

# BECAUSE OF YOU

VOLUME 2, NO. 1 • SPRING 2021

*Our newsletter demonstrating the impact of our donors' generosity*

## Presidential Pioneer Emergency Fund, One Year Later

In Spring 2020, former University President Leroy M. Morishita founded the Presidential Pioneers Emergency Fund in response to the additional help students required as their way of life was drastically altered by COVID-19.

After a little more than a year, more than \$200,000 in aid has been distributed to Cal State East Bay students.

"The Presidential Pioneers Emergency Fund will help me with my groceries and pay for printing my assignments and notes for classes," said Jaqueline T. "This fund is a blessing. I don't have to worry about starving. I also don't have to worry as much about how many pages to print at my local Office Depot."

"I was in transition, lost my job, temporarily staying with my friend, and faced medical challenges that were hard to overcome," said Maria L. "The Presidential Pioneers Emergency Fund, its compassion and understanding, truly made a difference for those of us who were struggling. Thank you for giving me hope!"

Director of Recreation and Student Wellbeing Jennifer Luna explained, "We have seen applications double since March 2020. Students are still experiencing decreased work hours and employment cuts, leading to the inability to cover living expenses such as rent, utilities, and food." Students can apply to receive up to \$1,500, and the average award is around \$800.

"The virtual academic environment also impacted students who need



Anuka Mithri with Darice Ingram, HOPE coordinator in a campus emergency housing unit.

access to technology such as laptops and hotspots," Luna said "We are also receiving requests for students who need support with access to meals, toiletries, and emergency housing."

Of the applications received, the top five requests for aid were food/groceries; housing or living expenses; miscellaneous living expenses; technology expenses (including computer/Internet access); and course materials.

"The importance of the Presidential Pioneers Emergency Fund cannot

be denied," said University President Cathy Sandeen, "I am proud that this program is helping to meet the most basic needs of our deserving students. While we are seeing improvement in the number of COVID cases, and vaccines are becoming more readily available, the fact of the matter is our daily lives are slow to return to normal. Until that happens, I pledge to keep the Presidential Pioneers Emergency Fund operating until there is no longer any student need for it."

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# Joe Morgan's Pioneer Legacy



Former President Mo Qayoumi presents Joe Morgan with a hood representing the honorary doctorate of Humane Letters conferred on Morgan in 2008.

Alumnus Joe Morgan was a Baseball Hall of Famer, a two-time National League Most Valuable Player, and enjoyed a career playing for teams in Houston, Cincinnati, San Francisco, Philadelphia, and Oakland. He was also an Emmy-award winning broadcaster for ESPN. Morgan passed away in October 2020 but his legacy lives on at Cal State East Bay.

The legendary ballplayer created the Joe Morgan Endowed Scholarship, which provides financial support to undergraduate and graduate students majoring in kinesiology, or those seeking to become credentialed as physical education teachers. Morgan graduated in 1990 with a degree in physical education, and was awarded an honorary Doctorate of Humane

Letters by the California State University in 2008.

Morgan always believed in the importance of education.

"I've always felt that the quality of your life is directly related to the quality of your education," he said. "If you continue your education, I believe you'll continue to improve the quality of your life."

A man of actions as well as words, Morgan signed his first baseball contract only after promising his mother that he would earn his college degree. After his career in MLB drew to a close, Morgan fulfilled that promise two decades later, inspiring countless people with the story of his educational journey.

While a student at Cal State East Bay, Morgan, an Oakland native,

established his scholarship through conversations with Dr. Stanley Clark, former Kinesiology and Physical Education Department chair at Cal State East Bay. They connected while Morgan worked on his education degree, starting when he was still playing baseball. Both men had a shared history of growing up in Oakland and playing baseball there as young people. Morgan was a pioneer as a philanthropist to Cal State East Bay; in the 1980s, few people made major gifts to the campus to support students, and he was one of those who paved the way.

Morgan continued to build the scholarship endowment over the years, organizing golf tournaments that teamed people with celebrities such as Sidney Williams, former

*“I’ve always felt that the quality of your life is directly related to the quality of your education,” he said. “If you continue your education, I believe you’ll continue to improve the quality of your life.”*

— Joe Morgan, B.S. '90, Physical Education

NFL player and ambassador to the Bahamas under the Clinton administration.

Rita Liberti, professor of kinesiology, explained the impact of the scholarship.

“Like many of our students, the Joe Morgan scholarship winners’ paths to college aren’t always easy or unobstructed, making the aid from this award that much more significant in helping to transform students’ lives,” Liberti said. “Among the winners are nationally certified athletic trainers, successful coaches,

physical education teachers, physical therapists, fitness industry leaders, and several more who have either earned a Ph.D. or are well on their way to doing so in a variety of fields.”

Chris Kyriacou (B.S. '88, Physical Education) was one of the first recipients of the Joe Morgan Endowed Scholarship. He taught and coached baseball for 30 years at East Bay area high schools and is currently at Bishop O’Dowd High School in Oakland.

Kyriacou recalled, “The scholarship was huge for me. I was a kid from

Oakland and my mom raised me on her own. The Joe Morgan Endowed Scholarship helped me tremendously with books and transportation. The impact lasted even longer because Morgan set such an example in the ways he supported Oakland youth. He motivated me over the years to take those extra steps to help those I have coached, helping them find jobs and more. I now see those players, a few of them in major league baseball themselves, doing the same. Morgan’s example keeps being carried on.”

*(continued on page 4)*



Morgan converses with Cal State East Bay students.

## Joe Morgan

(continued from page 3)

Recipient LaRon McCoy (B.S. '16, Kinesiology) also explained the impact the scholarship had on him.

"I was in the classic situation. I had run out of financial aid and I had just one semester to go. The Joe Morgan Endowed Scholarship helped me get to the finish line of graduation."

Today, McCoy is giving back as an academic and enrichment counselor with Cal State East Bay's Sankofa Scholars program, which supports the retention and graduation of first-year, continuing, and transfer African-

American and Black-identifying students.

Erika Rodriguez (B.S. '20, Kinesiology) received the Joe Morgan Endowed Scholarship last year.

"Because of Dr. Morgan, I was able to obtain my degree," she said. "I was worrying about how I was going to pay for tuition, and the scholarship took a lot of my financial worries and stress away. I am very grateful and I will never forget this blessing."

Although Morgan passed away last year, his philanthropy will live on, with students continuing to receive support from the scholarship he endowed. More than 100 students

have received the Joe Morgan Endowed Scholarship since its creation.

Theresa Morgan said of her late husband, "Joe was raised by wonderful parents who valued education; he never took for granted how fortunate he was to be able to attend and receive his degree from Cal State East Bay. I also witnessed firsthand how much Joe loved helping all youths in as many ways as he could. Joe was generous and compassionate to so many kids. He always wanted to help them have a chance like he did."

*"I was in the classic situation. I had run out of financial aid and I had just one semester to go. The Joe Morgan Endowed Scholarship helped me get to the finish line of graduation."*

*LaRon McCoy (B.S. '16, Kinesiology)*



Left: Morgan as an ESPN commentator. Right: Morgan playing for the Cincinnati Reds.

# Philanthropy Begins Early

When it comes to giving back to Cal State East Bay, graduates might take years before deciding to donate to the university. For some more recent alumni, philanthropy begins much earlier.

Luke Valencia (B.S. '18, Biology) is a clinical laboratory scientist for Marshall Medical Center in Placerville. He recently created a student award for the biology department.

"I wanted to give back to where my passion in biology thrived and help students that may be in the same situation was in while at Cal State East Bay, searching and applying for awards as an undergraduate. I felt a need to give biology students an opportunity and goal that would acknowledge their dedication to the field," he said.

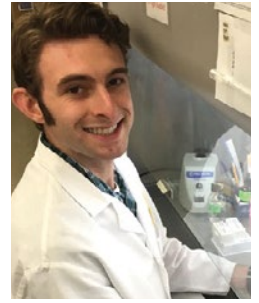
Another Pioneer giving back is Theodore Vuong (B.A. '17, Business Administration), who works as a correctional deputy sheriff for the Santa Clara County Sheriff's Office. Vuong established the Theodore Vuong Appreciating Meaningful Gratitude Scholarship to assist students pursuing studies in the educational psychology department.

"I constantly work with Licensed Marriage and Family Therapists and Licensed Clinical Social Workers assigned to our Mental Health Crisis team who assist inmates at our jail that experience mental illness or experience a moment of crisis," Vuong said. "I have a deep appreciation for the work

that our team of therapists and counselors do in assisting inmates in our jails and in our communities. Cal State East Bay has a graduate educational psychology program. This educational path of study was exactly where I wanted the scholarship to be targeted towards, for students looking to pursue careers in counseling, special education, and marriage and family therapy."

Additionally, Vuong wants to help those most vulnerable in the campus community: victims of a violent crime or those who experience a traumatic event. He created the Support Through Resiliency, Optimism, and Nurturing Growth (STRONG) Award to show students they are not alone and that alumni are supportive of their bravery and resilience in overcoming trauma.

"Besides the support this award will bring to someone in need, another goal for this award is to inspire others to take action in their communities and for causes they care for," Vuong said. "We do not need to make huge contributions to make a difference. Every bit of support helps."



Luke Valencia, '18



Theodore Vuong, '17

## ECMC Foundation Grant for East Bay College Agile Network

The East Bay College Agile Network, also known as East Bay CAN, is a partnership between Cal State East Bay and Chabot Las Positas Community College District



to increase transfer rates for students from CLPCCD to Cal State East Bay, as well as increase associate and bachelor degree completion in less time for historically underserved students.

The ECMC Foundation awarded a \$500,000 grant for East Bay CAN to implement a student support network redesign that will focus on developing dynamic scheduling to increase students' ability to enroll in needed courses at Cal State East Bay and Chabot and Las Positas colleges.

The network will create seamless degree/transfer pathways designed to meet students' educational goals; coordinate academic, transfer, and financial counseling across institutions to ensure students transfer in

*(continued on page 6)*

## East Bay CAN

(continued from page 5)

a timely manner and receive all available financial aid; and allow students to remain on their “home” campus while using resources, such as advising and student services, to accelerate degree completion.

Additionally, the partnership between East Bay CAN and CLPCCD

will share instruction through face-to-face and virtual modalities; grow the ability to leverage physical space and better use underutilized facilities; and share data across campuses to equip advisors with the information needed to provide proactive support and intervene when students veer off track.

The grant was the university’s first from the ECMC Foundation.

“Transfer pathways is a subject we are especially concerned with and, I believe, an area where philanthropy can have an outsized impact in terms of student success,” said Peter Taylor, president of the ECMC Foundation. “We are optimistic that Cal State East Bay’s relationship with local community colleges can serve as a model for other institutions, not only in California, but around the nation.”

## Construction Management Program Celebrates 10 Years



Cal State East Bay Professor Cristian Gaedicke speaks with several of his Construction Management students.

In 2009, the Cal State East Bay Construction Management program began with only six graduate students. Today, it is home to more than 200 undergraduate and graduate students, as well as four full-time professors and six part-time lecturers.

“The construction industry is the second largest industry in the United States, after healthcare”, said Dr. Farzad Shahbodaghlou, founding director of the Construction Management program at California State University East Bay. “We train our students to manage these mega-construction projects, which leads to internship opportunities and full-time employment after graduation.”

One reason the program has been so successful over the years is the partnership between the university and the Construction Employers’ Association, comprised of approximately 100 of the premier unionized contractors who perform building construction work in Northern California. CEA’s membership base performs more than \$10 billion in public and private construction volume annually, and it is the only organization whose sole purpose is to protect and promote the interests of the unionized commercial building construction industry in Northern California.

Since 2014, CEA has supported the Construction Management program

through student scholarships of \$1,000 which provide student ambassadors with stipends to mentor local high school students and support construction career fairs at Cal State East Bay twice a year, where students are recruited to work at various companies.

“I plan to go into the Construction Management field, and I have actually started working as a Project Engineer at Kaiser Permanente full-time prior to graduating,” said Alfredo Sanchez (B.S. ’21 Construction Management). “I have had an opportunity to intern at a few companies, and I am hoping this new venture will be my career company.”

*"This degree has influenced my life because it is the result of my dream as a woman in construction. The curriculum involved in my graduate degree constantly engaged me with its variety of activities and project involvements."*

**Karen Martinez, B.A. '19 Business Administration; '20 M.S. Construction Management**

Karen Martinez (B.A. '19 Business Administration; '20 M.S. Construction Management) explained, "This degree has influenced my life because it is the result of my dream as a woman in construction. The curriculum involved in my graduate degree constantly engaged me with its variety of activities and project involvements. I drove to various job sites, interacting with stakeholders. I have been involved with construction since I was 8-years-old. My father retired as a foreman and I saw his projects unfold before my eyes. I got my undergraduate degree in Business Administration, but that yearning to get back in construction never stopped. I could have pursued a MBA but I knew I would not be happy with it."

Martinez is currently working as a database support specialist supporting a project for the City of San Francisco through a large general

contractor. In the future, she plans to have her own construction firm and offer consulting services.

"This program, now in its 23rd year, is one of the most important ventures the Construction Employers' Association has undertaken," stated Committee Chairman Jerry Overaa, Chief Executive Officer of C. Overaa & Company, Richmond. "As the construction industry continues to expand, so does the need for qualified construction-oriented managers. Through these annual merit based grants to the targeted seven Northern California

programs where most of our members work, CEA has built strong partnerships with academic institutions as well as help prepare students for dynamic careers and leadership in the industry."



**Cal State East Bay Construction Management students work on a project during class.**

## Alumni Association Board Names Space in CORE Building



**Allen Kwan**

From trivia night to financial literacy workshops, the Alumni Association Board offers a variety of ways to keep Cal State

East Bay graduates connected to the university. Current students also benefit from the presence of the board, through its scholarship support and yearly donation to the Class Gift. Recently, the members of the board also made the decision to name a room in the CORE Building.

While hands-on learning opportunities and research have long been hallmarks of an education from Cal State East Bay, the CORE building will create a space for students to hone the soft skills they need to be competitive in today's world.

Allen Kwan (B.A. '04, Mass Communication), outgoing president

of the Alumni Association Board, said, "Many of us on the board spent time crossing through the area where the new CORE building is being built during our time on campus. The CORE building represents the future heart of our campus, it will be the place where students gather, we innovate, and the community comes to learn about the campus. We were motivated to invest in the building, because we recognize how important it is to the university's success in attracting students and providing a unique, modern space to connect with alumni and the community."

# New Support for Business Students During College's 50th Anniversary Year

Business was one of the first two majors offered at Cal State East Bay when the university was founded in 1959 as the State College for Alameda County, and Business has continued to be one of the university's most popular majors. A milestone in university history was reached in 1970, when a School of Business and Economics was created to house the expanding business programs at what was then called California State College at Hayward. Five decades later, with a name change from "School" to "College of Business and Economics," the continued success of the university's business graduates is widely recognized.

This year, the College of Business and Economics is celebrating the 50th anniversary of its creation as a school and the deep impact of Cal State East Bay/Hayward business education on our alumni and the surrounding community. The college introduced a new brand expression, "Empowering Tomorrow-makers," and an effort to discover and tell important stories about CBE's history and impact.

In October 2020, an anniversary celebration took place online, hosted by Emmy Award-winning comedy writer J.R. Havlan (BS '87 Business Administration), including an interview with trustee and philanthropist Jack Acosta (MBA '78, BS '75 Business Administration) and a panel of entrepreneurs. Acosta shared a key reason he supports the university.

"Giving someone the opportunity to achieve their dreams, their goals, was always important to me. That's why I got involved, that's why I'm still involved."

Visit [csueastbay.edu/cbe/50th-anniversary](http://csueastbay.edu/cbe/50th-anniversary) to view the historic timeline, view segments of the celebration, and scan the collection of anniversary stories.

During this anniversary year, alumni, faculty, emeriti, staff, and friends have joined forces to support business students through several new scholarships and programs, described below.

## DEAN JAY TONTZ MEMORIAL AWARD FOR INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS EXPERIENCES

Dr. Jay Logan Tontz is celebrated as the longest-serving dean of CBE, holding the position for 30 of CBE's 50 years (1973 to 2003). He is recognized for developing innovative programs and leading the significant growth of the college. Under his leadership, CBE gained a local, national, and international reputation for quality and innovation and established programs in Moscow, Russia; Vienna, Austria;

Hong Kong; Beijing; and Singapore. He was also a frequent and popular public speaker on the topic of economic forecasting and international executive development programs.

To help recognize the achievements of Dean Tontz, the college's Innovative Teaching Award was renamed in his honor and a challenge campaign to create a new student award was launched by former CBE Dean George Low. Once it is fully funded, the Dean Jay Tontz Memorial Award for International Business Experiences will encourage Business students to expand their practical knowledge of business by supporting the costs of their participation in a Business-oriented study abroad program, or an internship with a company outside the United States. Eligible expenses may include travel to or from the international program, lodging abroad, or program tuition.



Dr. Jay Logan Tontz

## MICHAEL D. LOVE MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP

Since the university's first days, deep friendships and even love have flourished on campus. Sandy and Michael Love are among the alumni who met on campus, fell in love and tied the knot. In honor of the 50th anniversary of Michael Love's graduation from Cal State Hayward in 1970, Sandy has created the Michael D. Love Memorial Scholarship in Accounting. This endowed scholarship will last in perpetuity and aid



Michael and Sandy Love

students for generations to come, growing slowly over time while supporting an annual scholarship.

After his graduation, Michael Love pursued work as an accountant, secured his CPA license and opened his own accounting practice serving small,



local businesses and income tax clients. He also served in the United States Air Force Reserves. He was active in the Livermore Valley Rotary Club and loved all sports. Mike enjoyed the Olympic Games and was honored to be an Olympic Torchbearer—twice. Sadly, after a three-year battle against cancer, Michael Love passed away in 2015.

Sandy Love established the scholarship in Mike's memory "to help accounting students reach their goals of graduating to pursue successful business careers," she said. "I believe Michael would be proud to know that he is helping accounting students to reach their academic goals."

### DELTA SIGMA PI SCHOLARSHIP



Nigel H. Winsor - 1964



Nigel H. Winsor - 2018

Back in 1964, Nigel H. Winsor joined with classmates to co-found the Zeta Tau chapter of the Delta Sigma Pi business fraternity at Cal State Hayward. Now the only co-ed professional business fraternity at Cal State East Bay, Delta Sigma Pi guides and shapes students into strong leaders and professionals.

As originally founded, the chapter is not only dedicated to business, but also to academic studies, community service, social events, and other extracurricular activities that help students prosper as individuals. Delta Sigma Pi has always believed in giving access to higher education for students of all income levels. Back in the 1960s, Delta Sigma Pi sponsored a scholarship for a student in the Business-Economics Division each quarter. The scholarship was a \$50 award for achieving a satisfactory 2.5 GPA and outstanding participation in furthering the organization's activities.

"I'm so proud of the fraternity we started, which continues to influence students on today's campus," said Nigel Winsor.



As CBE celebrates its 50th anniversary, Nigel decided to give back to Delta Sigma Pi Zeta Tau by creating a scholarship endowment for his student brothers (the fraternity is now co-ed, but the term "brother" is used for all members, no matter the gender).

He will match any donation up to \$25,000 to make this scholarship endowment a reality. Thanks to the chapter founders, Delta Sigma Pi Zeta Tau has fostered leadership experiences and friendships for over 450 students since it was founded on campus. Now Nigel's significant challenge provides an opportunity to help one or more active DSP "brothers" every year who are struggling with the cost of college.

### WOMEN AND THE GENDER GAP

A recent study conducted by McKinsey & Company and Lean In found that while women enter the corporate workforce in almost equal numbers as men, only 22 percent of C-suite executives are female, and only 4 percent are women of color. Moreover, women are less likely to be promoted. Only 85 women are promoted for every 100 men. The rate is even lower for women of color—just 58 Black women for every 100.

The newly launched Women in Leadership program in the College of Business and Economics is focused on creating gender equity in the workplace and empowering a new generation of women leaders from diverse backgrounds serving the San Francisco Bay Area and beyond. The new program will reduce the gender gap through mentoring, training, and leadership projects, as well as empower women to be future leaders and trailblazing entrepreneurs.

"Our goal is to empower a new generation of leaders by giving our students the support, training, and network they need to rise," said Dr. Asha Rao, program director.

Highlights of the program this year include the selection of 10 WIL fellows, who receive 1:1 mentorship by an industry executive and complete a social impact project; 70 students enrolled in two WIL courses, one for undergraduates and one for graduate students; more than two dozen executives involved as guest speakers (with many talks open to alumni too); and the offer of a \$20,000 challenge grant from an anonymous donor to help encourage support for the program.

To learn more about WIL or attend a future event, visit the WIL website at [www.csueastbay.edu/management/women-in-leadership](http://www.csueastbay.edu/management/women-in-leadership).

To add your support to one of the challenges or to create your own scholarship in the College of Business and Economics, contact Penny Peak, director of development, at (510) 885-4156 or [penny.peak@csueastbay.edu](mailto:penny.peak@csueastbay.edu).



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DECEMBER 3, 2019

#GIVINGTUESDAY

and faculty greatly appreciate your support, especially during the pandemic. Mark your calendars for this year's #GivingTuesday, happening November 30, 2021.

In December 2020, Cal State East Bay participated in its third #GivingTuesday, a global annual day of philanthropy. Despite—or maybe because of—the pandemic, donors were particularly generous to the university, giving to dozens of programs across campus. Here are highlights of five areas that benefited from #GivingTuesday.

**PRESIDENTIAL PIONEERS EMERGENCY FUND**

The largest amount raised on #GivingTuesday supported students' needs during the pandemic. The Presidential Pioneers Emergency Fund is an intervention program created to provide immediate relief to our most at-risk students facing homelessness and food insecurity, as well as unexpected health and childcare expenses. Since most Cal State East Bay classes were online this academic year, it also provided access to laptops and reliable Wi-Fi, crucial pieces to successful learning. (See cover story for more about the Presidential Pioneers Emergency Fund.)

**CBE DEAN'S INNOVATION FUND**

Donors showed their support for innovation with gifts to the College of Business and Economics Dean's Innovation Fund, which provides seed money to launch innovative ideas in teaching, research, and the business community. Funds have been used for the Women in Leadership pilot program and travel costs for a team of MBA students and faculty members to compete in a prestigious international investment strategy contest.

**GREEN BIOME INSTITUTE**

Donations to the Green Biome Institute allow students and faculty to advance knowledge of endangered California plants, unlocking their



possible human and other benefits through hands-on research opportunities. The institute is creating molecular and chemical profiles of 235 California endangered plant species while promoting conservation through a germplasm bank, and will be a centerpiece in the forthcoming Applied Sciences Center.

**PIONEER ATHLETICS CLUB**

The Pioneer Athletics Club supports Cal State East Bay student-athletes by closing the scholarship gap and funding a successful and broad-based program. Student-athlete scholarships provide tomorrow's community leaders with the important support they need to be successful, allowing them more time to dedicate to their studies and sports.



**WOMEN'S SWIMMING**

While the women's swimming team hasn't competed this year due to the pandemic, the team is no stranger to fundraising. Support from this year's efforts will purchase training equipment, provide more training opportunities and future team trips, as well as new swim parkas for our athletes.

**THANK YOU** to all the donors who made this year's #GivingTuesday our best yet. The students, staff,

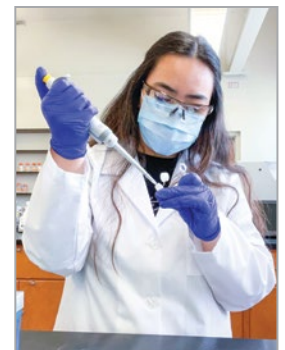


**SAVE THE DATE**  
**11.30.21**

**STUDENT RESEARCH ASSISTANT PROGRAM**

#GivingTuesday donors also supported the Student Research Assistant Program, which helps students gain first-hand experience while partnering with faculty on research projects. The program equips students with the skills that help them be competitive in the STEM job market and helps students achieve the self-confidence to see themselves as scientists. Donations fund students' tuition and expenses, providing them more dedicated time to work directly in their fields.

There are currently 20 student research assistant positions at Cal State East Bay. Our students are researching various projects, like how the trust method in mathematics is used in real life applications; the medicinal properties of 10 endangered species of manzanita; and the development of a dark matter detector and readout electronics.



# Support for Renaissance Scholars

According to Foster Care to Success, fewer than 10 percent of foster youth earn a college degree. Meanwhile, the Human Rights Watch estimates that approximately 20 percent of foster youth transitioning from care in California will find themselves homeless.

To combat these challenges and to reduce the barriers of earning a college degree for recently emancipated foster youth, the Renaissance Scholars Program was established in 2006. Additionally, a scholarship specific to the program was created to help former foster youth pay for tuition and other out-of-pocket expenses in attending Cal State East Bay.

"We wanted to make sure that not only students' needs for academic support were met, but also their social, emotional, financial and health needs," said Dr. Jodi Servatius, faculty emerita and member of the Renaissance Scholars advisory board. "We realized that there were many kinds of help that typical students look to their parents to assist with, and that this was a group that didn't have that as an option."

Myra Drouillard (MA '19 History) said, "I read about the students in the foster care system who come of age and do not have the security of family or resources that other students have. These students within the program are resilient, dedicated, determined, and deserve resources that will help them achieve their goals. This program is ideal for these scholars and I wanted to help our students within this program. As a Cal State East Bay employee and a Pioneer, I chose to give through payroll deduction, as it was the best way I could help in the long term, and it allowed me to make additional donations whenever something came up that the students needed assistance with."

Another donor to the Renaissance Scholars Program, Karen Long, explained, "I am a retired high school counselor. I heard about the program from a friend and arranged a meeting. I was very impressed with the students, the quality of the Renaissance program, and how essential it was for foster students to have this additional support to succeed."

Long's experience with the Renaissance Scholars program and its students inspired her to create an endowed scholarship.

"I hope that the endowed scholarship will provide funds for the foster students in the program so they have more

time to study and have to work less or borrow less," she said. "I simply wanted to give back some support to a few richly deserving students who have overcome a variety of hardships to graduate from high school and attend a university."

Support for Renaissance Scholars also comes from The Power to Soar Foundation, an organization focused on supporting youth in four-year colleges and universities.

"The Renaissance Scholars Program is well-run with a similar vision and passion to ours," said Vimal Srivastava, who created the foundation. "We see ourselves partnering with Cal State East Bay to support foster youth for many years to come."

The dedication of these advisory board members, donors, and foundation members is having a profound effect on Renaissance Scholars. Despite the drastic changes our world has seen over the past year, former foster youth at Cal State East Bay remain resilient and determined. Seventy-eight percent of first, second and third-year Renaissance Scholars students from 2019 enrolled again in Fall 2020. They graduate at rates higher than those who do not participate in support programs. Since its inception, the Renaissance Scholars Program has served more than 140 students who have gone on to be successful entrepreneurs, educators, nurses, social workers, and lobbyists.

"I know from many years of being a professor and an administrator at Cal State East Bay that there are strict limits on what state funds can be used for," explained Servatius. "We cannot use taxpayer dollars to buy new eyeglasses for a student, provide emergency cash for a car repair, or help with food assistance. However, these are exactly the kinds of needs that students have, and that parents often provide. My sense was that, if we could find donors and sponsors, we could really provide for their needs while, at the same time, we lift them up, let them know we believe in them, ease their burdens and encourage them in their studies."

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*To learn more about the Renaissance Scholars Program, or to make a donation, please contact Val Schutz, Senior director of corporate and foundation relations, at [valerie.schutz@csueastbay.edu](mailto:valerie.schutz@csueastbay.edu).*

*"We wanted to make sure that not only students' needs for academic support were met, but also their social, emotional, financial and health needs"*

*Dr. Jodi Servatius, faculty emerita and member of the Renaissance Scholars advisory board*

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CAL STATE EAST BAY

## BECAUSE OF YOU

VOLUME 2, NO. 1 • SPRING 2021

*"...Our creative solution of a Car-mencement ceremony was so well-received by our graduates and we enjoyed celebrating their achievements in this unique way."*

— Cathy Sandeen, President, Cal State East Bay

### Car-mencement a Success!

Cal State East Bay celebrated the accomplishments of its 2021 graduating class in May with a Car-mencement ceremony. Graduates adorned in black commencement robes, and sporting decorated caps and leis arrived in decorated cars filled with family and friends. They crossed a staged area in front of the university's monument letters while their names were recognized via loudspeaker.

Cal State East Bay President Cathy Sandeen said the event was a chance for the university to celebrate this milestone while keeping the health and safety of graduates in mind.

"Earning a degree from Cal State East Bay is life-changing for our students and their entire families," she said. "While we would have loved to honor them with our traditional in-person event ... it was just not yet safe to have a large event in Pioneer Stadium. Our creative solution of a Car-mencement ceremony was so well-received by our graduates and we enjoyed celebrating their achievements in this unique way."



Cal State East Bay celebrated the accomplishments of its 2020 and 2021 graduating classes.