics, 2014)

Director
Michelle Fielder
(BA Sociology, 2012)

Director
Vanessa Johns
(BA Communications, 2013)

Director
Patrick Maloney
(BA Political Science, 2014)

Director
Jim Manly
(MBA Business Admin. & Management, 1999)

Director
Amanda Mueller
(BA Business Management, 2013)

Director
Annette Powell
(BA Business Marketing/Psychology, 2005)

Director
Meg Ragan
(BA Sociology, 2008)

Director
Travis Saracco
(BA Communications, 2012)

Director
Sarah Scudder
(BS Business Administration, 2005)

Alumni Association Director
Laurie Ogg
(BS Kinesiology, 1994 & MA Kinesiology, 1999)

From the Alumni Association President...

Fellow Alums:

We hope you were able to join us at one of our exciting fall events. The Golf Tournament last October and the Lagunitas Mixer were both great events reuniting classmates and faculty alike.

They also helped the Alumni Association launch an easy way for every alum to conveniently give back. We are proud to announce the establishment of the Heart of SSU Alumni Scholarship. Every dollar helps build this new fund that will award a full tuition scholarship to a student who wouldn't

otherwise have the means to attend college. We launched this because we feel there shouldn't be a leap between the dream of a great education and the reality of achieving that education.



Every dollar helps build this new fund that will award a full tuition scholarship to a student who wouldn't otherwise have the means to attend college.

As alumni, you're the heart of SSU—the lifeblood of support and meaningful connections. You can help current students reach their full potential. For the cost of a cup of coffee a month you can join us in helping future students have their SSU moment in life. Every gift of every size supports the school that helped so many of us to get where we are today. Many of our alumni have already joined in supporting the cause. To learn more about the scholarship, view our calendar of events and to join the effort, visit www.ssualumni.org.

On a final note, this June marks the end of an era and a changing of the guard at Sonoma State University. Dr. Ruben Armiñana will retire after a 24-year tenure as president. Dr. Armiñana has been a visionary and future-focused president, transforming SSU into one of the most desirable campuses in the California State University. The SSU Alumni Association has always valued its special relationship with President Armiñana and wish him all the best in retirement. He will be missed.

Thank you for your support!

David Felte, '01
President
SSU Alumni Association

www.facebook.com/ssualumni

Lagunitas Mixer

The SSU Alumni Association's annual Lagunitas alumni mixer was again a sell out! The band Moxie entertained our alumni while they enjoyed food from Velascos in Petaluma and of course A Little Sumpin' Sumpin' and other signature ales from one of the top breweries in the nation. Some lucky alumni went home with door prize winnings and grads from the last 30 years had a great night. The event was a fundraising success bringing in \$2,500 for the new "Heart of SSU Alumni Scholarship."



Mark your calendar
to join us this year!
November 21, 2016
Lagunitas Brewery,
Petaluma

Golf Tournament

The foggy morning did not dampen the spirits of alumni who turned out for the SSU Alumni Association's annual Alumni Golf Tournament last October. Twenty foursomes competed in the scramble, which was a partnership with SSU Men's and Women's golf teams. The event raised nearly \$7,000 to be shared between the golf program and "The Heart of SSU Alumni Scholarship."



Don't miss this year's tournament
October 15, 2016
Foxtail Golf Course, Rohnert Park
 For more details, visit ssualumni.org

1970s

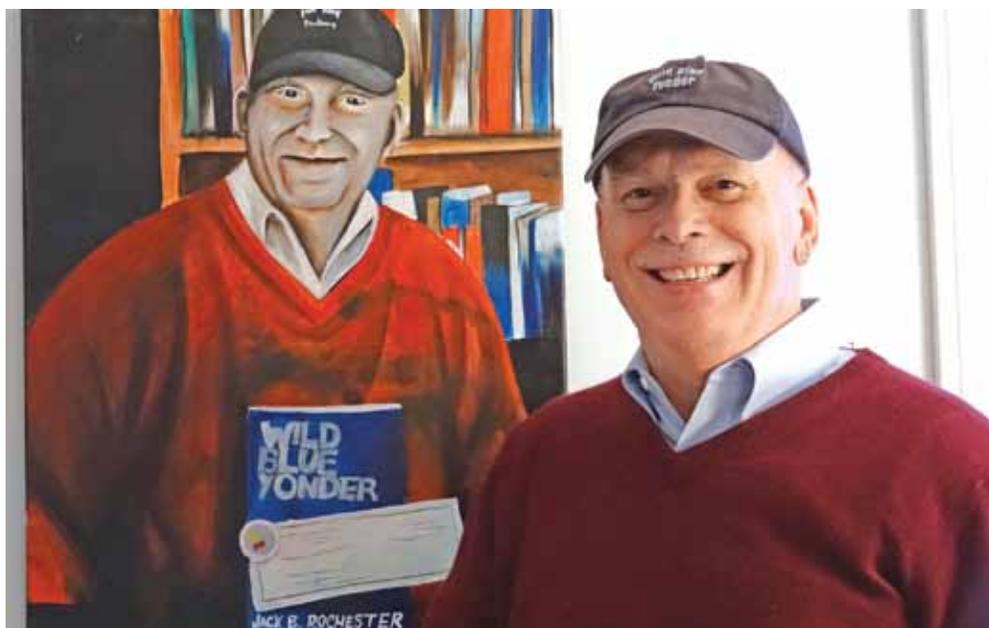
Jack B. Rochester, '72, BA English, '84, MA Comparative Literature, founded Fictional Café (www.fictionalcafe.com) in March 2014 to publish fiction, poetry, art and photography from creative people around the world. Rochester is currently working on his third novel, "White Bike," a story of hit-and-run murder, business espionage, entrepreneurship and multicultural romance.

Glenn E. James, '75, BA Physical Geography/BA Humanistic Psychology, has been awarded the prestigious Dr. Arthur Chui Award for Hurricane Preparedness. The award is presented annually during the National Weather Service Hurricane Season Outlook and honors an individual, organization or business that has demonstrated innovation or excellence in hurricane preparedness for the community. James is currently working at the Pacific Disaster Center, in Kihei, Maui as a senior weather specialist.

MaryJane O'Keefe, '77, BA English, is recently retired and working part time as a risk management consultant.

1980s

Donald Winkle, '88, BS Computer Science, was recently named Super Lawyer Rising Star for the second year in a row. Winkle is a business transactional



Catharine Bramkamp

attorney for Spaulding McCullough & Tansil LLP in Santa Rosa.

1990s

Natasha Hawes-Billips, '90, BA Biology, completed training as a medical

technologist and worked in several Bay Area hospitals throughout the 90s. Hawes-Billips now lives in Texas with her 14-year-old daughter.

Leslie Wolski, '91, BA Communications, has been appointed director of spa operations for Health

Spa Montecito, formerly called The Spa at Montecito Heights. Wolski is a nationally recognized spa consultant and a published author of "Spa: Refreshing Rituals for Body and Soul," which was released in 2002.

Give Every Year, Make a Difference Every Day

Through the generosity of alumni, parents and friends, the Fund for Sonoma State provides unique and relevant educational experiences for Sonoma State University students. Our signature programs have granted more than 145 WolfBucks for Books awards and funded more than 50 student/faculty research teams.

It takes a collective effort from the entire SSU community to create and sustain the unique programs available to our students.



Join the Effort and Invest in Sonoma State Students.
Make Your Annual Gift today!



Contact University Development at **707 664.2712** or visit www.sonoma.edu/development/fund-for-sonoma.

Stacey Gilligan, '93, BS Business Administration, has been awarded the Women in Business Award for her career as a leader and innovator in the business industry. Gilligan is currently working as the tax manager of Burr Pilger Mayer (BPM), Inc., one of the largest San Francisco Bay Area-based full service accounting and consulting firms.

Cheryle Stanley, '94, BA Sociology, has been presented the Nonprofit Leadership Award for being an innovator in providing transitional housing for women in recovery through Women's Recovery Services. Stanley is currently working as the executive director for Women's Recovery Services, which is a nonprofit organization that provides substance treatment for women and their infants and children.

Deborah Dalton, '97, BA English, has been presented the Nonprofit Leadership Award for her efforts working with at-risk youth through Mentor Me. Dalton is currently working as the executive director of Mentor Me, a nonprofit mentoring organization that matches adult volunteers with at-risk youth ages 5-17.

Meredith Rennie, '97, BS Business Administration, has been awarded the Women in Business Award for her career as a leader and innovator in the business industry. Rennie

is currently working as the senior manager of Moss Adams, LLP, which serves the public, private and not-for-profit enterprises with assurance, tax, consulting, risk management, transaction and wealth services.



Meredith Rennie

2000s

Delphine Metcalf-Foster, '01, BA Liberal Studies, currently works as the national junior vice commander for the Disabled American Veterans (DAV). Metcalf also serves as a board member on the Secretary of Veterans Affairs



Deborah Dalton

Women Veterans Advisory Board to ensure veterans benefits are protected and to advocate for advance appropriations and other concerns for all veterans.

Rosie Ochoa, '04, BA English, '04, minor in French, was recently awarded the 2015 International Latino Book Award for her book, "The Beauty of Being a Woman." Ochoa is currently working on a documentary film titled "The Dream" about the movement of the sixties as compared to modern movements.

Nicholas Majeski, '04, BA Political Science, recently received his Certified Emergency Manager designation from the International Association of Emergency Managers. Majeski currently works for the city administrator of the City and County of San Francisco as the emergency response manager.

Pandora (Sibley) Bethea, '06, BA English, recently finished her tenth year teaching english language arts to middle and high school students in the Bay Area. Bethea pioneered the Poetry Out Loud program in one school where one of her students won third prize in California. She was also honored as a featured poet at a café in San Francisco and her poetry book was published earlier this year.



Lauren Pitcher

Lauren Pitcher, '07, BA Communications, is currently the communications manager for Hayward Promise Neighborhood, Signature President Obama Poverty Initiative, at CSU East Bay. She is also pursuing her Masters of Arts in communications at CSU East Bay and worked for renowned public relations agencies such as MSL Group and Edelman. She is a proud mother and wife.

JoAnn Saccato, '07, BA Liberal Studies Hutchins, '10, MA ITDS Action for Viable Future, mindfulness teacher and life coach is author of "Companioning the Sacred Journey: A Guide to Creating a Compassionate Container for Your Spiritual Practice" and her forthcoming book, compassion-based "Mindfulness for Peace, Clarity and Freedom." Lake Co-op, California's only cooperatively owned online local food ordering and distribution system, was her Master's project.



JoAnn Saccato

Sarah Adams, '08, BA Art Studio, has been awarded a design scholarship from the Northern California chapter of the National Kitchen and Bath Association (NKBA).

Nancy Thomas, '09, BS Nursing with RN, '10, MS Nursing with RN, is teaching nursing at the Santa Rosa Junior College.

2010s

Ariana Aparicio, '10, BA Sociology, is back at SSU as the new academic advisor for undeclared and science and technology students after graduating with distinction in 2010.

Sarah Haley, '11, BA Criminal Justice Studies, '15, MA School Counseling, '15, Cred Pupil Personnel Services and Luke Haley, '11, BA Physics, met at

Sonoma State and got married in June 2014. Luke works as a process engineer for Keysight Technologies and Sarah was recently offered a counseling position for Analy High School.



Sarah Haley

Laura Bradley, '12, MA Education, received first place in The Henry Ford's Innovation Nation Teacher



All in the Family

Roy and Arlene (Kohl) Wolford graduated from Sonoma State in the 1960s, but there's more to their story that makes them an SSU family.

When Roy and Arlene were infants, their families lived 10 blocks apart in San Francisco. Of course, they never met. After high school, they both worked at the same large business—but again never met. When they both enrolled at SSU, the two finally met in a mineralogy and optics geology course taught by Dr. Rolfe Erickson. “We were geology sweethearts,” says Arlene. “We married after graduation and have been together for 44 years. We still fondly remember and relate stories of happenings at Sonoma State.”

The story doesn't end there. All three of their children graduated from SSU, with one turning down a scholarship to Dominican University and one to UC Berkeley. Among the family, their majors were business/accounting, counseling, geography, geology, kinesiology and math/computer science. A nephew also graduated from SSU and worked at Sonoma State for a time. The children are successful, with one in corporate accounting, one a licensed counselor and one who started a lucrative dog walking business.

“I started SSU in the fall of 1966, the first year on the existing campus,” says Roy. “There was no vegetation, only huge gray colored cement buildings and a gravel parking lot. SSU has come a long way since then and is a beautiful campus.”

Do you have an SSU family? Share your story and photos at insights@sonoma.edu.



Laura Bradley

Innovator Award, which recognizes educators who are using the classroom to inspire innovation, creativity, problem solving and critical thinking among their students. Bradley is currently teaching digital media to the 8th grade class at Kenilworth Junior High School.



Rayn Knutson

Ryan Knutson, '12, BA History, '12, Latin American Studies minor, '12, Spanish minor, recently finished law school at the Heidelberg Institute for Latin American studies in Santiago, Chile, where he studied international law/politics. Knutson also interned in Chile at a human rights law firm working on abuse cases from the Pinochet dictatorship.



Doug Catanzarite, '12, BA Communication and Media Studies

It's hard enough to find the right roommate, but to find one with the same passion and goals is truly rare.

For Doug Catanzarite, BA Communication and Media Studies, '12, and Jake Pisani, BS Business Administration, '12, that was just the case. Both shared the dream of working in sports and continuously pushed each other to achieve that goal. "We developed a friendly competitiveness and it pushed us both to get better," says Pisani. "Every time one of us made a stride in our respective careers, it always seemed to make the other try that much harder."

That friendly competitiveness paid off. After graduation, Catanzarite took an internship at the Oakland Raiders and Pisani spent time working with the San Francisco 49ers, Golden State Warriors and the San Jose Earthquakes. They continued to share learning moments with each other and grew in their fields. Now, three short years after graduating, both work for major Bay Area sports teams. Catanzarite is a corporate partnership manager at the Oakland Raiders, and Pisani is the senior coordinator for media relations at the San Jose Earthquakes. Now that's passion!



Jake Pisani, '12, BS Business Administration



Chelsey Aggio

Chelsey Aggio, '13, BS Business Administration, has joined the V2 Wine Group as a winery accountant. Aggio specializes in business finance.

Michelle Kincaid, '13, BA Theatre Arts, is attending Cal State Fullerton for her third year where she was offered a full scholarship into the grad MFA costume design program. Current and past costume design work at CSUF include: And Then There Were None, Is He Dead, and the musical Spring Awakening. Kincaid also recently worked freelance on The Real daytime talk show in Burbank.

Amanda Mueller, '13, Business Administration, recently started a career as a

realtor working for Vanguard Properties from the Barlow. She ran her first half-marathon in Windsor this past May.



Amanda Mueller

Jamari Fredenburg, '14, BA Liberal Studies, was recently accepted to Touro University in Vallejo, California into the Masters of Education Degree Program with an emphasis in urban education. She began classes in the spring of 2015 after working since graduation as a preschool teacher.

Paul Martinez, '14, BA Sociology, is currently a Eugene V. Cota-Robles Fellow and Ph.D. candidate in sociology at the University of California, Los Angeles.



Dan Rotlisberger

Dan Rotlisberger, '14, Executive MBA Business Administration, has been honored by the Sonoma County Harvest Fair as

2015's Outstanding Young Farmer under the age of 40. Rotlisberger is now working as a viticulturist for Redwood Empire Vineyard Management, providing his expertise to growers throughout the region.

Erika Spencer, '14, BA Women and Gender Studies, is currently working for the County of Sonoma in the Road Maintenance Division of the Public Works Department. Spencer is also a volunteer with the Sonoma County Hazardous Materials Response team and is in the process of becoming a volunteer firefighter with Valley Ford VFC (also a part of Sonoma County Fire & Emergency Services).

Alex Tannous, '14, BS Business Administration, has joined the Keegan & Coppin Company, Inc./ ONCOR International's Santa Rosa office. Tannous specializes in sales and leasing for retail, office and industrial properties and begins his real estate career with this position.



Justin Eterovich, '15, Business & Economics, cum laude

Watchmaking aficionado Justin Eterovich is gaining traction in the world of limited edition luxury brands with Blacklist Watches, automotive-inspired timepieces designed by Eterovich and

manufactured in Switzerland. The company boasted sales of more than \$125,000 in its first 12 months of operation and expects to double that number in the coming year. Eterovich graduated cum laude from SSU School of Business & Economics in 2015 and occasionally returns to campus to share his story with new business students.

"There would be no Blacklist if I had gone to any other school. At first, my SSU application was denied because I was missing one math class. But they saw something in me and believed in me, and granted me conditional entry," says Eterovich, said. "So I started Blacklist as a student and every time I learned a new skill or concept in class, whether resolving an issue with suppliers, distribution, accounting, or a current marketing campaign, I could apply it immediately to the business. This was a huge advantage and a contributing factor to my success." Visit blacklistwatches.com.

In Memorium

Dr. John Palmer
Professor of Counseling and
Dean of Students

~
Gil Schmidt
Associated Students Vice President
1966-67

~
Susan Chaffee Powell
MA, Special Education
Distinguished Alumna in 1989

send notices to insights@sonoma.edu



1801 EAST COTATI AVENUE
ROHNERT PARK, CALIFORNIA 94928-3609

A CAMPUS OF THE CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY

CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED

NON PROFIT ORG
U S POSTAGE
PAID
SONOMA STATE
UNIVERSITY

Weill Hall - Green Music Center



Visit — Experience — Be Awed

gmc.sonoma.edu