

FALL 2017 PRESIDENT'S CONVOCATION

August 17, 2017

President Gayle E. Hutchinson

California State University, Chico

Introduce Cabinet

- Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs **Debra Larson**
- Vice President for Business and Finance **Robbi Stivers**
- Vice President for University Advancement **Ahmad Boura**
- Interim Vice President for Student Affairs **Pedro Douglas**
- Chief of Staff **Brooke Banks**

Introduce Academic Senate Executive Committee

- **Jed Wyrick**, Chair
- **Jeff Livingston**
- **Joe Crotts**
- **Betsy Boyd**
- **Chiara Ferrari**
- **Jennifer Wilking**
- **Paula Selvester**
- **Rick Ford**

Introduce community and campus groups in attendance:

- Chico Chamber of Commerce
- Chico State Alumni Association
- Down Town Chico Business Association
- Gateway Science Commission & Advisory Board

- Janet Turner Print Museum: Board of Directors
- Parent Advisory Council
- Research Foundation
- University Advisory Board
- University Foundation

Introduce speakers

Mayor Sean Morgan

Elaina McReynolds

- Chief Steward of the Academic Professional of California, Unit 4, representing 120 advisors and extended education professionals
- Member of Campus Labor Council, University Staff Development Committee, and the Abusive Conduct Prevention ad hoc committee
- Director of Special Session and Extension for Regional & Continuing Education

Dylan Gray

- Associated Students President for 2017-18
- Student from Inglewood who first greeted the campus during the 2014 Fall Convocation address
- Political science major

Jed Wyrick

- Academic Senate Chair, beginning this year
- Professor in the Comparative Religion and Humanities Department
- PhD in Comparative Literature, emphasizing the intersection of classical and biblical studies

James Aird

- Chair of Staff Council
- Instructional technology consultant in the Technology and Learning Program, but he considers himself an “instructional technology coach.”

Arlene Ward

- Elder and Historian with the Mechoopda, upon whose ancestral lands our University sits
- Former Tribal Council Chairwoman
- Bachelor’s degree in Anthropology from Chico State
- Former Office Manager for the Far West Heritage Association, steward of Chico Museum and Patrick Ranch Museum

Thank you for joining me today as we prepare to launch another academic year. Convocation is an annual tradition when we gather to welcome the new semester. We are one university, one community, one team with one common purpose: to guide student success through academic rigor, quality service, civic engagement, diversity, global education and sustainable practice.

We gather here today to honor our first year together, celebrating the progress we have made to strengthen our community and rededicating ourselves to student success and the success of our University mission. We have established a solid foundation of working together. This year, we will continue to build upon this newly reinforced foundation as we set a new course for Chico State.

But first, let's look at what we have accomplished together over the past 12 months.

On a national scale, Chico State continues to shine. *Money* and *Forbes* magazines once again identified Chico State as a Best Value College. US News and World Report ranks our university as No. 8 in Top Public Schools and No. 37 in Regional Universities West.

CSU, Chico leads globally. We are ranked No. 2 in the nation for the number of yearlong study abroad students among master's-granting institutions. We send around 400 students annually to study abroad programs in over 26 countries.

Our athletic teams made us proud in 2016-17. Of Chico State's 13 intercollegiate athletic programs, 12 advanced to postseason play and three won NCAA Championship West Region titles (women's and men's cross country, and men's basketball)

- **Baseball** won its 2nd straight conference title and led NCAA Division II in fielding percentage.
- **Women's and men's cross country programs** each finished fourth at the NCAA Championships.
- **Women's track and field** won its 8th straight conference title. **Men's track and field** won its 2nd straight conference title, and 13th of the last 14 years.
- **The men's basketball team** advanced to the Elite 8 for the second time in four seasons.
- Chico State coaches won five **CCAA Coach of the Year** awards; congratulations to **Gary Towne** (who won for both men's and women's cross country), **Cody Hein** (volleyball), **Oliver Hanf** (men's track and field), and **Dave Taylor** (baseball).

One more national honor, the Wildcats finished 25th in the NCAA Division II **Teamworks competition**, which tracks the volunteer hours of student-athletes. At Chico State, a total of 204 student-athletes contributed 504 hours of service.

Off the court and field, I am especially proud of the Student Athlete Advisory Committee's "We Don't Say Campaign," a statement on diversity and inclusion which earned national attention and reached 3 million views on Facebook. Haley Kroll, the student athlete who spearheaded the campaign, was recognized with the CCAA Impact Award. Our athletes are more than accomplished students and fierce competitors, **they are model citizens.**

And, of course, we were recognized for academic excellence and knowledge across disciplines:

- Chico State's 2017 **Model United Nations** team won an amazing 12 out of 16 Position Papers awards and the distinguished delegation recognition at the national competition in New York City in April. Chico ranks in the top 5 percent of participating schools.
- Our **WindCats** interdisciplinary team was accepted into the 2018 Department of Energy's Collegiate Wind Competition in Washington DC, following a top finish in 2016.
- Accounting students passed the **Uniform Certified Public Accountant Exam** at higher rates than top research and private universities, including UC Irvine, UC Davis and Santa Clara University.
- Our **Civil Engineering program** boasts 100% job placement of graduates, proof that we are succeeding in preparing students for success.
- In July, Agriculture students won 3rd place in the American Society of Animal Sciences national **Academic Quadrathlon**, following their first place finish last year, the first time that a non-land-grant university qualified for and won at the national level.
- Chico State's **Advanced Laboratory for Visual Anthropology (ALVA)** took home an **Emmy Award** for Best Historic/Cultural Program/Special for the documentary "A Walk Through Time: The Story of Anderson Marsh," which tells the story of the ancestral home of the Koi Nation.

- Art Professor **Kijeong Jeon** was the recipient of the 2016 International Interior Design Association Diversity Award. The award notes that Professor Jeon encourages students to design with social responsibility in mind and he models this behavior through his work designing for people with autism and other disabilities.

We hold great expectations for our incoming class of 2,802 freshmen. For the 2017-18 academic year, we admitted a highly qualified class with an average GPA of 3.45. We also enrolled 1,477 transfer students to join us in the fall, 42% of them from our service area. These 4,279 students will bring us close to our target of 15,250 FTES. This year, we are holding steady with our student enrollment.

Last year, I stood before you and outlined five goals that we would tackle together and continue to work on over time. I am here to report on our progress. Before I do that, I want to thank you for your partnership in lifting campus morale and improving climate. I am grateful for the work all of you do every day to support and encourage our students and transform lives. It takes all of us to create and uphold the Chico Experience.

Goal one: **IMPROVE CAMPUS CLIMATE**. I couldn't do this without first listening to you and understanding where you had been. My 100 day listening tour provided the impetus to begin the conversation. Your responses around challenges and where to invest provided the catalyst for some of our early achievements. I want you to know that I heard you. I also want you to know that together we have the resolve and the commitment to respond to, and solve, the challenges that you have identified.

Upon taking office, I met with leadership representing all unions. We discussed low morale among staff. Clearly, staff were exhausted and stressed about many things and union leaders helped identify several issues, beginning with the two most pressing:

1. Staff who were working as temporary employees for years in positions that were on the books as permanent
2. Salary compression among staff

Running reports and analyzing data with Human Resources, we identified 28 employees holding temporary status in permanent positions. These employees had performed well at their jobs. I changed the status of these employees from temporary to permanent. It was the right thing to do.

In May, following further analysis and in concert with Cabinet, I delivered a staff salary adjustment program that positively impacted about **40% of staff**. This is the first step in an ongoing process. And, it will continue to be a priority for our campus.

Other actions we have taken to continue to stabilize and improve morale include:

- Improving the efficiency of the in-range progression processes
- Providing campus with anti-bullying workshops
- Offering Principles of Supervision training for managers
- Setting expectations and modeling professional conduct and interaction

We filled two Vice President positions this past spring, bringing Dr. Debra Larson to campus as Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs, and Mr. Robbi Stivers as Vice President for Business and Finance. My heartfelt thanks to the

search committees for their work and dedication. And, a special thanks and recognition to Dr. Charles Zartman for his leadership and oversight of these successful searches.

We said goodbye to a highly regarded leader and colleague when Drew Calandrella retired in June after 12 years of exceptional service. The search is underway for the next Vice President for Student Affairs. We will bring finalists for the position to campus this fall with the expectation of announcing an appointment by December.

These actions have gone a long way to improve staff and faculty lives and morale. The executive leadership team is committed to keeping all communication channels open, improving campus climate and nurturing a culture characterized by caring, inclusion and collaboration.

I would like to share with you an anecdote that illustrates our positive momentum; I believe it to be a representative of interactions that more commonly occur on campus these days.

I'm sure most of you are aware of the Wildcat statue that we have been working to bring to campus for more than three years. Few projects would have the long-term impact of something as substantial as this symbol of the Chico Experience: the opportunity for graduation photos at the site, development of traditions surrounding the piece, and the use of the statue as a tangible rally and welcome point for events on campus. The statue will be unique to Chico State and have untold value for future, current and past Wildcats.

A partnership between the University, Associated Students, Alumni and Parent Relations, and Athletics, the project has had its share of contentious moments.

The artist was on campus in June to discuss the statue location, final design and size. New members of the project team joined existing members and had an incredibly positive, collaborative, constructive and enthusiastic working session. In the past, this project had been stalled and sometimes felt like a battle among parties; the latest meeting was described by one participant as “the most positive, cross-divisional meeting I have ever attended at Chico State.” This warms my heart. It is the kind of forward momentum and positive mindset I have envisioned. I look forward to seeing this statue completed and enjoyed by the many generations of Wildcats to come.

Yes, we are experiencing positive momentum. However, it is important to acknowledge that we will always face challenges now and in the future. For one, resources will remain limited. After years of deficit spending and reliance on reserves, Cabinet and I are committed to exploring--with campus, with you--sustainable budget solutions. I have witnessed leadership at the Vice President level, among the deans, directors, and department chairs in this regard. I believe when we face our challenges together and apply our brightest minds in a transparent way, the burden can be lessened ... borne by many and not just a few. This dynamic was illustrated clearly by our college deans who came together to make difficult choices to aid one college experiencing financial difficulties.

Working together, the Provost’s Academic Council has a plan in place that will support students and proactively seek solutions with the college going forward.

Another concern highlighted in the listening tour report was the implementation of Executive Order 1000 and its impact on our campus and community. Student, faculty, and community groups found it challenging to use university facilities due

to time and use restrictions. I commissioned a study of our implementation of the executive order. After working with the Campus Facilities Use Committee (CFU) and others, I am pleased to report that a proposal has been received to revise implementation of EO 1000 so that it is more in sync with our mission.

To create a more vibrant and active campus:

1. We are expanding “normal hours” to include Fridays from 5-10 pm and Saturdays from 8 am to 5 pm.
2. We are broadening our definition of university users to include those hosting events that support the university mission, including divisions, colleges, departments, University-recognized student organizations, and IRA-funded student programs.

These changes will be effective this fall. Watch for an announcement with more details. In the fall of 2018, the fiscal and programmatic impact will be reviewed in relation to personnel costs and energy consumption.

Goal two: **RESTORE SHARED GOVERNANCE**. Last summer, I talked at length with Academic Senate Chair Betsy Boyd about ways to restore shared governance to campus. Betsy, along with the Senate Executive committee invited me and Cabinet to an Academic Senate retreat facilitated by systemwide Senate Chair Dr. Chris Miller. It was a productive retreat and set a positive tone for the year. Next, I asked Cabinet members to meet weekly with the Academic Senate Executive Committee and to attend all Academic Senate meetings. I invited the Academic Senate Chair, AS Student Government President, and the Staff Council Chair to work with me to establish a statement of shared governance that would guide future interactions. This yearlong effort came to fruition in May, and was

celebrated with a signing ceremony at the last Academic Senate meeting of the 2016-17 academic year. Each office received a signed copy of the statement, and it can be found online on my website. The document symbolizes our commitment to work together in the best interest of our students and our University. Our interactions and exchanges will never be without challenges. Yet, together, we will persevere. Together, we will improve and create consultative processes and practices, and communicate in ways that build and sustain greater trust in each other—faculty, staff, students and community.

Goal three – **FOSTER STUDENT SUCCESS AND ACHIEVEMENT** – is the heart of our mission. I am proud to report that Chico State continues to make solid progress on the CSU’s Graduation Initiative 2025. I acknowledge and appreciate Interim Vice Provost Bill Loker, who leads this effort, along with the faculty, staff, administrators, and students across the entire University who are dedicated to helping students succeed and graduate in a timely manner.

We updated our long-term student success plan this spring with more extensive campus consultation, which resulted in a greater emphasis on the role of faculty in reaching 2025 goals. Our investment in student support has yielded positive results. We are also investing in College Success Centers, which now exist in 6 of our 7 colleges. Some of these success centers receive support through our Hispanic-Serving Institution (HSI) STEM grant. All work together with the Chico Student Success Center, which just completed its 20th year of service to our students. Our General Education program will undergo review this academic year, presenting us with an opportunity to better understand the student experience of

GE. We are optimistic about our updated plan with its twin focus on data-informed student support systems and faculty-pedagogy-curriculum.

At this time, I would like to introduce and recognize the newest among us. During the past fiscal year, we had 115 new staff join our ranks at Chico State.

Unfortunately, due to summer schedules, only about a third of the new staff members were able to participate in the photo. All who are present, please stand and be recognized.

Investing in faculty is key to student success. We have 36 new faculty members joining us this fall. Please stand and let us welcome you with a round of applause.

And, finally, I would like to recognize our 31 newly tenured or promoted faculty.

When we speak of student success, it is paramount that we create a University experience where no student should have to make a choice between sufficient food and safe and reliable housing and their education. Our work in this regard has earned national attention. Chico State's efforts were featured in a story in the *Christian Science Monitor* on California's efforts to assist college students facing food insecurity.

In 2016-17, we served 2,200 students through the Hungry Wildcat Pantry, an increase from 300 served the prior year. We distributed 7,000 pounds of organic produce, and helped the Center for Healthy Communities CalFresh Outreach sign up more than 1,000 students for USDA food assistance.

We are grateful to Kathleen Moroney, Joe Picard and Stephanie Bianco for their commitment and hard work.

This spring, the President's Office along with the California Faculty Association established the Chico Cares Endowment to create lasting support for the Chico State Basic Needs Project, expanding our scope to include basic needs beyond food, such as short-term housing and emergency grants.

Together, with University Advancement, the Chico Cares Campaign aims to raise \$50,000 by Giving Day on November 28 to support the immediate needs of our students.

Our students are involved in the effort as well. The Chico State Student Philanthropy Council—and more than 1,800 students—donated \$13,000 to support students in need. This is the Wildcat way. Together, we will ensure that no student is hungry or homeless at Chico State.

Energy and enthusiasm for promoting student success are evident across campus. One notable area of revitalization is the **Meriam Library**, under the leadership of Dean Patrick Newell, where you will find:

- The Library MakerSpace that will begin implementation this fall in support of exploration and experiential learning; this partnership includes the Entrepreneurship group with faculty from all colleges, and the financial support of University Foundation. A large “grand opening” will take place in spring 2018.
- New reservable tools, including high-powered computer workstations, a presentation practice room, and collaborative study rooms.
- OneSearch, a new catalog across all CSU Libraries that allows users to borrow items directly from any of the 23 libraries in the CSU system. We now have access to a virtual library of more than 29 million volumes. It has

taken three years of implementation to pull off such a big project, and it involved a complete reconfiguration of our work processes and systems.

- Math tutoring relocated to the more visible fourth floor, which has significantly increased student use.
- Library faculty meeting with all college departments to map the WASC Information Literacy Outcomes to the department curricula to assure that we're consciously including Information Literacy in our curriculum.
- A variety of events to build community and foster student success, including Wikipedia edit-a-thons and game nights.
- The Chico State Author Wall, promoting the scholarship and creativity of faculty and academic personnel on campus.
- The Library partnered with Research and Sponsored Programs to create Inspired 2017 to recognize the publications and achievements of the campus. Mark your calendar for March 28, 2018 for Inspired 2018!

BUILD DIVERSE AND INCLUSIVE COMMUNITIES OF EXCELLENCE was the fourth goal.

As we continue to enhance the quality of our Hispanic-Serving Institution (HSI) designation, we are making solid progress:

- The College of Agriculture's Hispanic population increased from 13% to 30% with NO achievement gap this past year.
- The Colleges of AG, ECC and NSC were awarded a \$4.2 million, 5-year, HSI STEM grant from the US Dept. of Education.

- The Spanish-Language Parent/Guest Summer Orientation project was expanded three-fold. We offered three days of Spanish-language events for both freshmen and transfer students.
- Three faculty learning communities were offered with discussions around Understanding our Changing Student Body, HSI Basics, Student Perspectives, Inclusive Pedagogy, and Grant Opportunities.

Another area where Chico State is leading the way is **accessibility**. Just this week, our team comprised of staff members from the Office of Accessible Technology and Information Resources was recognized by Blackboard with a best of conference recognition at Blackboard World in New Orleans. Led by Jeremy Olguin, Chico State is a pioneer in advancing accessible technology, specifically innovations around accessible content. Our efforts are drawing recognition nationwide.

Other achievements of note:

In 2016-17, we established the Critical Incident Response Team or CIRT. This group was called into action to address current events and social justice issues, including pre- and post-election activities. This group has already met in preparation for our new academic year with the goal of providing a safe and inclusive environment for all. More information is available on the **Our Democracy** website.

I reached out to native communities, especially the Mechoopda. We are currently recruiting a tribal liaison to work on improving University relationships with

regional native communities and encouraging college-going rates among Native American youth.

The **South Campus Neighborhood Project** is the first formal public-public partnership for the Institute for Sustainable Development's Resilient Cities Initiative. This partnership between the University and City of Chico matches real-world sustainability and quality-of-life projects with existing courses. The initiative calls for development of a neighborhood improvement plan for the South Campus Neighborhood, beginning with an Existing Conditions Report, which will be delivered to the City Council this fall. This report represents the work of more than 400 students from 9 courses across 7 departments and 3 colleges.

Finally, I said we as a campus would **EXPLORE OPPORTUNITIES AND SUPPORT INNOVATION**. During my first year in office, I focused on outreach in our service area, connecting with community members beyond campus boundaries.

To allow us to be more and do more, the University's development team met with hundreds of alumni, parents and friends, sharing with them how faculty and staff across campus are transforming lives. Thanks to their efforts, and all staff who supported their work, the University celebrated its **most successful fundraising year on record**, surpassing \$14.8 million in cash and commitments.

With our first capital campaign, Transform Tomorrow, Vice President Ahmad Boura and the development team have been building support for two major capital projects: a new College of Business building and a new agriculture complex that will include a creamery, farm store, and state-of-the-art learning and research space. They also have established new endowments for scholarships, faculty fellowships, and programs across campus. From the start of the campaign

in 2012 to June 2017, the campaign has raised more than \$51 million toward our ambitious goal of \$100 million by 2020.

Looking to the classroom, I want to highlight an example of innovation and interdisciplinary collaboration that comes from the College of Communication and Education. This semester, faculty in Media Arts, Design and Technology and Journalism & PR are partnering with faculty in Computer Animation and Game Design to offer an interdisciplinary, team-taught course, “Virtual and Augmented Reality for Media and Gaming,” that will use state-of-the-art technology, providing students with new, rich and innovative ways to tell stories that impact our lives.

Plans are taking shape for the new Physical Sciences building; design is on track to be submitted to the Board of Trustees for approval in January 2018. This summer has been filled with meetings including users, stakeholders, College of Natural Sciences department heads, and campus leadership. The building will be located on the site of the existing Siskiyou building. Demolition of Siskiyou is set to start in June 2018 with construction of the new building following immediately thereafter. Occupancy of the new building is targeted for summer 2020. The objective is an innovative building with open and accessible features designed to attract people to STEM. Watch campus announcements for details of the next project town hall meeting on August 28.

I would say our first year together has been a resounding success. We have much to be proud of here at Chico State.

Now, it is time to look toward our future.

California State University, Chico emerged from humble beginnings as a Normal School whose primary mission was to educate and train high school graduates to be teachers. One hundred and thirty years later, we stand as the “University of the North State” and a “University of Choice” in the CSU for those who wish to join us.

We are an academic community of over 2,000 faculty and staff. We serve over 17,000 students annually and graduate more than 3,000 students each May.

Our academic rigor, student engagement and success, civic engagement, sustainability, diversity and social justice, global education, scholarly achievements, and innovations rival the best in the country. We continually earn the reputation from national media outlets as best value education for the dollar. For nearly a century and a half, we have transformed student lives with passion and dedication. We are Chico State. Our graduates move on and, like our faculty, staff, and students, make significant contributions to local, regional and global communities.

We are modest in the ways we boast about our accomplishments and contributions to the world. Yet, I know and you know that we are much more than what we allow the world to see. In many ways, we have always been a diamond in the rough showing the world only a small fraction, a sparkle, of what we are capable of contributing to higher education and beyond.

We are a symbol of promise for a better future, a promise kept by continuing to provide students with a high quality education that is accessible and affordable; that is student-ready and student-centered; that is leading-edge and innovative;

that is inclusive and diverse; that is relevant in solving today's problems and tomorrow's challenges.

Going forward we will unveil the full potential of our precious gem of an institution. And, we will aspire toward becoming a preeminent community-based, comprehensive university that is a model for the CSU, and the nation. Together, in partnership with our civic and community leaders, we will define and achieve this vision.

As we begin our journey, we must build upon our mission to serve students. Our commitment to academic excellence and inclusivity serve as our compass. Our core values of honesty, civility, respect and integrity serve as provisions that will sustain us over the course of this journey. The hallmarks that make us unique form the engine that drives us forward. As we come upon new terrain, we will explore opportunities that will further enrich the lives of our students and move Chico State to greater distinction as a community-based, comprehensive university. This will be an important year for exploration and reflection.

Graduation Initiative 2025, with its focus on data-informed student support systems and faculty, pedagogy and curriculum, will shape our work. We will complete a much-needed comprehensive self-examination of institutional strengths and weaknesses as we continue with the WASC accreditation process this fall. Both Graduation Initiative 2025 and WASC require a tremendous campus and community effort, and I call upon each of you to contribute.

Our WASC institutional report—due this fall in draft form with preliminary conclusions-- will lay the groundwork to update our strategic priorities and develop a new campus physical master plan, both of which will serve as our

institutional map showing a clear path toward becoming a preeminent community-based, comprehensive university.

Together, we are one University. Together, with the city, we are one community.

Together, we will transform tomorrow.

I wish you a meaningful fall semester and a productive academic year.