

# Building BRIDGES

At Chico State

A newsletter celebrating diversity at Chico State and in us all • Spring 2008

## Student Affairs promotes diversity

By Shelby Hollister

Promoting diversity by educating the campus community not just on issues of race and ethnicity, but also on sexual orientation, gender identity and/or gender expression, age, disability and size is one of Chico State's main goals.

With the leadership of Drew Calandrella and President Paul Zingg and their support of organizations such as the Office of Diversity and the Cross Cultural Leadership Center, diversity has become more prevalent on the Chico State campus.

Zingg has intentionally promoted diversity awareness on campus by stressing its value and importance, said Calandrella, Chico State's vice president for Student Affairs.

"If we are going to be intentional about it (diversity), we really have to pick up and express the value, otherwise it is just words," Calandrella said.

Student Affairs promotes diversity by providing "opportunities for students to learn, understand, respect and appreciate the differences that exist among all people," according to the Division of Student Affairs' mission statement.

Student Affairs' decisions are formed by people's different points of view, and it makes for a better decision, Calandrella said.

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"Each of us has our own story...we can learn from other people..."  
-Drew Calandrella

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"Each of us has our own story, our own cultural context that we understand because it is ours," Calandrella said. "But when you can embrace differences as a group, then you break it down to what we can learn from other people and what we can impart to other people about our points of view and experience in life."

The Associated Students is a large part of Student Affairs that promotes diversity. A.S. has a multicultural affairs officer who directs diverse programming for students, said Osazee Edebiri, A.S. president. Not only does this person plan events and programs, but he also has access to a fund of \$50,000 to be

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Drew Calandrella, vice president for Student Affairs, promotes diversity.



Students, faculty, staff come together at the Diversity Summit.



Pa Vue, a Chico State student, breaks stereotypes of Hmong women.

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## DIVERSITY CORNER

By Tray Robinson,  
Director of Diversity Programs

*"You cannot make yourself feel something you do not feel, but you can make yourself do right in spite of your feelings."*

– Pearl S. Buck

Why do we fear the differences that exist among our fellow human beings? Why does it seem so hard to engage in the golden rule, "treat others as you would like to be treated"?

If we cannot find it in our hearts to accept, embrace and celebrate the many differences that exist among us, we should at least be able to provide some form of respect. Where is the harm in offering a gesture, a common courtesy, to our fellow student, staff, faculty, administrator and community members when it could aid in fostering a safer and more welcoming environment?

## Alumnus' device fights terrorism

By Amanda Ponte

When Ed Tarver III created his Handheld Fourier Transform Ion Mobility Spectrometer, he thought it would impress others. Now it is being used to save American lives.

While working in the Analytical Materials Sciences Department for Sandia National Laboratories in Livermore, Calif., Tarver developed his spectrometer, which can detect explosives, chemical warfare agents, toxic industrial chemicals and narcotics.

On July 12, 2001, just two months before the Sept. 11 attacks, Tarver negotiated a private license for his invention, which gained him a lot of attention after the terrorist attacks occurred.

"I started getting invited all over the world to talk about my invention," he said. "I was the opening day speaker at the largest conference on protection against chemical and biological weapons in the world."

Along with praise, Tarver also received some pressure from his co-workers to get out of the private license he had negotiated for his invention. The Sandia lab owners, as well as large corporations, were interested in the device due to the fact that counter-terrorism technology had become so valuable after Sept. 11.

Tarver decided to leave his job and face the Sandia lab in court in order to keep the rights to his spectrometer.



Tarver (Left) with Dr. Hans Blix at a conference in Gothenburg, Sweden, where he presented his spectrometer.

"I looked at it like my barbecue recipe," he said. "I'm not gonna give you the recipe, but you can taste it 'cause I know it's good!"

After two years of litigation, Tarver was able to keep the rights to his spectrometer and start his own company, Etaran Instruments Inc.

Along with being an accomplished scientist, Tarver is also a well-respected artist, athlete and academic scholar. He painted a culturally historical mural on the front of the Guadalajara Market in San Jose, Calif.

"I like to draw, and public works of art are community mileposts that bring attention to that neighborhood or those businesses," he said. "That mural in that neighborhood is like the anchor of that community."

While attending Chico State in 1968, Tarver was one of the first black students to qualify for the

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This mural was painted by Tarver on the front of the Guadalajara Market to represent a timeline of Mexican history.

## Students, faculty climb summit for acceptance

By Shelby Hollister

Cross the line if you are male. Cross the line if you feel physically unattractive. Cross the line if you have been discriminated against because of your race.

These instructions were given to 75 students and 25 faculty and staff members in an activity at the Diversity Summit to demonstrate that each person faces similar insecurities and obstacles in their lives.

The Diversity Summit was a retreat held Feb. 10 and 11 in Napa, Calif., that consisted of an ethnically-diverse group of Chico State students, faculty and staff members.

Faculty and staff began planning for the summit during fall 2007.

"The consistent message we wanted to focus on was to build an inclusive community," said Erica Flores, coordinator for the Cross Cultural Leadership Center that helped implement the summit.

"Some topics students focused on were anywhere from age, to sexual orientation, to body image and race," Flores said.

Not only did the students participate in these activities, but so did the faculty and staff.

Mathematics, Engineering, Sci-

ence Achievement Program outreach coordinator Ajamu Lamumba did a rendition of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s "I Have a Dream" speech. Afterward students, faculty and staff wrote down their dream and what their message to others would be, Flores said.

"It was an emotional and powerful experience," Flores said.

The faculty and staff each had their own reason for attending the summit.

No matter where we come from, what our culture is or ethnicity, we all want families, we all want to be happy, we all have had tragedy in our lives, said Chris Malone, associate director for Chico State's Educational Opportunity Program.

Attendees connected with the experience they had, it was an opportunity to come together and learn about other cultures, said Eric Evans, a Chico State student and Diversity Summit participant.

Faculty members also served as mentors to "families," which were made up of students, Cross Cultural Leadership Center interns, faculty and staff members.

The family units developed at the summit still exist.

One family already met again and is planning to put on an event to promote diversity, where people will bring different food from different cultures, and wear different types of dress, Malone said.

The students who attended the Diver-



Attendees participate in Captain's Table to build trust and teamwork.

sity Summit learned how they can help promote diversity on campus to create a more inclusive community from the workshops and relationships they built with other students, faculty and staff at Chico State.

"You don't look at people the same way," said Erica Dubin, attendee and intern for the Cross Cultural Leadership Center. "You have a piece of them, and they have a piece of you."

Everyone who attended would like to see the summit happen again, said Flores. However, they want it bigger so more students can attend.

"This summit was just the tip of the iceberg of where we can go," Flores said.

This event is just one example of Chico State's commitment to diversity acceptance.

"We are intentionally trying to promote diversity on campus and help folks understand and appreciate one another," Malone said.



Participants share ideas during an exercise at the Diversity Summit.

## Hmong student breaks cultural female stereotype

By Shelby Hollister

Women in the Hmong culture are taught to be docile and quiet, but one Chico State student stands against these cultural norms each day.

Pa Vue, 21, has not only achieved scholastic excellence but she is also graduating within four years while participating in four campus clubs: Community Action Volunteers in Education, Educational Opportunity Program, Associated Students Multicultural Affairs Council and the Hmong Student Association.

Vue has a strong passion for her involvement with the Hmong Student Association because of her Hmong heritage.

"It is not always easy to voice your opinion as a Hmong woman," Vue said. "I have managed to say what I want to say and do what I want to do."

Vue has also managed to gain respect within the Hmong community at Chico State.

"I see her as a future role model for Hmong women," said Jack Yang, a

Hmong Student Association member. "I am very blessed that I have known Pa, she has so much good to offer."

As part of the Hmong Student Association, Vue promotes education for Hmong youth and their parents, she said. She tries to send the message that it is good for Hmong students to go to college and get an education.

Helping students, especially in the

Hmong Student Association, influenced Vue's involvement with EOP as a first-year student and inspired her to work for the organization as a peer professional adviser.

"Last year, I had a student tell me she wanted to go home," Vue said. "This year I ran into her on campus, and she said that she decided to stay and that everything was going well. That is great and why I

love working for EOP."

Helping students inspired Vue to become a teacher.

"I like to let them know it is possible to succeed when people don't think you can succeed," she said.

All of Vue's experiences have helped her break the stereotype of the typical Hmong woman.

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**"I have managed to say what I want to say..."**  
-Pa Vue

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"She has overcome so much, and that makes her the strong woman she is," Yang said.

Vue will continue helping others when she ventures to graduate school at UC Santa Barbara in the fall.

"I am hoping to teach part time and start a nonprofit literacy program for underrepresented students and refugee immigrant students in California," Vue said.

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## Calandrella, Zingg support student services

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allocated to student organizations that create diverse programs.

The Cross Cultural Leadership Center is a service that works to combine leadership and diversity. The center focuses on leadership development, cultural awareness, community education and the creation of constructive social change, according to its mission statement.

"It is an opportunity for Chico to take what many campuses have in

terms of multiculturalism or cross-culturalism and develop it," Calandrella said.

Chico State's promotion of diversity is key to ensuring its increase and understanding among Chico State students.

"The more we put diversity out there, the more people are going to acclimate to it," Edebiri said.

Zingg and his administration have supported students, faculty and

staff in the promotion and education of diversity.

"I would like to believe every interaction we have with one another, with faculty, with people from the city and with students, has something to do with valuing diversity," Calandrella said. "If we don't create the opportunity, then we can't hope for the outcome."

## Butte County increases HIV/AIDS outreach

By Andrea McDonald

Millions on the African continent die from it each year, and each year millions more are orphaned by it. HIV/AIDS is an epidemic that's not just sweeping Africa. It's knocking right on our front door, and our community is starting to take a stand against it.

The reporting and documentation of HIV/AIDS cases in Butte County began in March 1983. Since then, there have been 139 cases of death by AIDS and five cases of death by HIV. Currently, there are 124 people living with AIDS and 62 people living with HIV in Butte County, according to the Health Department's Web site.

Of the HIV/AIDS cases in Butte County, 83 percent are Caucasian, 8 percent are Latino, 5.4 percent are black and 2 percent are American Indian, according to Lori Hungerford, a public health education specialist for the Butte County Department of Health.

As of 2007, Butte County has seen a surge in the number of infected Latinos, Hungerford said.



The mobile medical unit provides testing, information and safe-sex products.

"We don't know if more (Latinos) are testing or if there's something going on there," she said. "All we know is they accounted for 45 percent of our newly diagnosed."

These numbers match the state and national statistics, she said.

Blacks and Latinos account for an unbalanced number of new national HIV/AIDS cases. Of the new cases, 29 percent are Latino and 54 percent are black, according to The Henry J. Kaiser Family Foundation.

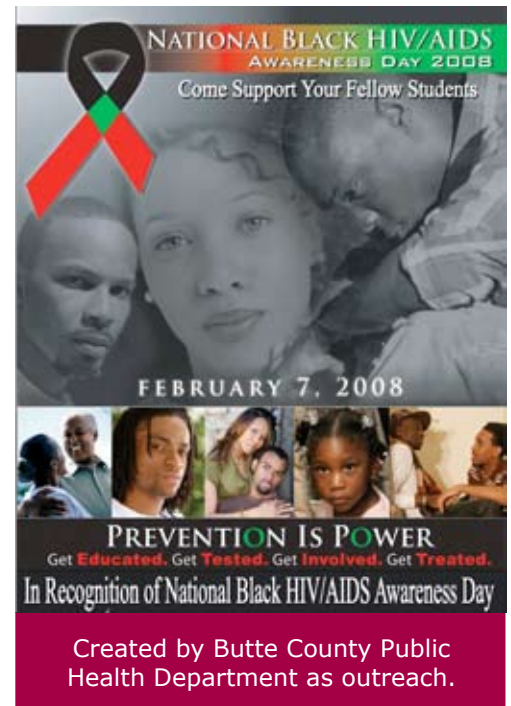
Age is also starting to become a prominent factor with HIV/AIDS in Butte County. As of 2007, Butte County has seen a high rate of newly diagnosed cases in people between the ages of 19 and 29, Hungerford said.

Hungerford provides education and prevention services in Butte County focusing on high risk individuals, she said. She visits substance-abuse treatment facilities monthly to give presentations on HIV, STDs and Hepatitis C.

"What we try to do is work with them to do risk-reduction type of techniques so if they wanted to choose to continue that behavior, they can do so more safely," Hungerford said.

Hungerford also helps to coordinate National HIV Testing Day, National Black HIV/AIDS Awareness Day, National Latino AIDS Awareness Day and World AIDS Day.

On these days Hungerford and a team of



other health educators go out into the community with their mobile medical unit and offer on-site HIV/AIDS tests that give results in just 20 to 40 minutes, she said.

They also offer education prevention materials like condoms and lubrication.

"We go to the community and try to get them tested because, you know, getting your HIV test is a scary thing," Hungerford said.

Chico State is also doing its part to contribute to HIV/AIDS awareness by conducting tests at the Student Health Center.

Chico State's Student Health Center has conducted 18,000 HIV/AIDS tests since 1991, said Cathy Felix, the center's director.

During the fall 2007 semester alone, the Student Health Center conducted 381 HIV/AIDS tests, Felix said. Of those tested, most saw negative results.

## Groups' efforts inspired to end hate crimes

By Amanda Ponte

Once in awhile a group of people come together with a vision and dedication to create one strong voice that can be heard long after its meetings are adjourned.

Joe Wills, director of Public Affairs & Publications, wanted to form such a group. He and other faculty members proposed the Building Bridges committee to President Esteban's Cabinet on Feb. 4, 2000. They planned a series of events and programs for the 2000-2001 academic year, focusing on educating Chico State faculty, staff, students and the community about diversity. The Cabinet approved the request Feb. 10, 2000, officially forming Building Bridges.

At the time, Wills and other campus faculty were reacting to a series of hate crimes that shocked both the university and nation. These crimes included the November 1998 beating death in Chico of homeless man Lloyd Brown by two Butte College students; the highly publicized October 1998 torture and murder of gay University

of Wyoming student Matthew Shepard; and the July 1999 murders of Winfield Mowder and Gary Matson, a gay couple living in Redding, committed by brothers James and Benjamin Williams, both of whom had previously attended Chico State.

It's disturbing that some of these crimes were committed by previous Chico State students, Wills said.

"Building Bridges was started in a time of a great deal of ugliness and terrible events," Wills said.

Wills recruited a variety of faculty, staff and Chico community members to be a part of the project.

"We needed a group to talk about and address how we would introduce students to diversity, and hopefully through that contact, people would be rid of these hateful, disturbed and abhorrent views of others," Wills said.

One of the faculty members Wills

recruited to help was Chela Patterson, director of the Educational Opportunity Program on campus.

"Building Bridges wasn't really a formal department," Patterson said. "It was people choosing to be a part of it and wanting to do things."

Following its birth in 2000, the Building Bridges committee saw their

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**"It was a very innovative, bold and brave process."**  
-CC Carter

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vision come to life through a series of public events that promoted diversity education and awareness.

"I think Chico State had never seen anything this intentional," said CC Carter, director of the Cross Cultural Leadership Center and former member of Building Bridges. "It was a very innovative, bold and brave process that took place on this campus, and it put diversity in the forefront of everyone's mind."

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## Alumnus' spectrometer helps protect nation

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Educational Opportunity Program. He also played baseball and ran track.

Throughout his lifetime Tarver has been able to attain four academic degrees. He has a bachelor's degree from UC Berkeley in African-American studies, a bachelor's in chemistry from Chico State, a master's in chemistry from San Jose State and holds a doctorate in chemistry from Washington State University.

He now serves on Chico State's College of Natural Sciences Advisory Board, where he and other members work to educate citizens about scientific concepts, he said.

In terms of education, Tarver believes students should be curious, then studious, then ambitious.

"It's more important to go out and find something you really enjoy

doing and want to work hard at, rather than try to impress others by taking classes that you aren't passionate about," he said.

## Chico State grad inspires classroom makeover

By Andrea McDonald

Durell Siplin Jr. is a third-grade teacher at West Walton Elementary School in Yuba City, Calif., who not only teaches academics, but sets an example of excellence by living the golden rule.

Growing up with two younger brothers in a single-parent home headed by his mother created his caring attitude early in life, Siplin said. At a young age he made personal sacrifices so his mother could better support his brothers.

Siplin grew up in Inglewood, Calif., an inner-city area that presented a lot of opportunity for bad choices. But he hardly fell into that.

Siplin took his first job at age 15 and worked throughout high school. Working put money in his pocket and paid for a lot of expenses, such as prom and homecoming, he said.

“High school was when I figured out I needed to support myself so she could support my two younger brothers,” Siplin said.

Siplin went to Chico State and graduated in May 2005. Not until recently was he truly recognized and rewarded for his hard work.



Siplin stands in the class' favorite addition, the library.

Siplin took his first teaching position in August 2007, one week before school started. This left him with no time to prepare the classroom. For the entire fall semester the classroom was left without visuals, decorations and extra resources.

“It wasn't a low-quality room, it just wasn't organized really well,” Siplin said.

That all changed Sunday, Dec. 16 when seven teachers gathered in Siplin's classroom and worked from 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. to redecorate his classroom and surprise him with a friendlier, more welcoming and better teaching environment.

“For Christmas we were going to do a bulletin board for him, because he had been saying he wanted his room to look nice,” said Kristi Moreno, a fellow third-grade teacher at West Walton. “But it just kind of manifested into this ambush makeover.”

The teachers tried to incorporate all things important to him, she said.

“We did bulletin boards, we did name tags, we organized his desk and made a filing system,” Moreno said. “We also made him a teacher wall with pictures of him doing things with the kids.”

When Siplin saw the room, he was speechless.

“I had only been there for like three months, and for them to take their time to do that said a lot about them and what they see in me



Siplin instructs student in the newly improved classroom.

as a teacher,” Siplin said. “It was really emotional.”

The teachers chose to help Siplin with his room because he brought community to the school and his classroom, Moreno said.

“He has a huge array of kids with tough backgrounds, kids who are supposed to be struggling and having trouble and not wanting to come to school, but he's inspired them and he's really motivated them to do their best,” said Julie Rojo, also a third-grade teacher at West Walton. “If the teacher's going to be giving out that much effort to connect with the kids, he deserves something like this.”

It's easier for him to teach, and his students feel safer in the classroom, Siplin said.

“It's almost like the golden rule was brought to life,” he said. “Treat people the way you want to be treated and they will give it back to you.”

## International Festival provides music, food, fun

By Andrea McDonald, Shelby Hollister and Amanda Ponte

The downtown plaza came to life Saturday, April 26 as the 30th Annual International Festival 2008 was held.

The plaza was packed with about 200 people of all ages and ethnicities eager to soak up different cultures and enjoy the best of April's weather.

The event was sponsored by the Associated Students Multicultural Affairs Council and featured food, music, dance and art representing cultures within Chico's community.

"I think that diversity is a big thing, and there's a bunch of different organizations here that are showcasing their culture," said Amber Harris, commissioner of A.S. Multicultural Affairs.

School and community organizations set up booths during the day, offering people the chance to delve into various cultures and to get a taste of their traditions.

Some of the organizations in attendance included Chico State Hmong Student Association, Pacific Islanders Connection, Nu Alpha Kappa Fraternity, In Mien Student Association, MEChA and the

Upward Bound Alumni Association.

The Delta Xi Phi Multicultural Sorority members were selling Mexican drinks, Italian sodas and mixed fruit as a form of community outreach.

"We have been coming to this since our sorority came to Chico in 1998 because it gives us a chance to get involved in the community," said Jessenia Guzeldere, a Delta Xi Phi member.

They enjoy coming to this event because it promotes togetherness in the heart of Chico, Guzeldere said.

Another main attraction of the day was the booth judging. Multicultural Affairs Council members walked around and awarded prizes for the best food, the booth with the best cultural representation, and the best environmentally-conscious booth.

The Indian Students Association won an award for best cultural representation, while the Sri Lankan Students Association won first place for best food, Harris said.

One of the most crowd-pleasing aspects of the event was the series of performers that included singers, dancers and musicians.

The artists provided a wide variety of cultural entertainment. Nefertiti's Dozen performed a Haitian/West African-themed dance, while the Loyd Family Players provided a mix of samba, rock and rhythmic dance.

"I really enjoyed Loyd



Daniel Randolph serenades the crowd with his bass kalimba.

Family Players," said Marina Maroste, A.S. Presents student coordinator. "It brought everybody together and you could see everyone bobbing their head with the music."

The event encompasses everything that Chico is, Maroste said. It shows that the community is a variety of cultures, races and ethnicities. And it is a place where everyone can come together and show what they are good at whether it be music, dancing or food.



Loyd Family Players entertain at the festival.

This publication is produced by:

**TEHAMA GROUP**  
COMMUNICATIONS  
California State University, Chico

On Behalf of:  
Chico State Office of Diversity

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