

**UNIVERSITY STUDENT UNION  
CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, NORTHRIDGE  
BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

**September 15, 2025 – Grand Salon**

**I. Call to Order**

The regular meeting of the USU Board of Directors was called to order at 12:37 p.m. by Chair Sabah.

**II. Roll Call**

<b>Present</b>	<b>Absent</b>	<b>Staff</b>	<b>Guests</b>
Alejandro Perez	Dr. Freddie Sanchez	Alejandra Aparicio	Mahima Adey
Alexia Aguilar		Ani Davtyan	Jackie Richman*
Alvaro Geminiano Aragon (A.S. Liaison)		Audrey Martinez	Cicely Kang*
Cameron Gonzalez		Janessa Reyes	Jordan Cote*
Cecilia Ortiz		Jenny Aw	
Cesar Rosales		Jeremy Hamlett	
Dr. Edith Winterhalter		Joseph Illuminate	
Joaquin Macias		Kristen Pichler	
Heet Patel		Lara Shaghoian	
Honey Modi		Natalie Johnson	
Karim Kouatly		Ryan Hairapetian	
Dr. Mirna Sawyer		Samantha Liu	
Nawshin Sabah		Sharon Kinard	
Rudy Granillo		Shelley Sakoda	
Steven Wang		Steven Wein	
Vyom Pathak		Dr. Tari Hunter	
		Tim Rasmussen	

*\*TEAMS video participant*

**III. Approval of Agenda**

M/S/P (K. Kouatly / V. Pathak) Motion to approve the agenda for September 15, 2025.

***Motion passed 12-0-0.***

**IV. Approval of Minutes 08/25/2025**

M/S/P (R. Granillo / H. Modi) Motion to approve the minutes for August 25, 2025.

***Motion passed 12-0-0.***

**V. Open Forum**

There were no participants for Open Forum.

## **VI. Chair's Report**

Chair Sabah wished everyone a good start to the semester, engaging with the multiple resources and events taking place on campus, as well as a productive couple of weeks in Non-Student Directors' respective roles. She expressed optimism for the year ahead and hoped for a smooth committee recruitment. Chair Sabah ended her report by announcing new Student Representative appointments: Director Aguilar will serve on the Food Advisory Committee and Director Gonzalez will serve on the Campus Quality Fee Advisory Committee.

## **VII. Vice Chair's Report**

Vice Chair Granillo started his report by acknowledging that Directors are likely concluding their committee interviews and expressed excitement toward their selections. Vice Chair Granillo reminded everyone that he and Chair Sabah are there for support. The Social Justice Scholarship Committee completed and finalized its process. Winners will be announced at the Cultural Welcomes. The Internal Review Ad Hoc Committee and Retirement Plan Committee updates were saved for Committee Reports.

## **VIII. Executive Director's Report**

Director Ortiz opened her report by thanking the team and volunteers for their contributions to Matador Nights. There were 2,751 admitted students, an increase from the prior year. She further highlighted the event's main attractions and activities, including a 360-degree photobooth sponsored by Associated Students (A.S.), and thanked California State University, San Bernardino's (CSUSB) programs team for attending. Director Ortiz announced the open recruitment for the Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Supervisor and Director, Student Recreation Center; Rolando Cabral and Samantha Barraza accepted new appointments. The Games Room billiards tables were re-felted with new tournament quality cloth, and USU Marketing assisted with inviting door wraps on both entrances.

## **IX. A.S. Report**

Associated Students (A.S.) Vice President Geminiano Aragon reported on matters involving A.S. Senate, cross-campus collaborations, and programs and events. A.S. Senate approved four new appointments and the Audit Committee, as well as learned about CSUN's immigration enforcement resources. A.S. Vice President Geminiano Aragon attended various meetings, including one with former TRIO SSS Director Carina Alvarado, one with the Pride Center, and another for the California State Student Association's Central Engagement. A.S. organized Welcome Week outreach events, Sports-a-Palooza, Movie Night, Pimp My Ride (Clean Air Day), and Thursday Thrift. Big Show will be on October 11 featuring Galantis; tickets are available at the A.S. Ticket Office. Other upcoming events included the Mental Health Awareness Fair, Point Magu State Park Day Hike, and Learn to Surf Workshop. Additionally, A.S. Sport Clubs tryout season has commenced. A.S. Vice President Geminiano Aragon closed his report with openness to continue collaborating with the USU to empower CSUN students.

## **X. Committee Reports**

### **A. Diversity & Inclusion**

Director Rosales and Director Gonzalez have worked with their executive team, discussing potential plans and ideas for the upcoming year. Their committee meetings have been established bi-weekly on Tuesdays from 2:45 to 3:45 p.m. They are concluding committee member interviews and plan to make decisions soon. He ended his report with excitement for the beginning of the semester.

## **B. Facilities & Operations**

Director Patel shared that the committee will conduct regular meetings on Fridays between 9:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. They have finalized their roster and aim to hold committee training on September 19 with their first meeting on September 26.

## **C. Finance**

Director Modi reported no significant updates. The committee currently has three active members but is still open to more members. Orientation will be on September 19 to train new and current members on the committee.

A.S. Vice President Geminiano Aragon left at 1:10 p.m.

## **D. Personnel**

Director Aguilar shared that the committee has finalized four committee members. Their meeting schedule is as follows: October 13, November 10, and December 8 from 12:30 to 2:00 p.m.

## **E. Retirement**

Vice Chair Granillo reported that the committee is preparing for its first meeting of the year on September 26 at 2:30 p.m.

## **F. Internal Review**

Vice Chair Granillo stated that the committee has not been able to meet quorum for the last two meetings but held an informal meeting on September 5. Director Kouatly will be joining as another BOD representative. Vice Chair Granillo intends to recruit two more representatives to the committee. He concluded his report by extending the invitation for Board members to participate in the Committee Code review process.

## **XI. Action Items**

### **A. Acceptance of the 2024-2025 Financial Audit Report**

Motion out of the Audit Committee to accept the 2024-2025 Financial Audit Report prepared by CohnReznick LLP.

Associate Director, Accounting and Finance Joe Illuminate shared his gratitude toward his partners at CohnReznick and his team before introducing Jackie Richman, Cicely Kang, and Jordan Cote to present the document. CohnReznick has prepared the audit report for the ninth consecutive year. CohnReznick has issued an unmodified opinion which is the best opinion that an audit firm can issue to its client. CohnReznick did not report any negative findings.

Director Winterhalter and Director Ortiz thanked J. Illuminate, the Accounting and Finance Department, CohnReznick partners, and all other departments involved for their work toward another smooth audit.

Director Macias joined at 12:45 p.m.

***Motion passed 13-0-0.***

### **B. New Regular (Staff) Employment Position**

M/S/P (K. Kouatly / C. Rosales) Motion to approve the new Regular position of Facility & Guest Services Coordinator – The Valera NEST.

The Valera NEST, the first of its kind of resource center in the CSU system to provide basic needs services to students in a centralized location, is scheduled to open in Spring 2026. A new full-time, benefitted staff position is being proposed to oversee daily operations, manage facilities,

coordinate logistics, ensure service standards, and supervise USU information desk operations and staffing. If approved, position recruitment will begin this fall.

Associate Director, Human Resources and Professional Development Kristen Pichler fielded some questions from the Board. K. Pichler clarified that this position is comparable to other USU Coordinator roles, and while the terminology might vary, other campuses have equivalent positions to support the role's qualifications. Funding for this position was accounted for in the annual operating budget. Due to the Federal Standard Labor Act (FSLA), all USU Coordinators, including this position, are non-exempt.

Director Sawyer joined at 1:17 p.m.

***Motion passed 14-0-0.***

### **C. 2025-2026 Board of Directors (BOD) Goals**

M/S/P (C. Rosales / A. Perez) Motion to approve the USU BOD Goals for the 2025-2026 academic year.

The Board of Directors participated in a review of the organization's strategic priorities and engaged in goal-setting discussions during the BOD summer retreat, as well as the July and August 2025 BOD meetings. These sessions included brainstorming, refinement, and alignment with the USU Strategic Plan. Chair Sabah and Vice Chair Granillo presented the two goals, as well as each outcome, target population, metric/level of expectation, methods of assessment and timeline. The proposed goals were as follows:

Goal 1: Enhance the Board of Directors' internal governance framework to ensure strong, transparent, and effective operations.

Goal 2: The BOD will enhance visibility, access, and belonging by expanding awareness of USU spaces and services and positioning the USU as a central, inclusive hub that benefits all students.

The Board engaged in some thoughtful questions about target audience, the continuing Internal Review Ad Hoc Committee, and the new Visibility and Engagement Ad Hoc Committee. It is likely that the work from the new ad hoc committee will continue with the next Board.

***Motion passed 14-0-0.***

### **XII. Discussion Items**

There were no Discussion Items.

### **XIII. Announcements**

Director Patel will be out of the country from December 26 to January 5 and will try to attend the BOD meeting on January 26.

Vice Chair Granillo encouraged Directors to take advantage of the multiple conference opportunities available to enhance career development.

Director Sawyer announced that Sangha at CSUN's Mindful Practice Group will be meeting on Thursdays from 12:00 to 1:00 p.m. in Room UL 3 of the University Library, which will feature Oasis Wellness Center Manager Condor as one of the facilitators. A flyer was passed around.

Associate Director, Operations and Services Samantha Liu shared that the ribbon-cutting of The Valera NEST has changed from February 6 to February 27. An official invitation will be shared closer to the date, as well as details on a tour for the Board.

Director Ortiz announced that the Oasis Wellness Center will be celebrating its 10-year anniversary on November 5. More information to come.

Chair Sabah and Vice Chair Granillo shared information and deadlines for the upcoming Association of College Unions International (ACUI) Region I Conference and Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities (HACU) Annual Conference. In case any of the Directors miss either of these opportunities, there will be a chance to go to the ACUI Annual Conference this winter.

Chair Sabah reminded Directors about BOD training on September 22 from 12:30-2:30 p.m. and highly encouraged them to volunteer to table at the Cultural Welcomes, as part of the new BOD goals.

#### **XIV. Adjournment**

Chair Sabah adjourned the meeting at 1:36 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by,



Cecilia Ortiz,  
Executive Director