

## **2019 State of the University Address**

**Monday, February 4, 2019**

Welcome to 2019 State of the University Address. We returned to campus this spring ready and excited to continue the academic year providing our students with high-quality education, while increasing our rates of graduation and narrowing the equity gaps that exist among our students. We also returned with renewed hope and strengthened resolve to partner with the North State, especially Paradise and neighboring communities, as we work to recover and reimagine and rebuild in the wake of the worst fire in California history.

As always, we acknowledge the Mechoopda Tribe on whose ancestral lands this great University sits. They are our friends and our partners as we work toward a more resilient and sustainable future.

We are living in an era of great change. Environmentally, we are witnessing the effects of climate change here, with the wildfires and other impacts that are occurring across the country, with the polar vortex, and around the globe. World communities and cultures continue to struggle for basic human rights, countries compete for global and market dominance, and on a national front, I believe we are navigating our way through one of the worst, one of the most divisive political climates of our time. We remain hopeful in the strength of our democracy and the power of the people, especially last fall when we observed the largest number ever of women and underrepresented individuals elected to political office.

[APPLAUSE]

As an academic community, we understand quite well that now and for generations to come, humanity will continue to wrestle with local and global challenges, like sufficient food and water to sustain humankind, medical and nutrition solutions to tackle disease and illness, resources to preserve ecosystems, and strategies to combat climate change, policies, education, and creative arts to protect civil and human rights and embrace cultures different from our own, both in this country and abroad.

Our responsibility as an institution of higher learning is to provide our students the best education possible so when they become innovators, culture leaders, activists, and change agents, they will be prepared to navigate a world that is constantly changing.

This spring, we will finish developing a new University Strategic Plan, designed to elevate Chico State's reputation from notable to outstanding. It will position us as the intellectual, innovative, and cultural partner of the North State, and will guide our ascent to national prominence and global recognition as a leading-edge University.

We are a collaborative institution of higher learning, so I begin this presentation by recognizing my colleagues who serve as campus leaders. Please stand as I call your name and, if you would, audience hold your applause until I finish each group.

Beginning with Cabinet:

- Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs Debra Larson
- Vice President for Student Affairs Milton Lang
- Vice President for University Advancement Ahmad Boura
- Chief of Staff Brooke Banks

[APPLAUSE]

Now, the moment you have been waiting for ... joining us as our new vice president for business and finance just three weeks ago, please stand, Vice President Ann Sherman. She comes to Chico from San Francisco State, where she served as senior associate vice president for human resources and interim vice president of Administration and Finance. Vice President Sherman brings an impressive array of talent and experiences, and she has something in common with the provost. Anybody know? It is a special place in the Upper Peninsula in Michigan, I'm not sure where it is on the map, but they are fellow "yoopers." Welcome.

I would also like to recognize another important member of my executive team, Jeni Kitchell. Jeni served as interim chief financial officer for the past nine months. She is deeply committed to the Division of Business and Finance and represented the division extremely well, especially during the Camp Fire emergency closure. She learned a great deal in a short period of time to represent her expanded team. Jeni is highly respected, not only by her Cabinet colleagues, but the campus as a whole. When she entered the position of CFO, she didn't skip a beat and neither did the division. Thank you, Jeni.

In the spirit of shared governance, I recognize the Academic Senate Officers. This team is doing an exceptional job navigating Senate responsibilities and meeting regularly with me and Cabinet. Please stand and be recognized as I call your name:

- Jed Wyrick, Chair
- Jeff Livingston, Vice Chair

- Tim Sistrunk, Secretary
- Chiara Ferrari, EPPC Chair
- Carl Pittman, FASP Chair
- Rick Ford, Statewide Senator
- Betsy Boyd, Statewide Senator

[APPLAUSE]

I also acknowledge the collaborative efforts and contributions of the leaders and members of Staff Council, Campus Labor Council, California Faculty Association, and the CSUEU. Let's give a warm thanks to:

- Tawny Peterson, chair of Staff Council
- Elaina McReynolds, Campus Labor Council and chief steward of Academic Professional of California, Unit 4
- Tim Sistrunk, President of California Faculty Association
- Jessica Westbay, President of CSUEU, Chapter 302

[APPLAUSE]

Finally, for the millions of alumni watching this live stream right now, I would like to acknowledge the many contributions of our alumni, friends, benefactors, and those who serve on various advisory boards like University Foundation, Alumni Association, Research Foundation, and other advisory boards, along with our city officials in the audience, one of whom said he is keeping an eye on me.

It is always important to take time to recognize where we have been and what we accomplished. I begin with the University's national recognitions.

*Money* magazine ranked Chico State No. 32 out of 727 American universities on its national list of Best Colleges for Transfer Students. *Money's* methodology includes quality of education, affordability, and outcomes, such as employment rates and earnings after graduation. Last semester, we enrolled 1,517 transfer students. Aside from California, they arrived from nine states and 11 counties. I'm delighted to see recognition for our success in supporting students who transferred to Chico State, and I know it will continue to grow.

Chico State was also recognized as one of the country's top institutions for preparing students for life after graduation so they can thrive in their chosen field and experience upward mobility. In its 2018 Social Mobility Index, CollegeNET ranked us No. 2 in a listing of national higher education institutions that provide students with the best opportunity to improve their lives and the lives of their families. Among the top 20 colleges and universities on the 2018 Social Mobility Index list, Chico State tied for third-highest graduation rate (68.5%) and boasts the fourth-highest medium early career salary of \$53,600.

At the college level, *Money* magazine ranked Chico No. 45 on its list of Best Colleges for Business Majors. The list highlights colleges that have large numbers of students majoring in business, as well as top salaries for graduates who studied business. Of the colleges and universities on *Money's* list, CSU, Chico emerged as the most affordable with an estimated price tag of \$14,700 without aid. The University also

ranked in the top 10 for the least amount of average student debt at \$17,000. When you look at national averages, we're doing extremely well.

Days ago, hot off the press, Chico State's School of Nursing received news of its ranking at No. 17 among all Schools of Nursing in the State of California!

*RegisteredNursing.org* looks at programs and student performance on the NCLEX-RN exam, which is the exam students take to become registered nurses. Out of 126 California nursing programs analyzed, 50 were ranked by the organization, and Chico State rose to No. 17, up from No. 20 last year. So congratulations to the School of Nursing.

[APPLAUSE]

Sadly, the College of Engineering, Computer Science, and Construction Management suffered a terrible loss, as well all did, last October with the passing of Dean Ricardo Jacquez. Before joining Chico State three years ago, Ricardo spent 34 years working at New Mexico State University. He was passionate about diversity in the profession of engineering. His dedication to Chico State, our mission, faculty, students, and staff was evident every day as he worked to grow the College of ECC's reputation for academic excellence, real-world research, industry partnerships, and pre-professional experience. Dean Jacquez will be greatly missed, but you must understand in three short years, he leaves a legacy on this campus like none other. So, a moment for Ricardo.

[Moment of Silence observed]

Not surprising, the College of ECC was ranked No. 3 in 50 Best Value Engineering Schools by *Best Value Schools*, which notes that Chico offers “one of the best engineering degrees for sustainability and eco-conscious building.”

In the *US News and World Report* ranking of Best Undergraduate Engineering Programs for schools without doctorate programs, the College of ECC tied for No. 71. I'm confident with time that ECC's reputation will continue to climb as we work to make our students and alumni even prouder.

We continue to work with corporate partners to invest in our labs and other facilities. University Advancement and the College of ECC are in the process of finalizing a gift of \$700,000 with Omron Corporation that will be used for a major renovation of a lab in Plumas Hall. Construction is scheduled to begin in summer.

Now, this new collaborative lab will be used by mechatronic engineering, electrical engineering and computer science. This came about because of the collaboration between University Advancement and the College of ECC, with visionary leadership by the Dean, chairs, and faculty who sat down and imagined a collaborative lab that will serve multiple departments. In addition, Concrete Industry Management patrons continue their steadfast support of Chico State, giving \$300,000 for the next stage of Langdon Lab renovations.

And finally, a story of student success. Computer Science major Victor Torres defeated 3,000 students to win a national cyber hacking competition. This is someone we need to get to know. I think he can help the University, I think he can help me personally. During the three-day National Cyber League event, students worked their

way through challenges involving password cracking, open-source intelligence, web application vulnerabilities and exploiting binaries. For the final challenge, Victor found himself working for 12 long hours straight before securing the win. Two weeks later, he combined his efforts with other Chico State students to win the team championship as well. And they beat out more than 300 other groups. Well done.

[APPLAUSE]

The Chico Cares campaign received its largest single gift to date when Rob Hodes donated \$50,000 to support students most at risk and to assist in developing affordable housing for students. He is a health insurance executive and philanthropist who established the Hodes Family Foundation. His son is a graduate of Shasta High School and he is now in his first year at Chico State.

The support is vital as the Hungry Wildcat Food Pantry meets a growing need. The pantry had its busiest semester yet in fall, serving 250 students a day in December and dispersing more than three tons of food. So our congratulations to the Basic Needs Project.

You may recall our experiment with virtual reality last fall. I'm excited to report we're continuing to explore wider use of virtual reality on our campus.

Last fall, the chemistry department and Creative Media and Technology teamed up to create the University's first large-scale VR assignment. Over five days, more than 400 general chemistry students completed a VR lesson on atomic orbital theory. Lead professor Erik Wasinger was joined by Monica So and Luke Hillyard to offer the VR lesson, which allowed students to interact with the concepts in new and novel ways.



Students were able to change the mathematical makeup of an atom and see the effect of it in real time. How cool is that? They could pick up the atom and look inside to see its critical components. I'm hoping to make my way to the lab this spring.

Theoretical concepts may be difficult to grasp, but a lesson with the aid of VR helps bring the tough concepts to life. In a preliminary analysis, students on average doubled their scores on the content portion of the assessment after the VR experience. Those students who performed the weakest on the pre-assessment almost tripled their scores on average. This teaching method shows great promise. Nearly 70% of students in the class either agreed or strongly agreed that VR can improve learning outcomes for the first-year chemistry class, and only 10% disagreed. This semester chemistry 111 will be expanded to include one or two additional learning modules. So congratulations to the chemistry department on that.

[APPLAUSE]

Moving on to Athletics.

The mission of the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) Division II is “educational well-being and academic success of every student athlete.” Student athletes learn through their academic pursuits, civic engagement and community service, and sports competitions. NCAA Division II strives to create inclusive environments where all students feel a sense of belonging. And, I assure you that our athletic director and athletic staff work hard and tirelessly to build inclusive sports teams where student athletes feel empowered to succeed on and off the field, track, or court.

Chico State's women's cross-country team won their 11th consecutive CCAA title and finished eighth in the national championships. They have now finished in the top 10 at the NCAA Championship 19 times in the last 20 years

Men's cross-country won its 17th straight CCAA title, placing all 10 of its runners in the top 12. The team claimed its third consecutive West regional title and finished 7th in the NCAA championships.

[APPLAUSE]

Men's and women's soccer teams advanced to the NCAA Championship Tournament. The women's team opened the season with a school-record of 13-0, unbeaten for 13 matches. Let's give soccer a round of applause.

[APPLAUSE]

Our athletes also scored in the classroom, and this is important to remember because the mission of Division II is student athlete with student first. Our athletes scored in the classroom with 16 students earning California Collegiate Fall All-Academic honors. Sara Emigh, a sophomore and pre-nursing major, earned the CCAA Championship Scholar Athlete Award, which is given to the student athlete with the highest grade point average among teams participating in the championship. She is the third Wildcat to earn the award. Volleyball player Bekah Boyle and cross country athlete Caton Avilla won in their respective sports last season.

[APPLAUSE]

With our golden shovels we broke ground on the new physical sciences building in October. We celebrated the history of the land and set high expectations for the leading-edge science capabilities that the building will offer. Here is a peek at the progress that has been made so far.

[VIDEO]

So for those of us who aren't in construction, it looks like a lot of trucks pushing dirt around. But the important piece was to get the building down, and secondly to work on stabilizing the ground and making sure it is secure to the best of our ability before we start placing the footers. That important work should guarantee or ensure that the building doesn't fall over later, so a lot of work went into that and we're happy about that.

In fall 2018, we were in a highly productive sprint to the end of the semester when it came to a sudden halt on November 8. The Camp Fire ravaged communities, killing 83 people and displacing nearly 50,000, including students, faculty, and staff. I declared an emergency closure due to poor air quality and out of concern for those impacted by the fire.

Reflecting on the weeks that followed, I can say I have never experienced a more difficult time as president. At the same time, I have never been more proud of Chico State and my community. To meet the needs of the campus and the wider community, the Chico State Emergency Operations Center, comprised of Cabinet and emergency personnel, was staffed around the clock. During the long days and nights, we provided shelter for first responders, shelter for California State University critical response unit

volunteers, Red Cross volunteers, and our own students. Faculty, staff, and students stepped up around the community to help around the clock in countless ways:

- Volunteering at evacuation centers like the Red Cross, Salvation Army, FEMA and many other locations;
- Opening our homes to fire survivors and people displaced; and
- Supporting the volunteer organization Caring Choices to verify and assign volunteers.

In two days, we started a fund to help those who experienced loss related to fire. Truly exemplifying the generosity and caring in our community, donations immediately began to flow into the fund. By the beginning of January, there was more than \$675,000. I believe today it might be around \$694,000 that has been raised, with more than 5,091 donors from 49 states and countries like Japan and Canada. We have awarded \$661,000 to 158 faculty and staff, and 376 students. Staff members also donated sick leave and vacation time to help meet the needs of our Wildcat family.

I will tell you right now, the Board of Trustees placed before the Legislature a change for catastrophic leave in the system that will allow people to donate catastrophic leave across campuses as a result of our efforts and us asking them to do that.

[APPLAUSE]

Students, faculty, and staff contributed in countless ways:

- Nursing students assisted with medical care; Passages helped to replace life-sustaining medicines.

- Two students set up a triage system to improve care at East Avenue Church, creating an electronic medical system using Google Docs.
- World Central Kitchen and volunteers, including folks from A.S. Catering, provided a holiday meal for evacuees at Thanksgiving Together.
- Procurement and Contract Services staff helped with purchase and delivery of critical supplies, from safety suits to space heaters to N95 masks and pig food.
- The Chico State Livestock Judging Team cleaned pens and fed animals at the Butte County Fairgrounds.
- Forensic anthropology faculty and students aided in the search for human remains.
- School of Education students gathered supplies to restock classrooms for Paradise teachers in a program they called Color a Classroom with Love.
- The Agricultural Leadership class community service project Planting Hope, Harvesting Joy brought in more than \$35,000 in cash and donations, surpassing its goal of \$6,000. On the day of the class final, 256 students from Paradise elementary schools and 32 additional families attended the event at the University Farm in what one student described as “the best version of collaboration and group work I have ever been a part of.”
- Led by Construction Management Chair Chris Souder, the department rallied the support of industry partners to raise more than \$50,000 for the Wildcats Rise Fire Recovery Fund.

- Don Hankins, professor in the Department of Geography and Planning, was called on for his expertise and insight into wildfires by the *San Francisco Chronicle*, CNN, and NPR's Blue Dot report.
- The baseball team collected three moving trucks full of gear for Little Leaguers and youth in Paradise and surrounding areas who lost their equipment in the fire.
- Dan Herbert, director of Off Campus Student Services, was instrumental in finding housing for those impacted by the Camp Fire. His important work is ongoing as some students are feeling the impact of secondary displacement.

And this is only a glimpse, this is a snapshot of the monumental outpouring of goodwill from this campus. Thank you to each and every one of you who volunteered and assisted in Camp Fire relief efforts.

[APPLAUSE]

One thing you may not have had time to realize is that your generous and compassionate acts strongly affirm what we know to be most true about our character here at Chico State: our caring commitment to each other and the community. This isn't lip service, we care. We do our best to support our fellow Wildcats and the community at large. This signature strength is one of several things that make Chico State unique. During the Camp Fire, we witnessed this collective super power through your actions. Well done.

[APPLAUSE]

Where do we go from here? What happens now? As history professor Laird Easton told us in his column published in *The Washington Post*, we will pass through several phases in this recovery. The road will be long. At times, it will be very difficult, and we must guard against compassion fatigue. We must protect and prolong what Professor Easton called “social solidarity,” because in a post-catastrophe world, it is common for public attention to fade and for compassion to decline.

I know that we at Chico State won't let this happen. We're busy. We're busy participating in post-Camp Fire support while still advancing the primary mission of the University—providing our students with a high-quality education.

Supporting our neighbors and reimagining and rebuilding Paradise and surrounding communities will take a long time. So I invite each and every one of you to consider ways to contribute to Camp Fire recovery efforts. Think about how you might lend your disciplinary expertise through research, teach your students through experiential activities that help with community rebuilding, or encourage them to participate in organized volunteer acts of service. Our focus should be on helping Butte County recover and rebuild. It should also be about learning from the disaster and discovering ways to prevent something like this from happening in the future.

In that wonderful Chico State way, ideas and efforts have sprung up all over campus. Research interests include:

- The release of containments in the watershed. This is Jack Webster collecting samples from the burn area near Butte Creek Ecological Preserve. He is working with other universities who made a consortium

where they are studying contaminants that wildfires release into the watershed.

We have faculty, staff, and students looking at:

- The impact on housing
- The elderly and how social media failed them
- Where displaced residents choose to relocate in short and long term
- Capturing and learning from social media data about the evacuation or during the evacuation
- Impact on the county's homeless population
- The effects on public health
- The impact of runoff on salmon in our local streams
- The impact on students
- The ecological response and how to better protect ourselves through management of forest and electrical utilities.

One of our challenges as we continue our post-Camp Fire efforts is coordination and communication of our activities. Therefore, in partnership with the Office of Civic Engagement, I have appointed Megan Kurtz as Wildcats Rise Community Liaison. She will serve as a link between Chico State and the various agencies leading the long-term recovery efforts. Megan will work in collaboration with the Office of Civic Engagement and the newly formed Teaching the Camp Fire faculty workgroup. The Office of Civic Engagement recently launched a webpage designed to serve as a resource and



communication tool for all of us. And I'm going to ask Megan, where are you, please stand. Megan, thank you.

[APPLAUSE]

Stay standing for a moment. Thank you, Megan. I want all of you to know who she is and then really work hard to support her in her new role by providing her with notifications of activity, events, and work within your purview that connects our campus to the Camp Fire recovery efforts. Thank you.

Now on to spring '19.

We launched this semester with a unifying event.

On January 17—raise your hand if you were there, thank you very much—more than 350 faculty, staff, and administrators came together for the first-ever Tipping Point: Student Success Summit, a day-long exploration of who our students are, the compelling stories they tell about their about their experiences here, and the innovative teaching and support programs helping them succeed.

One of the simplest but most powerful takeaways from the summit is how much it means for students when we make a personal connection with them: learning their names, sending a personal e-mail message, letting them know we see them as individuals and as partners in their own education. This was a watershed event, marking our steadfast commitment to student success by collaborating across departmental and divisional lines.

Here is a wonderful video created by our Creative Media and Technology media production team that captures the spirit and energy of the day.

[VIDEO]

Frankly, the Tipping Point: Student Success Summit delivered on its promise to help us understand our diverse student demographic and share best practices in teaching, advising, and student engagement. We collected ideas on how to strengthen our learning environments through inclusive pedagogy, deepen our culture of caring by enhancing our student support services, and utilize data for informed decision making in scheduling, advising, business processes, and teaching. Much of what we learned that day will help us help students as they persist and progress through their course of study. I look forward to another student success summit next January.

One of the ways to elevate Chico State's reputation to national prominence is to share our best practices with the world. When we do, we earn awards. In January, Chico State received word from the Council for Advancement and Support of Education, known as CASE, that we won several awards for publications, marketing, and development programs. The University received two CASE Gold Awards, a Silver Award, and a Bronze Award within our region. University Communications won a Gold Award in the crisis management category, and the 2016-17 annual report *On the Road* won Gold in the category of fundraising publications. The *Chico Statements* article on the Basic Needs Project received a Silver Award for best article, and Chico State Giving Day won a Bronze Award for targeted campaigns. Please join me in congratulating our colleagues in University Communications and University Advancement.

[APPLAUSE]

Sharing best practices, I turn to Student Affairs. Just recently we learned that three of their programs received excellence awards from the National Association of Student Personnel Administrators. Adventure Outings won a NASPA Gold Award for the submission “Get Outdoors Fund Scholarship Program.” The Accessibility Resource Center was selected as a Silver Award Winner for Academic Coaching for Students with Disabilities. And, Community Action Volunteers in Education, known as CAVE, won a Bronze Award in the category of Civic Learning, Democratic Engagement, Service Learning, and Community Service. These awards represent a broad array of the excellent support services we provide to students. To our colleagues who lead these programs, I say congratulations.

[APPLAUSE]

Facilities Management and Services, FMS, sponsored the second Veterans Day 5K Hoorah Run/Walk. Scheduled for fall semester, it was postponed until January due to the Camp Fire. More than 200 folks signed up, doubling earnings last year. The run raised more than \$9,000, which will be used to provide veteran student scholarships and to support the student veterans’ organization. Congratulations to Mike and the team. Where are you Mike? Hoorah!

Let’s shift to our financial picture. So this is our business meeting and last year we spent quite a bit of time talking about budget. So I want to give you an update on some of the things we have been working on. A year ago, I talked in depth about our

multi-year problem of deficit spending and made a commitment that we will work diligently as one University to end this practice. Before I report on progress made, let me remind you the general operating budget for Chico State is roughly \$223 million. Approximately 90% of that is for employee compensation and benefits. Our remaining portion funds student financial aid and the institution's operating costs. All things considered, we provide our students with a high-quality education on a modest budget.

As a campus, we have come to rely on the unsustainable practice of spending down reserves. We don't want our reserves to run out, and we don't want them to be so low that we are unable to cover unexpected challenges. After all, campus is over 130 years old, and we have deferred maintenance but no resources to take care of that. So our deferred maintenance needs are backlogged. What could go wrong?

So did we reduce deficit spending last year? Yes, because of our good, hard work. In fact, a year ago we predicted that we would end the academic year with a reserve balance of \$37 million. We ended the year of a balance of \$40 million. The deficit spending was less than predicted, and this is good news.

I commend Provost Larson and the Division of Academic Affairs, which comprises 72% of the University's budget, for their earnest and collaborative efforts to balance the 2017–18 budget. The Provost's Academic Council and the University Budget Committee led by the Academic Senate Executive Committee completed prioritization exercises and ultimately reduced divisional deficit spending by \$2.5 million. This resulted in a nearly balanced budget for the first time in a long time. I commend the

other divisions too for their wise use of resources and a savings of approximately \$500,000.

We made progress this year, but we're not out of the woods yet. The National Association of College and University Business Officers (NACUBO) recommends that campuses have enough reserves to cover salary and benefits for three months, which for us would mean over \$47 million. So there is more work to be done and we will remain diligent on this front.

Our enrollment picture is changing, too. Resident enrollment remains strong and we expect to be 2% over our funded target this year. However, the 2% overage is not enough to cover the significant decline in nonresident enrollment that we have been experiencing. Since 2015–2016, nonresident enrollment has declined 45%, primarily due to fewer international students. Consequently, our current year FTES is expected to be 160 short of the budget projection, which translates to or what results in a \$1.5 million revenue shortfall.

In the past, we have seen revenue surpluses as a result of exceeding enrollment targets, which have provided consistent one-time funding to the divisions in the following year. While this shortfall is one-time in nature, its impact is significant.

In the future, budget and enrollment planning for resident and nonresident enrollment must be better aligned to adjust, to anticipate, and react to these types of fluctuations. We will manage this revenue shortfall, but this is an example of unanticipated challenges that impact our annual funding. Therefore, this spring we will update our enrollment strategies in ways that better anticipate and address enrollment

fluctuations in the future. For those asking, I have been in touch with the Chancellor's Office to ask them to be flexible about our enrollment fluctuations, not only this year but a few years to come.

If you're interested in learning more or would like to review what we discussed last year in terms of budget, I encourage you to attend University Budget Committee meetings or visit our budget website, which should be up on the screen.

([www.csuchico.edu/sen/ubc/schedule.shtml](http://www.csuchico.edu/sen/ubc/schedule.shtml) and [www.csuchico.edu/bud/](http://www.csuchico.edu/bud/) )

Shifting topics, increased student fee revenue has brought positive changes to the campus. Two of the increases—Student Health Services Fee and Student Learning Fee—were phased in last fall and this spring. As a result of the increased Student Health Fee, there have been improvements in the delivery of critical medical and mental health services to students. Is it perfect? No, it is not. But, it is an important step in the right direction.

The Student Health Center hired another doctor and four additional medical staff that will reduce wait times and fill gaps in service. The center is now able to offer competitive salaries and attract and retain talented practitioners. The health center is also exploring tele-psychiatry and implementation of a self-scheduling module to help meet the needs of our students.

In addition, improvements were made to the center itself. Panels were installed to increase privacy in the triage area, and charging stations were added to the student waiting area.

At the Counseling and Wellness Center, we have filled counselor vacancies created by retirements and added one new counseling position. Following a failed search last fall, a new search will begin this semester. This third position will bring the staffing in line with the standards recommended by the International Association of Counseling Services, and will raise our counselor-to-student ratio above the CSU system average. In an effort to meet the needs of students, we have added a counselor-in-residence in the Housing Office and added a counselor in the Student Health Center.

Mental health issues continue to challenge students. According to the 2018 National College Health Association study:

- 36.5% Chico State students said that stress had a negative impact on their studies,
- 67.4% of Chico State students reported experiencing anxiety,
- 21.1% of Chico State students reported depression had a negative impact on their academics, and
- 20.3% of Chico State students reported they have been diagnosed or treated for depression in the past 12 months.

Our student numbers are higher than the national average, signaling the need to boost our efforts to understand this important student demographic, and do a better job of creating supportive learning environments that are trauma-sensitive and trauma-informed.

Our Counseling and Wellness Center will undergo a voluntary review this spring to identify innovative ways to continue increasing student access to mental health

services. It is our hope to implement recommendations from this review later this spring and into the fall 2019.

As a result of the increase in the Student Learning Fee, which went into effect this semester, we are investing in student success by providing:

- \$214,000 in financial aid,
- \$234,000 in additional work study,
- \$400,000 in additional learning fee awards.

Provost Larson along with the Campus Fee Advisory Committee designed a new allocation process effective for the 2019–20 award year. The revised process is structured to improve efficiency, protect the student voice, support improved assessment, and build capacity for innovative, interdisciplinary, and cross-divisional projects.

The Student Athletic and Recreational Sport Fee will be implemented next fall, and next year at this time I will have a report for you.

Let's briefly take a look at the budget outlook for the California State University in 2019–2020. Governor Gavin Newsom has said that California's workforce faces an anticipated shortfall in bachelor's degree-holding students.

The CSU is expected to graduate 480,000 students to offset the shortfall in the workplace. "We will shape the future of work and connect higher education and skills training to the next generation of middle-class jobs."



On January 10, the governor showed his commitment to higher education when he released his proposed state budget. It contains the single largest proposed investment in the CSU by any governor in the history of the system, with \$300 million in ongoing funding for:

- Graduation Initiative 2025,
- Compensation increases,
- Resident enrollment increases of approximately 2%,
- Mandatory cost increases, such as health insurance, retirement costs, and minimum wage increases.

There is also one-time funding for the CSU deferred maintenance backlog, approximately \$247 million, and \$15 million in one-time dollars for basic need partnerships.

In responding to the governor's proposal, Chancellor White stated there would be no tuition increase for 2019–20.

The Chancellor expressed gratitude and appreciation for the governor's commitment to the CSU, "The budget recommendation enables us to expand our work, to welcome more students to our campuses, enhancing our efforts to ensure their success, and aiding their launch into graduate programs and careers that impact our state's economy and its citizens."

Not only do I thank the governor, I commend the Chancellor's Office, the Board of Trustees, campus presidents, Academic Senators, other union leadership, Associated Student government, Alumni Association, parent groups, industry leaders

and hundreds of others—students, staff, faculty and concerned citizens—who rallied in Sacramento in support of the California State University. Our collective advocacy efforts were not only heard last year, but acknowledged in this proposed budget.

However, I do agree with the Chancellor, who, in response to the governor's proposal, cautioned that the high-fives should come later and reminded us that we're at the beginning of a six-month advocacy process that engages the legislature as they craft the budget for next year. Many forces will come into play between now and the May revision, so I encourage all of us to continue our efforts and stay focused on acquiring sufficient funding for student success at the CSU.

Let's linger on the slide for a moment. When you're looking at the proposed budget by the governor on the right and you look at what CSU's budget request was, you'll see that this is significant, because there is money there for the mandatory costs and employee compensation but not all of the Graduation Initiative, because our request was \$75 million and this is \$45 million. We asked for 5% enrollment growth; this is 2%. You see our need far outweighs from what we're hopefully getting, but at the same time, we are grateful for this because it's certainly a step in the right direction. So in our advocacy efforts this spring, we have to push for sufficient funding for the CSU.

In the meantime, we have work to do. Academic year 2018–19 is pivotal in the history of Chico State, as we look toward the future and envision our greatest ambitions. Last fall, we began University-wide strategic planning and campus master planning. These efforts are designed to unlock our potential, better meet the needs of our

students, and elevate the academic reputation of Chico State from notable to one of national prominence.

Through an open process called FutureFest, we had 860 people participate in 22 face-to-face sessions. Additionally, we received 1,300 responses to an online survey. Participants provided input about our vision, mission, values, and strategic priorities. I asked you to be bold in your vision of the future, explore possibilities, and identify priorities that will help us serve the North State and earn national prominence with global recognition.

I'm pleased to report that the University Strategic Plan and Campus Master Plan are beginning to take shape. We will be proposing drafts to you this spring.

With regard to the Campus Master Plan, the master plan team has been hard at work reviewing data and putting together alternatives based on input from the strategic planning effort, most notably our sense of community, commitment to student success, and our commitment to sustainability. The consultants with whom we are working will return to the University in March to present master plans scenarios for your consideration and feedback. Three 90-minute sessions will be conducted on campus March 11 and 12, and we look forward to getting as much input as possible. Be on the lookout for the announcement for time and place of the workshops. I strongly encourage you to participate and provide the best feedback and informed opinions.

Despite disruption by the Camp Fire, members of the Strategic Plan Steering Committee under the leadership of Brooke Banks, Tony Dunn, and Rebecca Lytle, organized and analyzed FutureFest strategic planning data, grouping data into

categories and themes. Together, with Cabinet, we began drafting for your consideration, statements of vision and mission, as well as proposing values and strategic priorities.

On February 13 and 14, we will hold campus engagement sessions and open an online survey where we will seek your feedback on proposed vision, mission, strategic values and priorities. My hope is to have penultimate drafts of the Strategic Plan and the Campus Master Plan by the end of the semester.

Once determined, we can develop goals and objectives for each of the new strategic priorities. The Campus Master Plan will be submitted for approval to the Chancellor's Office and Board of Trustees. That will take approximately a year to navigate and earn approval.

We are far from done with these planning processes. Nothing is done. Nothing is decided, but I would like to take a moment to thank the members of the FutureFest team, the planning and the master plan core groups, for their efforts to bring us to this point. Please stand and let people see you, and have a round of applause.

[APPLAUSE]

OK, so now I'm going out on a limb, because what I'm about to share with you is only proposed. They are drafts. They are for you to actually think about, and I only share them to ignite your critical thinking, knowing you will help me consider ways to improve upon them. Please don't leave here thinking this is a done deal. That is where this is risky. I'm bold; I'm going to take the risk. I'm going out on a limb because what you see here today will be presented to you in those information sessions, so by letting

you see it today, will start you thinking. And when you come to the sessions, it won't be a surprise. You're going to dive in and help us make these better.

Let's begin.

## **The proposed vision**

*Chico State will be known as an intellectual, innovative, and cultural partner of the North State that ensures student success while improving local, regional, and global communities through exemplary scholarship, teaching, and service. As civically engaged, responsible steward of environmental, social, and economic resources, we will be the University of choice for lifelong learners.*

I got one thumbs up! So again, these will be for your consumption later. We really need to think about how we unlock our potential and who we aspire to be.

Moving on, I've got two vision statements for you. They sound a lot alike so we need your help, again. I want you to be thinking: national prominence, innovation, creativity.

## **Proposed Mission A**

*Our mission is to prepare and graduate diverse leaders and passionate alumni through an accessible and affordable high quality education defined by inclusive experiential learning experiences, prominent scholarship, caring relationships, and coordinated student support. We are civically engaged, responsible stewards of environmental, social, and economic resources.*

## **Proposed Mission B**

*Chico State is a comprehensive public university that offers the welcoming, familial experience of a residential college. We prepare and graduate diverse leaders and passionate alumni through an accessible and affordable high quality education defined by inclusive experiential learning experiences, prominent scholarship, caring relationships, and coordinated student support.*

This is after poring over hundreds upon hundreds of statements that you provided us, so I hope you will turn out and help us a little bit later.

Continuing on, the list of values I think we gleaned from all of the statements is probably a list of around 25 or 30, so we whittled it down to this. But something may be missing or something may not capture who we are.

## **Proposed Values**

- Academic and intellectual freedom
- Care and support
- Collaboration
- Inclusion, diversity, equity
- Resilience
- Respect
- Reason

Moving on. Strategic priorities.

All of Chico State's priorities are predicated on the primacy of student success enabled by excellence of faculty and staff. Communication, technology, and philanthropy are critical enablers.

1. Accessible and Affordable High Quality Education
2. Transformative Student Experiences
3. Diversity, Inclusion, and Equity
4. Prominent Scholarship and Innovation
5. Civic Engagement
6. Resilient and Sustainable Systems
7. Culture of Excellence and Accountability (Academic, Operational, Financial)

I like the silence; this is good. I want you to be critical thinkers here. I want to ignite your critical thinking today. I look forward to your feedback. Remember our goal is to unlock our potential, be known as the cultural partner of the North State and beyond, and achieve national prominence with global recommendation.

We are in the home stretch of our WASC reaccreditation, and I wish to acknowledge Vice Provost Daniel Grassian for his guidance and extensive work on the process.

In December, the evaluation team completed an offsite review of our institutional self-study. The review commended us for our resilience, our candid report, our G.E. Pathways program, our rent informed use of data to drive decisions, our increases in

our retention and graduation rates, and our response to service area needs in the North State.

Just about a month from now, March 5–7, we will host the WASC evaluation team members, who will conduct an on-site visit. While they may ask questions about almost anything in their main lines of inquiry, you can take notes. Main lines of inquiry involve learning more about shared governance, data use, distance education, technology, financial planning, strategic planning, assessment, program review, and our graduate and credential programs.

I do invite you to learn more about the areas and be ready to speak with evaluation team members who may walk up to you as you cross campus. If you haven't been part of the process or aren't scheduled to meet with them, you should be familiar with the University's draft mission, vision, values, and strategic and master planning efforts. You are invited to attend an open meeting for WASC and all campus community members. Watch for details in Campus Announcements.

As I bring this presentation to a close, let me point out exciting opportunities available to you and your students this is spring.

Mechoopda-Maidu printmaker Jacob Meders challenges ideas of indigenous assimilation and the cultural appropriation of Native American identity in two distinct and related exhibitions at the Janet Turner Print Museum and Jacki Headley University Art Gallery. *Meemento: Before* is an exhibition curated by Meders from the Janet Turner Print Museum collection. *Aksum Bell: Afterwards* features new work by the artist at the Headley Gallery. Both shows run through February 23. An artist talk is scheduled for



5:30 p.m. on Thursday, February 7 in the Zingg Recital Hall with a reception to follow. The Turner exhibition talk will be at 2 p.m. on Saturday, February 9. The project was made possible with support from California Humanities, a nonprofit partner of the National Endowment for the Humanities.

You may recall that Giving Day was postponed due to the Camp Fire and campus closure. I'm pleased to report that it has been rescheduled for February 14. The 24-hour fundraising drive is a way for the 'Cats to give back and support what they're passionate about. Visit the Giving Day website to check out the projects that have established goals for this year's campaign. Watch for more information on social media. This is your chance to make a difference. I will be giving back. I hope you do, too.

Here is a group that means business. A Women's Leadership Symposium is planned for February 15 to gather the campus community's distinguished female leaders to share stories and discuss topics designed to inspire us all. Faculty and staff will share their personal stories of successes and failures, sharing their journeys of resilience and rise as a woman in today's social climate. I hope you will join us in the BMU auditorium between 10 a.m. and 2 p.m. on February 15.

In March, Hmong poet Mai Der Vang, author of *Afterland* and winner of the Walt Whitman Award from the Academy of American Poets, and a finalist for the 2018 Kate Tufts Discovery Award, will read from her debut collection. Mai Der was raised in Fresno and earned degrees from UC Berkeley and Columbia University. Her performance will be at 7:30 p.m., March 7 in the Zingg Recital Hall.

An event that is new this year, and that I expect to have a big impact on our service area, is a collaboration among Meriam Library, the Book in Common committee, and University Public Events to simulcast the Book in Common author's presentation to the libraries in the 12 counties in our service area. Our selection, *All They Will Call You*, written by Tim Hernandez, tells the harrowing account of the worst airplane disaster in California's history. Five county libraries have written a grant to get copies of the book into their branches and will have the author speak at the county library before or after his presentation at Chico State, which takes place March 13. If you haven't read the book already, I encourage you to start. I find it powerful to have read the book before the author joins us on campus.

Now in its third year, Inspired: Bridges to Knowledge, the publication recognition event co-hosted by the Meriam Library and the Office of Research and Sponsored Programs, will take place March 27. In addition to recognizing the publications of faculty, we will recognize all of the campus "best" awards (best teacher, best lecturer, etc.) and announce the winner of the Lantis Award. I hope you will be there to celebrate the outstanding achievements of our campus community members.

Following our most successful fundraising year on record, *Transform Tomorrow | The Campaign for Chico State* will transition to the public phase this spring.

[APPLAUSE]

We set a record for fundraising two years ago; last year we broke it! The campaign has now surpassed the \$70 million mark and the University is planning to launch the public phase with a celebration for our campus and community on April 27.

Thanks to the VP Boura and his team, we are well on the way to achieving our \$100 million goal. Highlights of the campaign's accomplishments include: more than \$13 million committed to endowed scholarships, \$2 million committed to create three new professorships (Beavers, Dennis Murphy, and Thomas Family Fellowship), and more than \$5 million committed to renovate facilities.

[APPLAUSE]

And we celebrate our first Wildcat Spirit Week in April. Campus will unveil a series of events and activities from April 15–19 built around the anniversary of the dedication of the Wildcat Statue. The week will be filled with student-centered programs that highlight our campus community values. After all, the Wildcat isn't just our mascot, it represents the shared identity and community to shared beliefs that make up the Chico Experience. The events will build up to a Rally 'Round the Wildcat, a pep rally-type event scheduled for noon on that Friday. It is wonderful to see students, alumni, parents, and staff to gather around the statue.

In closing, special thanks to Lori Miller, Gail Vanderhoof, and the entire production team for their help in preparing today's State of the University presentation.

[APPLAUSE]

So I probably could sum this up in five minutes, but the state of the University is strong. Our potential as an intellectual, innovative, and cultural partner of the North State and beyond unlimited. The only barriers to achieving national prominence in scholarship, teaching, and service are the constraints that we place on ourselves. I am confident that you will continue to join me in our pursuit of excellence by striving to be

thought leaders and scientists in our respective academic and professional fields; engaging students in innovative and inclusive learning opportunities and research projects that prepare them for a rapidly changing world; by taking risks to explore, innovate, create, and build solutions for environmental and social and economic challenges facing society and the earth today. Student success is the responsibility of every employee on this campus. Together, we will support and meet the needs of our students on their journey to educational achievement. Together, we will transform tomorrow. Together, we are transforming tomorrow.

Please take a moment to share a cookie and lemonade with me, and Cabinet will be in the lobby. Have a healthy and productive spring semester. Thank you.

[APPLAUSE]