

**UNIVERSITY STUDENT UNION
CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, NORTHRIDGE
BOARD OF DIRECTORS
DECEMBER 2, 2024 – NORTHRIDGE CENTER**

I. Call to Order

The regular meeting of the USU Board of Directors was called to order at 12:34 p.m. by Chair Lopez.

II. Roll Call

Present	Absent	Staff	Guests
Mishell De Leon	Rudy Granillo	Alejandra Aparicio	Jason Wang
Nawshin Sabah		Allen Schentrup	Jasmin Zesati
Debra Hammond		Audrey Martinez	Katie Karroum
Nidharsh Kempegowda		Christina Leon	
Iman Khan (A.S. Liaison)		Christine Aratounians	
Daniel Lopez		Janessa Reyes	
Joaquin Macias		Jenny Aw	
Devaansh Mann		Jeremy Hamlett	
Marilyn Orantes		John Eduard	
Heet Patel		Joseph Illuminate	
Vyom Pathak		Kristen Pichler	
Nataly Pelaez		Luis Hernandez	
Dr. Freddie Sanchez		Magdalena Sanchez	
Dr. Mirna Sawyer		Malahat Zhobin	
Steven Wang		Natalie Johnson	
Dr. Edith Winterhalter		Ryan Hairapetian	
		Samantha Liu	
		Shaina Olmedo	
		Sharon S. Kinard	
		Shelley Sakoda	
		Steven Wein	
		Tari Hunter	
		Tim Rasmussen	

* TEAMS video participant

III. Approval of Agenda

M/S/P (D. Mann / N. Sabah) Motion to approve the agenda for December 2, 2024.

Motion passed 14-0-0.

IV. Approval of Minutes 11/18/2024

M/S/P (D. Mann / H. Patel) Motion to approve the minutes for November 18, 2024.

Motion passed 14-0-0.

V. Action Items

A. Fire Alarm Monitoring System Capital Outlay Request

Motion out of the Finance Committee to recommend the approval of the Re-Allocation of \$13,665 from the Games Room Pool Table Capital Outlay item to the Fire Alarm Monitoring System Capital Outlay item.

The Board previously approved an allocation of \$85,649 for the Fire Alarm Monitoring System. The current quotation for the Fire Alarm Monitoring System is \$99,314, leaving a deficit of \$13,665. The increase in the budget is due to the necessity to upgrade the software that was included in the original quotation so that the software is compatible with the vendor's current workstation. The Games Room pool tables were purchased in 2023-2024, allowing for available funds to be re-allocated to the Fire Alarm Monitoring System. In a response to Director Wang's inquiry, Director Pathak confirmed that there is no need for hardware updates at this time, just a software update.

Motion passed 14-0-0.

B. 2024-2025 First Quarter (3&9) Budget Report

M/S/P (S. Wang / J. Macias) Motion to approve the 2024-2025 First Quarter (3&9) Budget Report.

The purpose of this report is to summarize the financial results of the USU for the three-month period ending on September 30, 2024. The optimal operating range is 25% of the annual budget, although limits from 20% to 30% are acceptable.

Due to a technical glitch in the accounting system, the Accounting and Finance Department was unable to access key accounting data until the first week of November 2024, causing a delay in preparing the quarterly report.

The Statement of Activities does not include any budget modifications that were discussed in the budget meetings with department managers. Due to the technical glitch, those modifications will be reported in the October 2024 Statement of Activities. All Revenue and Expenditure categories are within the operating range as of September 30, 2024: 26.5% Revenue, 23.6% Salaries and Wages, 25.2% Employee Benefits, and 23.4% Operating Expenditures. The Change in Net Assets is a deficit of \$304,946, which is due to a planned and scheduled cash transfer to the Valera NEST Construction Fund. November 2024 will likely show a surplus of the Change in Net Assets.

The Statement of Financial Position reflected \$10,863,178 total assets of which \$9,885,522 is liquid cash. There are \$2,121,766 total liabilities of which \$754,217 is the liability to pay for projected medical expenses of current and future USU employees, who are eligible for the Retirement Health Benefits Plan (RHBP). There is \$8,741,412 in Total Net Assets.

The Investment Summary reflected \$922 of total investment income of which \$23 is from the USU's investment in the Capital Preservation Fund and \$899 from its investment in the U.S. Treasury Cash Reserves Fund at Farmers & Merchants Bank. The Consolidated Investment Pool received about \$247,000 in investment income in October 2024.

There were no Unallocated Reserves recorded in the first quarter. However, the Finance Committee anticipated that there will be sufficient Unallocated Reserves to fund additional expenditures that were not planned in the 2024-2025 budget because budget managers have returned funds to the organizations during the 3&9 budget process.

The 2024-2025 approved budget for Designated Reserves is \$597,458. A total of \$29,257 was transferred to the Operating Budget during the first quarter, leaving a balance of \$568,201, for employee vacation advances and the corresponding employer-paid payroll taxes.

The Capital Outlay budget is \$189,095. The only activity that took place during the first quarter was a \$6,503 re-allocation of funds from the Games Room Pool Table line item to the ADA Chair for the Plaza Pool due to the increase in price of the ADA Pool Chair.

The total Foundation cash balance is \$769,980 of which \$151,238 is restricted and \$618,752 is unrestricted.

The USU has not yet received any Work Study Funds. There were \$737.60 in expenditure. The first receipt of Work Study funding occurred in October 2024.

Motion passed 14-0-0.

C. New Staff Position

Motion out of the Personnel Committee to recommend the approval of the new staff position of Wellness Supervisor.

Due to the growth and development of the Oasis Wellness Center, staff is recommending a full-time Wellness Center Supervisor (staff) position that will assist the Manager in the day-to-day operation. The DREAM Center, Pride Center, and Veterans Resource Center are currently staffed by full-time Managers and Supervisors, as well as part-time student workers. Creating a second staff position for the Oasis Wellness Center provides a greater depth of staffing and support for the Wellness Manager. In response to Director Winterhalter's inquiry, Director Sabah confirmed that the funds for this role were already included in the 2024-2025 budget.

Motion passed 14-0-0.

D. USU Renovation and Expansion Project

M/S/P (D. Mann / V. Pathak) Motion to approve the USU Renovation and Expansion Project.

Recommendation to approve the re-imagining of the renovation and expansion project; specifically, to replace the Southwest Addition building with a new "gateway" building, while remaining within the previously approved \$125 per semester fee.

Each CSUN student pays Mandatory Category II fees per semester which go toward 6 major areas. The percentage for 2023-2024 are as follows: \$153.64 (24%) to Student Recreation Center, \$146.82 (23%) to Programs and Services, \$111.39 (18%) to Bond Payments, \$103.40 (16%) to Supporting Services, \$67.62 (11%) to New Project Expenditures, and \$49.12 (8%) to Major Repair and Replacement.

The USU and current students the table for future students by renovating and expanding facilities, programs, and services to meet their needs. Some examples include the USU Renovation (2006), Student Recreation Center (2012), the Resource Centers (2012-2020), Oasis Wellness Center (2015), Esports and Games Room (2021), and Valera NEST (2025-2026).

In 2019, the students of CSUN voted yes to increase USU fees by \$125 per semester to fund The New Heart of Campus. However, due to the impact of COVID-19 and its impact on construction costs, interest rates, and enrollment, design was paused in 2020. The design resumed in 2021 but was reimagined to include the concept of a Basic Needs Suite in the project. In 2023, the USU rolled out a campus wide survey to determine and assess the needs of students that the USU could fulfill, receiving 12.9% total responses. When students were asked what they wanted to see improved in

the USU, they emphasized support for the Basic Needs Suite, the benefits of branding and wayfinding, centralized resource centers (Rise Center concept), desire for more variety in dining options and food preparation stations, and desire for more seating options with charging capabilities.

The USU conducted additional student engagements in 2024 about the Valera NEST, future plans, and graduated fee implementation schedule. The additional engagement generated 6,426 direct impressions from talking directly to students at events, survey responses, unique webpage views, and unique QR code scans. It also resulted in 68,736 impressions, including total event attendance, social media reach, banner and signage views, total webpage sessions, and total QR code scans. The plan was shared with Associated Students, Campus Fee Advisory Committee, President Beck, and CSU Business and Finance.

Previously, the Board approved the \$125 per semester fee increase to be applied over four years instead of taking place all at once, providing a manageable fee increase schedule for students. This fee increase schedule was similar to the USU fee schedule used for the opening of the Student Recreation Center in 2012.

Construction of the Valera NEST also began this year with an anticipated opening in 2025-2026. The Space Utilization process provided the team with an opportunity to examine all options involving current facilities and existing spaces to determine how to provide the most to students, while abiding by the 2019 student fee referendum. Two new options were presented: 1) The renovation of the Sol Center 2) The replacement of the Southwest Addition.

Between the Sol Center and Southwest Addition options, the USU would still deliver on the primary goals, such as more indoor and outdoor seating areas, the Rise Center, enhanced food options, and more lounge and study spaces. Along this examination process, the team identified two new concepts from student feedback: 1) Inclusion Quad, a programmable outdoor space to support the convergence of activities of the Inclusion Neighborhood 2) Valera NEST, containing the Food Pantry, Matty's Closet, Basic Needs Department, and the Community Kitchen.

The new Southwest Addition replacement would be three levels. The first floor would contain food service, such as a new hot food venue and dining space with 389 seats. The second floor would contain offices for Associated Students (A.S.) and Matador Involvement Center (MIC), as well as lounge and meeting spaces. The third floor would contain the Rise Center: DREAM Center, Pride Center, Veterans Resource Center, and Women's Research and Resource Center. The new building would serve as a gateway that connects the east and west sides of campus and provides a clear entrance into the USU from the west.

This project aligns with the direction of the rest of current and upcoming campus developments, such as the Matador Success and Inclusion Center (MSIC), Autodesk Technology Engagement Center, Inclusion Quad, Sustainability Center, Matador Square, and Marilyn Magaram Center for Food Science, Nutrition and Dietetics. The USU will adhere to CSUN's sustainability mandate on replacing a tree for every tree that is displaced.

The USU is currently in the test fit phase and confirmed that existing spaces and entity needs to fit within a 40,000 to 45,000 square foot facility. Because the construction market is still volatile, the Design Build Process was recommended due to its reliability in bringing projects in on time and within budget. The project's anticipated completion date would be in 2029.

Director Sanchez asked Associate Director, Operations & Services, Samantha Liu to share why the Southwest Addition was considered. Samantha stated that one of the challenges with the building was that it was built in 1994, so the waterproofing on the facade was failing, causing major leak issues. As the team assessed options through the Space Utilization process, they found that

demolishing the building and developing a new one would save more money than replacing the facade on the exterior of the building.

In a response to Director's Sawyer's question about the Sol Center and MIC's current space, Samantha said that the space would be utilized by Student Development and Transitional Development Programs, which is currently housed in the Southwest Addition.

In a response to Director Macias' inquiry, part of the Design Build Process entails the contractors and architects, who bid on the project would present a constructable design and the planning committee could choose which design best meets the outlined criteria and objectives of the project. The actual shape of the building will be discussed during that process. Also, the Grand Salon would not connect to the new Southwest Addition building due to code issues.

Director Patel asked what will replace the current spaces that house the Resource Centers? Samantha stated that the Veterans Resource Center would be renovated to serve future initiatives and needs of students; the Marketing Department will move into the space that currently houses the Pride Center; A.S. IT will move from the Mercantile into the space that currently houses the DREAM Center.

In a response to Director Kempegowda, Samantha confirmed that the \$3 inflation will go into effect, on top of the existing \$5 inflation factor, in 2028-2029.

In response to Director Kempegowda's follow-up question, Director Hammond said that the inflation factor was not allowed to be tied to Consumer Price Index (CPI) or Higher Education Price Index (HEPI), so the USU came up with a flat dollar amount, which was included in the referendum. Inflation factors can now be tied to a specific index as long as they are outlined specifically in the referendum language.

Director Mann left the room at 1:15 p.m.

Motion passed 13-0-0.

Director Mann returned at 1:20 p.m. Director Hammond left the room under personal privilege at 1:22 p.m.

E. Executive Director Retirement-Honoring Budget

M/S/P (J. Macias / N. Sabah) Motion to approve the Executive Director Retirement-Honoring Budget.

Director Hammond has led the University Student Union at California State University, Northridge (CSUN) for 31 years, which is among the longest serving positions, just shy from Vice President for Student Affairs, Dr. William Watkins. Her transformative initiatives include the establishment of the Student Recreation Center (SRC), the Oasis Wellness Center, and community-based resource centers like the Pride Center, Veterans Resource Center, and DREAM Center. Continuing her legacy of innovation, the Valera NEST is set to open in 2025. Additionally, Director Hammond has served as a faculty member in the Michael D. Eisner College of Education and President of Association of College Unions International (ACUI) for two years. In January 2024, Director Hammond announced her retirement after 31 years at CSUN and a cumulated 44 years in higher education. A committee of 17 staff members originally planned a retirement-honoring event for \$36,000, but when presented to Vice President for Student Affairs Dr. William Watkins and Interim Assistant Vice President for Student Affairs, Equity and Inclusion, Dr. Freddie Sanchez, the committee was asked to scale back their budget. After reconfiguring logistical needs, the committee was able to decrease their budget by \$12,000, moving to approve \$24,000 from unallocated

reserves to fund the executive director retirement-honoring event scheduled for December 6, 2024. This amount only takes up 1/16 of the \$150,000 in unallocated reserves account.

Director Macias expressed his gratitude to the planning committee for their work in keeping the cost down, as money is always a challenge.

Director Winterhalter wanted to make sure that the planning committee's efforts in reducing the costs were reflected in the minutes.

Associate Director, Administration and Communications, Sharon Kinard stated that 280 people are expected to attend. She also

shared that an additional \$1,000 is not needed at this time and there might be \$800 in savings.

Motion passed 13-0-0.

Director Winterhalter left the room at 1:36 p.m.

F. Rename the Board of Directors Leadership Scholarship

M/S/P (D. Mann / M. Orantes) Motion to approve the Rename the Board of Directors Leadership Scholarship.

Director Hammond has served as the Executive Director of CSUN's University Student Union for 31 years. Additionally, Director Hammond has served as a faculty member in the Michael D. Eisner College of Education, embodying the principles of servant leadership by keeping students at the center of her work and mission. As she approaches her retirement in December 2024, the USU Board of Directors, who she has mentored and guided throughout her tenure, seeks to honor her legacy. They proposed renaming the Board of Directors Leadership to the Debra L. Hammond Servant Leader Scholarship as a tribute to her remarkable contributions and enduring impact.

Director Sanchez recommended renaming it to the Debra L. Hammond Servant Leadership Scholarship because the term, "Leadership," refers to the action of serving.

M/S/P (M. De Leon / D. Mann) Motion to amend the motion to Rename the Board of Directors Leadership Scholarship to the Debra L. Hammond Servant Leadership Scholarship.

Motion to amend passed 12-0-0.

The USU Board of Directors motioned to approve the renaming of the BOD Leadership Scholarship to the Debra L. Hammond Servant Leadership Scholarship.

Motion passed 12-0-0.

Director Winterhalter returned at 1:45 p.m.

G. Executive Session – University Student Union Executive Director Recruitment

Entered Executive Session at 1:48 p.m. A.S. Vice President Khan left at 1:48 p.m.

M/S/P (F. Sanchez / M. Orantes) Motion to approve to enter a closed Executive Session to discuss the University Student Union Executive Director Recruitment facilitated by USU Executive Director Search committee chair, Jason Wang, Senior Director, Physical Plant Management.

M/S/P (D. Hammond / F. Sanchez) Motion to amend the motion to include Human Resources Manager, Jenny Aw, in the Executive Session – University Student Union Executive Director Recruitment.

Motion to amend passed 14-0-0.

M/S/P (M. Orantes / D. Mann) Motion to approve the University Student Union Executive Director Recruitment recommendation.

Motion passed 12-0-2.

M/S/P (M. Orantes / S. Wang) Motion to close Executive Session.

Motion passed 14-0-0.

Exited Executive Session at 2:30 p.m.

VI. Discussion Items

VII. Open Forum

Associate Director, Accounting and Finance Joe Illuminate introduced Allen Schentrup, the new Accounting Manager in the Accounting and Finance Department. Allen shared that he has a long background in Accounting and Finance, especially within nonprofit organizations.

Associate Director, Administration and Communications Sharon Kinard expressed her gratitude to Director Hammond for the past 26 years together. Sharon credited her growth as a leader to Director Hammond.

VIII. Chair's Report

Chair Lopez extended his best wishes to students during finals season and encouraged time to recharge over the break. He shared that the Visibility and Engagement and Internal Review Ad Hoc Committees have continued their work and will be providing formal committee reports, as well as appointing Students-at-Large in January. Chair Lopez reminded everyone that the Transportation Assistance Program (TAP) will launch on December 4th at 10:00 p.m. and that a featured article has been published by the CSUN Newsroom. As it was her final Board meeting, Chair Lopez recognized Director Hammond's 31 years of service to the institution, visionary leadership of the USU, and unwavering dedication to the Board of Directors. He credited Director Hammond for his passion and knowledge for Student Affairs and student unions through her mentorship and guidance. Chair Lopez ended his report by thanking everyone for their contributions throughout the semester.

IX. Vice Chair's Report

Vice Chair Orantes encouraged everyone to make time to take care of themselves, physically and mentally, this holiday season. She expressed her gratitude for Director Hammond, acknowledging the impact she has made on her and previous students under her leadership. Vice Chair Orantes reported on, "Friendsgiving," the USU and Housing collaboration, highlighting the work and effort of the Programs Department. Given her goal of creating a sense of community, she said that many families stopped by; some parents came up to her to express how kind and approachable the USU staff were. Vice Chair Orantes stated that the Internal Review Ad Hoc Committee was unable to meet on November 22nd because they did not meet quorum. She ended her report by reminding everyone to check their Spring 2025 calendars and wishing everyone the best for finals week.

X. Executive Director's Report

Director Hammond thanked the Board of Directors for trusting the core team to look at the USU Renovation and Expansion Project. She particularly acknowledged Interim Assistant Vice President for Student Affairs, Equity and Inclusion, Dr. Freddie Sanchez, Vice President for Administration and Finance, Colin Donahue, Vice President for Student Affairs and Dean of Students, Dr. William Watkins, Associate Vice President for Budget and Strategic Business Operations, Dr. Edith Winterhalter, members of the Chancellor's Office, and colleagues across the Cal State University system for their support. Director Hammond was grateful for the Board, taking responsibility for the strategic direction of the organization seriously. Director Hammond highlighted the CSUN Daily Sundial's articles on the Oasis Wellness Center, "Be Kind to Your Mind by Using CSUN's Wellness Services," and the USU Resource Centers' feature in, "Pride Center's Days After: A Community Dialogue and Election Debrief." She recognized that CSUN allows for authenticity. She also attributed the Board's innovation to student success, mentioning their support of gender-neutral restrooms while the rest of campus was not initially supportive, over 10 years ago. Director Hammond encouraged everyone to remember their why and make sure we continue to be people-serving over self-serving.

XI. A.S. Report

On behalf of Associated Students (A.S.) Vice President Khan, Chair Lopez read the A.S. report. A.S. Vice President Khan congratulated Director Hammond for all her accomplishments and the scholarship rename in her honor, mentioning what a privilege it has been working alongside her and the University Student Union. She reported on the two bills (resolutions) that the A.S. Board of Directors approved earlier that day. The first bill motioned to pause the implementation of the CSU Time, Place, and Manner (TPM) Policy. The A.S. Board of Directors found that the TPM Policy, as is, is unfit to be implemented across the CSU. A.S. Vice President Khan stated that A.S.'s values align with faculty senate, Cal State Student Association, and feedback from active students at large. The second bill they approved motioned to oppose the implementation of the CSUN Ready Program by The University Corporation (TUC). They found the program to be inequitable and enforced unnecessary costs to students. The A.S. Senate is willing to reconsider support if the program is altered.

XII. Committee Reports

A. Diversity & Inclusion

Director Granillo reported on the committee's goals for the 2024-2025 academic year: 1) In collaboration with the USU DREAM Center, the committee will research and identify at least five best practices and initiatives aimed at enhancing undocumented student success by the end of the academic year 2) The committee will collect feedback and analyze data from students within the International Student and Parenting Scholar demographic within the university to assess their awareness, opinions, and suggestions regarding Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (JEDI) initiatives in the USU. Based on the findings, the committee will compile a comprehensive report with actionable recommendations and present it to the Board of Directors for consideration by May 30, 2025. Director Granillo hopes that these goals will increase visibility for these student populations. He ended his report by highlighting committee member, Jane Martorana, for joining the Internal DEI Work Team as an acting representative.

B. Facilities & Operations

Director Mann reported that the committee held its second meeting on Friday, November 15th, where they welcomed Director Kempgowda to the Facilities & Operations Committee. Additionally, the committee approved its goals and organized a team-building activity, which will take place at Dave & Buster's.

C. Finance

Director Pathak reported that the committee has made progress toward its goals. Key updates included: 1) On November 25th, the committee approved reallocating \$13,665 from the Games

Room Pool Table to the Fire Alarm Monitoring System Capital Outlay. The original budget was \$85,649, but the current cost was \$99,314, creating a shortfall. The increase was necessary to upgrade the software for compatibility with the vendor's workstation. 2) In the same meeting, the committee watched a presentation on the Valera Nest Project. Committee members received information about the Valera Nest, including the various resources that will be offered, long-term financial plans, the project's financial sustainability, and its alignment with strategic objectives.

D. Personnel

Director Sabah reported that the committee had its first meeting on Wednesday, November 20th from 3:45 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. Despite the meeting being held virtually, committee members were eager to engage with each other. During that meeting, the committee recommended the action item for a new staff position, Wellness Supervisor, at the Oasis Wellness Center. Director Sabah expressed her gratitude for Director De Leon and Executive Secretary Kristen Pichler.

E. Retirement

No report was provided for the Retirement Committee.

XIII. Announcements

Chair Lopez announced that the Board was given 10 VIP tickets to The Soraya's Dorrance Dance Nutcracker event on December 11th, celebrating Director Hammond. Any BOD members interested in attending must let him know by the end of the day. Chair Lopez also reminded the Board about Phase 3: JEDI Focus Groups and encouraged members to attend if available.

XIV. Adjournment

Chair Lopez adjourned the meeting at 2:51 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by,



Debra L. Hammond,
Executive Director