Another measure of achievement is in national rankings, and we are thrilled that Fresno State ranked No. 4 in the nation among master’s degree-granting universities, according to the Washington Monthly, a magazine based in Washington, D.C. This ranking is particularly important because it considers several key factors to our region, including how well schools perform as an engine of social mobility for students, research and public service.

This is a bold time for the University, and these are only a few highlights from Fresno State’s commitment to students and community. Thanks to the efforts of faculty, staff, alumni and friends, there is much to be proud of at Fresno State.

Go ‘Dogs!
Biology and music grads awarded highest honors

Fresno State’s top academic honors were awarded to Yesenia Thompson (master’s in biology) and Joseph M. Bohigian (bachelor’s in music composition) at Fresno State’s 104th Commencement in May.

Bohigian was chosen from a group of nine Deans’ Undergraduate Medalists and Thompson from nine Deans’ Graduate Medalists.

Thompson, of Lindsay, was selected as the University Graduate Medalist, Fresno State’s top honor for a graduate student. Thompson’s family migrated from Mexico to the United States. She earned a 3.91 GPA while researching the role of pesticide exposure in cancer cases among Hispanic farmworkers. She now works as a research associate at Beckman Research Institute in Duarte.

Bohigian, of Clovis, was selected as the President’s Medalist, the University’s top honor for an undergraduate student. A Smith-Camp Family Honors College scholar, Bohigian earned a 4.0 GPA, and his original compositions have been performed in Armenia, Germany, Portugal, Brazil and across the United States. He has a Graduate Council Fellowship at Stony Brook University in New York.

New retailers now open at The Square at Campus Pointe

The Central Valley took another step forward in urban street resurgence when Fresno State celebrated the grand opening of The Square at Campus Pointe July 17.

Located across from the Save Mart Center, just off Highway 168 (Chestnut and Shaw avenues), the new retail development formally opened with three tenants: Maya Cinemas, Beach Hut Deli and Mad Duck. Gold Stone Ceramics, Screen Works, Yogurtland, Paragould and Wahoo’s opened this fall.

Fresno State and Granville Homes celebrated the grand opening of the Graduate Art Studios — the University’s first satellite campus — in May at the M Street Arts Complex in downtown Fresno (1419 M Street).

The space provides a safe, clean and professional environment where artists can create and the community can discover and support local art. Students work side-by-side with faculty and professional artists in the 6,000-square-foot building on the corner of M and Tuolumne streets. The complex has galleries, a conference room and 15 private working studios for Fresno State graduate art students.

The studio spaces will be used to recruit top students, and the gallery will provide space for exhibitions, visiting artists and shows.
A short walk atop a hill at one of Napa Valley’s most well-known wineries reveals an enchanting building constructed in 1888 that resembles an English gothic castle. It’s Chateau Montelena — built of thick, rectangular stones and covered in vines as green and healthy as the grape vineyards in the fields it watches over.

It’s a structure made for the big screen. And while Hollywood took a bit of creative liberty in producing the 2008 film “Bottle Shock” — a Napa Valley love story highlighting the rise of California wines — it certainly captured the charismatic personality of Bo Barrett, CEO and president of Chateau Montelena.

Barrett, a Fresno State alumnus who studied viticulture and enology in 1976–77, was portrayed in the film by Chris Pine. The movie tells the story of a British wine connoisseur who visits Napa expecting to find a product inferior to the French wines that had traditionally dominated the market. But a blind taste test by French judges in Paris proves the California wine — namely the 1973 Chateau Montelena Chardonnay — to be the best in class.

The nine judges were taken aback when they realized they had selected a California wine. The “Judgment of Paris,” as it became known, was featured in TIME magazine, and a bottle of the Chardonnay is on display at the Smithsonian in Washington, D.C.

Continued
During production of the Chardonnay, Barrett and his father, Jim Barrett, portrayed by Bill Pullman, discover the white wine in thousands of bottles had turned a darkish color, a phenomenon known as “pinking” or bottle shock. Barrett recalls learning about the process in a class at Fresno State led by Sig Shandrel, who told the students they’d likely never see such a thing in America because the wines aren’t acidic enough. But Barrett quickly chimed in with his story.

“That was the first time I ever spoke in front of my classmates,” Barrett says. “I put my hand up and said, ‘Actually our ’73 Chardonnay turned a dark color, a phenomenon known as “pinking” or bottle shock…’”

Tell us how you accomplished this feat.’”

“In scientific terms, pinked, occurred in the presence of oxygen in the wine. In the film, the wine turns back to its proper color over time. In scientific terms, pinking occurs in the presence of oxygen in the wine. In the film, the wine turns back to its proper color over time. In scientific terms, pinking occurs in the presence of oxygen in the wine. In the film, the wine turns back to its proper color over time. In scientific terms, pinking occurs in the presence of oxygen in the wine. In the film, the wine turns back to its proper color over time. In scientific terms, pinking occurs in the presence of oxygen in the wine. In the film, the wine turns back to its proper color over time.

“Tell us how you accomplished this feat.’”

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A global influence of alumni

Fresno State’s viticulture and enology graduates can be found all over California and the globe. And many have left their marks on the industry, such as Ondine Chattan, director of winemaking for Accolade Wines/Geyser Peak Winery North America; Greg Snich (1992), winemaker, whose Lodi Mandarin Vineyards wine has been served at the White House; Hal Huffsmith, senior vice president for vineyard operations at Sutter Home Vineyards; Louis Moreau (1990), a sixth-generation winemaker from Chablis, France; Mark Beringer, chief winemaker for Beringer Vineyards; and Fred Holloway (1981), director of production and winemaking for JUSTIN wines — just to name a few of the graduates.

“I keep in touch with some fellow grads and have met many more over the years,” says Ondine Chattan. “When I do meet fellow alumni, there is a great, instantaneous connection.”

Chattan, who earned her master’s at Fresno State in 1997 and now lives in Healdsburg, says daily interaction with professors and industry professionals helped prepare her for a competitive workplace where she faced challenges in achieving her goals.

“Being a woman tends to get you typecast in laboratory or clerical roles,” she says. “I had to be steadfast in my commitment to run production winemaking, never wavering and always dedicated to the goal.”

Eric Gallegos (inset), general manager for Gallegos Wines, faced challenges of his own in building a startup company.

Gallegos’ grandfather immigrated to Napa Valley from Michoacan, Mexico, in 1956 and worked at Beringer Winery for more than 30 years. His father was the vineyard foreman at the Hundred Acre J.J. Cohn Ranch in Rutherford, where the family lived in a tiny farmhouse.

“I guess you can say wine is in my blood,” Gallegos says. “I was on a tractor as young as I can remember, and by the age of 7, I was pruning in the vineyards. My brother and I would race to see who could reach the end of the row first.”

The family winery now produces more than 1,000 cases annually. “Fresno State gave me the opportunity to expand my professional network and get the technical schooling needed that has helped move Gallegos Wines from an idea to a successful startup.”

It’s an exciting time to be in the growing wine business, which is part of the reason Fresno State’s program is growing as well. Barrett recalls something his professor said in 1976: “Professor Sig Shandrel said, ‘If Americans ever start drinking wine there will be a single, continuous vineyard from Guadalajara to Vancouver.’ And what we are now, from Ensenada to Vancouver, in an airplane, you can always see a vineyard. The future is very bright for American wine.”

— Eddie Hughes is senior editor for Fresno State Magazine.

ONLINE EXTRA
Visit www.FresnoState.edu/magazine to see exclusive video interviews and more.
Autism Center expands services across region

Uriah, who graduated from the program in July, no longer has the diagnosis of autism and began kindergarten in the fall — fulfilling a prime goal of the Autism Center.

Tim Yeager, clinical director of the Autism Center, says Uriah is one of many success stories that arise from the program each year.

Since 2007, the Autism Center has provided more than 80 children with early intervention services. As a treatment, education and research center, it provides children diagnosed with autism between 20 and 40 hours of weekly therapy services to improve the child’s language, motor, social and learning skills.

In addition, 50 undergraduate students majoring in psychology, early childhood education and speech-language pathology are employed and receive training there. The center is part of the Behavioral Sciences Institute in Fresno State’s College of Science and Mathematics.

"The rates of autism continue to rise," Yeager says. "The Central Valley, in particular, is identified as an autism cluster with significantly more children with autism here than in other areas in the country."

To broaden the services offered in the region, a new satellite location was launched in August at Valley Children’s Hospital in Madera County. The new two-room site, located nine miles north of Fresno State, serves up to 16 clients.

Children receive 15 to 30 hours of treatment a week and are referred for services through the child’s pediatrician or through the Central Valley Regional Center. Yeager hopes to open additional locations in the future.

Students and staff working at the Autism Center at Fresno State will receive additional training at the satellite location.

Behavioral interventionist Camille Williams (pictured above, no relation to Valerie) worked at the Autism Center for the past three years while pursuing her bachelor’s degree in psychology. She was hired full time at the Autism Center soon after graduating and says the experience she’s gained will be tremendous toward obtaining a master’s degree in applied behavior analysis.

“If I know how to work directly with children, I’ll be able to train other people to work with children in the future,” Camille says. “Starting here has helped me gain valuable and extremely rewarding experience in working with children with autism.”

— Melissa Tav

Unable to verbalize his emotions and with his speech regressing, Uriah began early behavior treatment at the Autism Center and his family saw immediate results.

“He is able to verbalize his emotions and with his speech regressing, Uriah began early behavior treatment at the Autism Center and his family saw immediate results.”

— Valerie Williams

10
Valley veteran beats breast cancer, homelessness to earn degree

by Susan Hawksworth

A my veteran Iantha Hutchinson — a breast cancer survivor — was living in a homeless shelter in Fresno in 2012 as a result of financial hardships caused by medical treatment. An online community college student at the time, she learned about the Veterans Education Program at Fresno State and was encouraged by director Dr. Daniel Bernard to participate in the first student cohort.

The program, founded in 2012, gives veterans access to resources at Fresno State and connects them to support organizations across the Central Valley.

Because of Hutchinson’s homelessness, Fresno State’s Division of Continuing and Global Education raised funds to house her in the campus dorms and to provide a meal plan while she completed the program. Hutchinson was among five veterans who graduated from the first cohort in 2013.

For many Valley veterans, returning to civilian life can be a challenge emotionally, mentally and sometimes financially. And for some, it’s further complicated by a life-threatening health condition.

After many years of struggle and frustration in school, Hutchinson was diagnosed with dyscalculia, a condition sometimes known as math dyslexia in which it is difficult to comprehend arithmetic.

“Because I was in a small class with Dr. Lance Burger [associate professor of mathematics], I was able to get insight into how my mind processed mathematical equations,” Hutchinson says.

“What a light bulb moment that was for me. I could now move forward with a personal understanding of what, for me, had been an impediment to my academic success. Most of all, I gained confidence.”

The support and encouragement of her Fresno State professors — Burger, Dr. James Mullooly, Dr. Gary Rice and Dr. Tim Skeen — renewed her hope and desire to pursue a degree in anthropology.

When she finished the Veterans Education Program, Hutchinson was accepted at California State University, Northridge, and relocated to reconnect with family in the area. In May 2015, she graduated from Cal State Northridge with a bachelor’s degree in anthropology, proudly accessorizing her commencement attire with a Fresno State stole. (pictured)

The Veterans Education Program also offers veterans a parallel admission route into Fresno State. By successfully completing small group classes focused on coursework necessary for admittance into the University, student veterans can transition to matriculated status at Fresno State. The courses are available to veterans who are service-connected and/or honorably discharged.

— Susan Hawksworth is program and marketing specialist for the Division of Continuing and Global Education at Fresno State.

Like all our people, ER nurse Starshema Dimery’s approach to treating patients is remarkable. This means delivering personalized care and the kind of understanding you’d expect from a friend. Having been a patient here too, Star believes that recovery is about more than medicine. It’s about the compassion and commitment we bring to our patients. Each and every day.

Learn more about our remarkable team at samc.com.
Justin Garza, who is on leave from his job as Central High School football coach and teacher, got involved in organizing bone marrow registry drives in the community to educate people about the need. At first, he planned a drive at Central’s home opening football game in fall 2014, but word spread and others wanted to get involved.

In September 2014, the Justin Garza Blood and Marrow Registry Drive at Fresno State, his alma mater, drew 672 new marrow registrants. Within four months, the Be the Match for Justin Garza team registered more than 2,200 people. Joining the registry is as simple as a cheek swab that is sent to a lab for analysis. One out of every 500 people who register will be called to donate.

That call came for Johnathan Benson, a Fresno State senior majoring in environmental sciences. He joined the registry at that on-campus drive and was called 10 months later as a possible match for an infant diagnosed with an immune system disorder.

“I thought, ‘What kind of terrible person am I if I say no to this?’” Benson says. “So of course I called them back in 30 seconds and said, ‘I’ll do it.’” Benson then provided a blood sample for further testing and was scheduled for a physical examination before undergoing the hour-long procedure to donate his marrow.

“How often do you have a chance, in an instant, to say, ‘Yeah, I am going to do something that could change someone’s life?’” Benson says.

That potentially life-changing moment came for Garza this past year as well. He had been through chemotherapy and a stem-cell transplant, and the next step was a marrow transplant. In August 2014, Garza’s match was located in Europe.

“I was relieved that I found a match and excited that at least I had a chance to beat the cancer that had come out of remission twice already,” says Garza, who this summer was receiving treatment at Stanford University Medical Center for complications related to the transplant. “Some patients never find a match.”

A new student club wants to help make more matches possible. This fall, Fresno State launched a chapter of Be the Match On Campus — becoming the third California State University to do so. The chapter planned four marrow drives for the year.

Marrow registrants 18 to 44 years old have the highest chance of being a match, and every year about 14,000 people are in need of a marrow transplant, says Ariana Cavazos, president of the Be the Match On Campus chapter.

While Garza’s organs still try to adjust to his donor’s cells, he remains focused on surviving for his family and helping others do the same for their loved ones.

“Just joining the donor registry provides an opportunity to save a life,” Garza says. “There are people like myself who are in the middle of their great lives, and all they have for a chance to continue their lives with their families is a matching donor. You may be their last chance.”

Visit www.bethematch.org for more information or to see how you can help.

Registration now open to SAVE A LIFE

Justin Garza started his battle with Hodgkin’s lymphoma in 2011. Now 40 years old and married with two young children, Garza is fighting as hard as ever, having twice come out of remission. He’s fighting for his young family — wife Regina, 4-year-old son Joaquin and 11-month-old daughter Elena — but also for other people facing blood cancers and immune disorders.

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was in Washington, D.C. in June 1945 and the war was in full engagement.

For reasons unknown the Navy was holding up my transfer to a very secret employment in interior China.

A soldier and I were in a Pepsi-Cola service center when we saw the two Marine ladies hesitate at the entrance.

"Oh my God — I hope they come in."

My prayer was answered. They took the only two seats left, at our table.

Corporal Freda June Ball, USMC (women's) sat across from me. She was the girl of my dreams!

They stated they were waiting for a movie to open … and of course we said that was where we were headed.

At the entrance to the movie, I realized I had spent all my cash the previous night with a Navy wave! I had to borrow $2 from her to gain our admission.

I promised to repay her; that I had money at my quarters. I promised to take her to a really nice restaurant. She reluctantly agreed. That evening led to the two of us exploring all of the many museums and monuments in Washington, D.C. We were allowed to climb the interior of the Washington Monument.

After two weeks Freda believed I was a deserter; so I told her of my orders sending me away on a mission.

In early August 1945 my orders arrived and hope of a formal engagement was dashed — no one knew when or if I would return.

She kissed me goodbye, and I boarded a Navy plane. At Calcutta, India, I was ordered off the plane. We learned a single bomb had destroyed one city in Japan and another would be dropped within a week. I returned to Washington.

A call to Freda was my first priority. Now I knew why my orders had been delayed for almost three months.

We were engaged — met again at my hometown, after our honorable discharges, and on March 9, 1946, we were married.

We were for 57 ½ years until she left us for paradise, where she awaits me.

The Honor Flight to D.C. in June 2015 had to be an act of God. We met in D.C. in June. Her middle name is June; so her birthday was there in D.C.

The Honor Flight took us to all the memorials Freda and I had walked. I carried her photograph with me; in my lap and next to my heart the entire tour.

At the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier — tears came to me. As a Marine stationed at Henderson Wall, at the base of the National Cemetery; she had patrolled that very place as a MP.

The Honor Flight must have been allowed by higher authority. Our love was renewed even more.

A reporter seeing the picture asked me what my first words would be when we met again. After due recollection, it will be:

“I love you Freda.”
Fast forward four to five years. You’re tailgating on campus, gazing up at the beautifully updated façade of Bulldog Stadium. You walk through a tunnel and reach a cross aisle a short distance from your seats (no more hikes up 60-plus rows of stairs). Look around. There are new scoreboards; a massive west side tower featuring a club lounge, luxury suites and a press box; and a two-story football building at the bottom of the ramp behind the south end zone. Imagine it’s time for the first game in the newly remodeled stadium.

“I think it’s going to be one of the biggest events in Fresno history,” says Cameron Worrell, a former Bulldogs safety who played six seasons in the NFL and is now part of the broadcast team for 940 ESPN Radio. “There’s going to be such a feeling of accomplishment, not just here at the University and around the program, but in this community as a whole. From Chowchilla up north to Bakersfield down south, I know there are so many people who are so pumped to see this happen.”

One of them is Gary Castro, a 20-year season ticket holder and Bulldog Foundation supporter who owns KRC Safety in Visalia. He’s seen the renderings and videos showing the possibilities. When asked what he will feel like walking into a renovated Bulldog Stadium with his family for the first time, he gets quiet for a moment. “Wow, you just hit me right between the eyes,” he says. “I’ve got goosebumps.”

For Fresno State fans, there will come a time when visiting Bulldog Stadium feels different than it does today — a time when it feels more modern, comfortable, accessible and convenient. It could be as soon as 2018 or 2019. And it will be a game changer, for the University and the community.

First-year director of athletics Jim Barbo held a press conference June 26 to announce his vision for modernizing the 35-year-old Bulldog Stadium and shared concepts that were developed by AECOM Sports, LLC — the same company that designed stadium upgrades for Oregon and other major universities.

Furthermore, for fans who are looking for a place to enjoy the game, there will be numerous options for dining, entertainment and music. The west side tower will feature a club lounge, luxury suites and a press box.

The bulldog stadium ramps up support for Bulldog Stadium renovation

by Eddie Hughes
With so many of our games being televised now, if you don’t have a compelling reason to come, people stay at home in HD and watch the game. We want them to come to Bulldog Stadium, feel the excitement and feel like they have to come and experience Bulldog football that way.”  

Tim DeRuyter  
Fresno State head coach

A privately funded project

To make this vision a reality, it will take private funding — from $100 donors to multimillion dollar donors. It could include a naming rights deal for Bulldog Stadium, and a handful of lead gifts. In fact, Bartko has already identified some willing philanthropists to help with the project that could cost about $80 million.

“For this to work, everybody has to be a part of it,” Bartko says. “We can’t just have 100 people do everything. We want every fan to be engaged. If they can give $100 or $1,000, buy season tickets, buy extra tickets and bring friends. All of our fans can take ownership to help because we can’t do it alone. The state isn’t going to fund it.”

This past summer, the first wave of enhancements came with installation of a new 24-foot-tall, 66-foot-wide HD video board and a 104-foot LED ribbon board on the north end of the stadium. Best-case scenario, Phase 1 will be executed before the 2016 football season with fencing and branding around the facilities; Phase 2 will be done by 2017 with tunnels, cross aisles, restrooms and other amenities; and Phase 3 in 2018 would add additional luxury suites, club lounge and press box. The final phase will be a new football facility housing the Bulldog’s locker room, offices and an alumni lounge for former student-athletes.

“As former players,” Worrell says, “we take a lot of pride in the fact that what we were able to do on the field has allowed the players that come after us to experience better things, to get better equipment, to have a better locker room, to have this meeting room that we didn’t have when we were here. And we feel an obligation to help any project that the football team has moving forward.”

Five-year NFL wideshot Charlie Jones, whose 3,344 receiving yards from 1992-95 are the most ever by a Bulldog, says he would encourage former players to get involved and make the alumni lounge a reality. “That would be huge for our football tradition,” Jones says. “As everyone does different things after they take off their helmets for the last time on Senior Day, the lounge would give them a place to always be welcome back home.”

And Fresno State wants all alumni to feel like it’s their home. “It’s going to be a great touch point for all alumni to come back and see the games, have alumni events in the stadium and host University groups,” Bartko says.

Facility improvements help all sports

Six days per year, football games draw more people to campus than any other event and often draw a national television audience. That support generated by football helps fund the 18 other athletics programs at the University. So Bartko says it makes sense to bring Bulldog Stadium up to industry standards so it can continue to attract fans.

Women’s tennis coach Ryan Stockland says he is amazed by the Bulldog Stadium renderings he’s seen. “I showed everyone right away and said, ‘Look at how great our stadium is going to look.’ It helps everybody. Everything benefits everybody else, so the more we build, the better.”

Fresno State is also constructing new tennis courts, improving women’s soccer and lacrosse locker rooms and preparing to install a new track. “We have momentum, we have people who want to help. It’s going to help out all of our sports,” Bartko says.

“The football stadium brings a lot of exposure to the community and the University. It’s a great front door for everybody to see, but it’s getting a little aged after 35 years. We have to make sure it’s around for another 35 years.”

Jim Bartko, director of athletics, says enhancements to Bulldog Stadium will address fan needs.

“We have been season ticket holders since the stadium opened in 1980. The main hardship now is, because we are 35 years older, climbing the stairs to get up to the stadium and then climbing down to our seats and then up to the restrooms and snack bar.”  

Leah Gill  
35-year season ticket holder

“There’s no question that new, modern facilities heighten fan enthusiasm. The updates will help draw and keep the fans in the stadium.”

Rich Tabin  
25-year season ticket holder

“Every time I’m with friends or family, they ask me, ‘So how’s the new stadium, that’s going to be pretty sweet, right?’ I think they’re more excited for it than I am, and I’m the one who gets to play in it.”

Kyle Riddering  
redshirt freshman tight end

What they’re saying:

“A lot of fans around Fresno are going to want to come to more games now, and they’re going to help us out even more.”

Keyan Williams  
redshirt freshman wide receiver

“To see these changes now are extremely special to me. As a father, I am excited to bring my family to games and share my experiences with them and build new memories that I hope they enjoy.”

Adam Mesick  
offensive lineman from 2002-05

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Fresno State women’s tennis coach Ryan Stotland has a love-love formula when recruiting players to his program. He wants to make sure they have two loves — academics and tennis — in that order.

The results are positive. In the spring 2015 semester, four of the eight members of the team earned perfect 4.0 GPAs, and the team had a 3.73 GPA overall. From 2010-14, the team earned the NCAA’s highest possible Academic Percentage Rate (1,000), which measures eligibility, retention and graduation. And the Bulldogs have won two straight Mountain West championships.

The 4.0 GPA club includes 2015 graduate Tanya Murtagh, sophomore Mayar Sherif Ahmed and seniors Annie Watts and Sophie Watts, the reigning Mountain West player of the year.

“When I’m recruiting, I make sure academics is a priority,” says Stotland, the fourth-year coach. “I always look at their high school grades and find out if their work ethic is good. I tell them when they come in, they are student-athletes and the ‘student’ part is the first part of that term. Being an athlete is the bonus part.”

This season, all eight players on the Bulldogs roster are from overseas — four from England, two from Egypt, one from Russia and one from Sweden. “Some of their schools are so hard they’re prepared for college life right away,” Stotland says. “They work so hard, and international kids know it’s a good opportunity so they make the most out of it when they get here.”

Twin sisters Sophie and Annie Watts, from Hitchin, England, are both biology majors. Sophie wants to work in conservation, and Annie wants to work with animals. As a doubles team, they were unbeaten in the Mountain West regular season, and Sophie advanced the NCAA Round of 32 in singles play.

“When [Stotland] recruited me, he was very keen to point out all the academic facilities and stressed the fact that there are a whole team of people here to help us succeed in the classroom,” Annie says.

“Coach understands the first reason we come to college is to get an education,” Sophie adds. “There is always competition between myself and my sister, and that extends to the classroom especially. We always want to do better than each other.”

Senior Rana Sherif Ahmed, who is also on track to graduate with honors in economics, says the success is by design. “It is not a fluke,” says Rana, whose younger sister Mayar earned a 4.0 GPA this past semester. “We work hard on and off the court, and that is what makes us perform well in the classroom.”

It makes sense that Stotland puts such emphasis on academics. While playing for New Mexico from 2003-06, he became the first four-time Mountain West All-Academic honoree in school history while triple majoring in accounting, marketing and business and graduating magna cum laude. On the court, he was ranked No. 2 in the nation.

And on the court, Stotland expects this Fresno State team to be his strongest yet. The Spalding G. Wathen Tennis Center was outfitted with a brand new playing surface this summer, just in time to welcome a transfer from Idaho who was the Big Sky player of the year, plus two of the highest ranked players from England.

ACADEMICS AND ATHLETICS
RISE TOGETHER

6 of 8 players named Intercollegiate Tennis Association scholar-athletes
Perfect 1,000 NCAA four-year Academic Percentage Rate
50% of the team earned 4.0 GPAs
6-0 in Mountain West

To view the team’s schedule, visit www.gobulldogs.com.
Juan Felipe Herrera became the first Latino to earn the nation’s highest poetry honor when it was announced in June he would be the United States’ 21st poet laureate. Herrera, who was named the 21st Poet Laureate Consultant in Poetry for 2015-16 by the Librarian of the United States Congress, is a former Fresno State professor from Fowler. He completed a two-year term as California poet laureate in 2014 before being named U.S. poet laureate.

Herrera is the second former Fresno State professor to be honored with the distinction, following the late Philip Levine, who served as the 18th U.S. poet laureate in 2011-12.

“It’s just been incredible,” Herrera says. “This journey is quite a leap. I want to take everything I have in me, weave it, merge it with the beauty that is in the Library of Congress, all the resources, the guidance of the staff and departments, and launch it with the heart-shaped dreams of the people. It is a miracle of many of us coming together.”

His term began Sept. 15 when he presented a reading of his work at the Library of Congress National Book Festival. President and Mrs. Obama served as honorary co-chairs.

Librarian of Congress James H. Billington says he sees the work of an American original in Herrera’s poems that “champion voices, traditions and histories, as well as a cultural perspective, which is a vital part of our larger American identity.”

Herrera, 66, the son of migrant farm workers, was a professor in Fresno State’s Chicano and Latin American Studies Department from 1990 to 2004, serving as department chair his final two years before accepting a position at the University of California, Riverside, from which he retired in May. He resides in Fresno.

Says Fresno State President Joseph I. Castro, “His success demonstrates that big dreams can be achieved when we make higher education accessible to talented students from all communities. I know the extended Fresno State community throughout the world is enjoying this journey with @Cilantroman.”

@Cilantroman is Herrera’s Twitter handle and a reference to his use of symbols and metaphors to bring his work to life. The University is working to schedule an appearance with Herrera on campus in the fall.

Victor Torres, Chicano studies professor, says many of Herrera’s former students will come back and honor their teacher. “His poetry is like his personality: colorful and thoughtful,” says Virginia Madrid-Salazar, a 1995 mass communications and journalism graduate who is now studying law. “I recall how fascinating he made any interaction. Later, I often read his books to my own kids when they were growing up.”

― Tom Uribes is a public affairs specialist at Fresno State.
Each morning when he wakes up, Robert Willmott glances at his cell phone and is reminded of modern technology’s impact on agriculture.

The Fresno State campus farm technician checks the WiseConn smart phone app that is virtually connected to the University’s olive orchard. A few clicks verify the 20 acres of trees he oversees are receiving the right amount of water via drip irrigation to keep them healthy and productive.

Willmott is also able to monitor the orchard’s pumps and make sure water is flowing efficiently. The system uploads data 24/7 to an online server and will alert him of any sudden changes.

“We still have to see how the trees are doing every day, but the information helps the process operate smoother,” Willmott says.

“It even alerted me that my water flow has been 20 percent less this year through my filter system.”

— ROBERT WILLMOTT

Once Willmott gets to work, he can reassess the data on his desktop computer and compare irrigation and weather information to adjust planning for the next day, month or season.

Before the technology’s arrival, irrigation timers had to be manually set at each field, and there was no real-time soil moisture data. Now Willmott can schedule irrigation rates by duration and quantity from his phone and can turn the system off to stress the olives and increase their oil quality and quantity.

Fresno State has served as an ideal test location for WiseConn, which started in Chile in 2007. One of the company’s founders, Guillermo Valenzuela, met Fresno State’s David Zoldoske, director of the Center for Irrigation Technology, at an international conference in 2012. After visiting WiseConn’s headquarters, Zoldoske suggested the campus farm as a springboard to the U.S. market.

Fast forward to 2015, and the fourth year of a statewide drought is forcing the nation’s leading agriculture state to re-examine its water use.

“Water is a commodity that is in rare supply, and we need to manage it the best possible way,” Willmott says. “This technology is helping achieve that.”

From Chile to the Central Valley

The WiseConn DropControl monitoring equipment was installed at Fresno State in summer 2013. The company is a University farm partner through the campus Water, Energy and Technology Center that supports innovative start-up agricultural companies.

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— Geoff Thurner is a communications specialist for the Jordan College of Agricultural Sciences and Technology at Fresno State.
BIOPLASTICS

Fresno State researchers turn food waste into sustainable form of plastic

by Erika Castañon

A Fresno State professor’s bold thinking is leading to a new way to use food waste.

Dr. William Wright, a civil engineering professor in the University’s Lyles College of Engineering, and his students are producing bioplastic — a material derived from renewable resources, like food waste from food processing operations.

“It’s really fascinating and interesting because what we’re doing is developing technology that allows us to produce a material that is used extensively throughout society — plastics,” Wright says.

These plastics are unlike typical, petroleum-based plastics, a resource Wright says is abundant, but “there will be a day when those reserves start to dry up.” Wright believes the sustainability of bioplastics is its greatest selling point.

In 2012, brothers Dane and Jeff Anderson approached Wright with the idea. They founded a firm called Back2Earth Technologies (B2E), then later Full Cycle Bioplastics. Wright ran with the idea and, in partnership with B2E, began looking for ways to fund the research. The first investor was Bill Smittcamp, president and CEO of Wawona Frozen Foods in Clovis and a longtime supporter of Fresno State.

Wright’s lab manager, Mike Nunes, envisions vast possibilities.

“Excessive costs are circumvented by avoiding genetically modified organisms (GMOs) for bacteria, which pose potential issues to the environment. “We were the first to get our costs close to petroleum-based plastics while others before had come in with plastics two or three times the cost,” Dawson says. “The plastics are also biodegradable in the ocean, which propels us further than others.”

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Wright believes it can be done. Nunes says their research is on the “ragged edges of technology,” and Fresno State is surpassing other universities worldwide.

“This has never been done before, only thought of and looked at in niches, but never looked at as this all-encompassing method that could change how we deal with waste.”

— Erika Castañon is a student news assistant in University Communications at Fresno State.

Potential community impact

Imagine a meal being packaged in a plastic container made from food waste. Imagine eating the meal with a fork or spoon made from that same waste, and drinking from a wholly repurposed plastic water bottle.

The technology even has medical potential. “The advantages to bioplastics are that it’s biocompatible, that it isn’t negatively react with human tissue,” Wright says. “So one of the uses that has been developed in recent years is for plastic parts associated with implants and other things that go into people.”

These plastics are produced with volatile fatty acids from fruit, vegetable, fat and other types of organic waste. Natural microorganisms break down molecules in the food waste, and a different bacteria is used to convert the molecules into acids. These are fed to another bacteria, which is placed in a controlled environment with an excess of carbon but (with) a restricted amount of nutrients and oxygen. The microorganisms “fatten up,” and as a result, a polymer material called polyhydroxyalkanoate, or PHA, is produced and used for plastics.

“We take something that is a problem and turn it into a high-value product,” Dawson says.

— Cary Edmondson

IN THE KNOW | ACADEMICS

by Erika Castañon
A Community of Writers

Alumni become leaders of their own college writing centers

by Jefferson Beavers

When past and present tutors from the Fresno State Writing Center gathered this past spring to celebrate the center’s 35th anniversary, alumna Tabitha Villalba felt right at home.

“It’s good to be surrounded by fellow writers,” she says.

Villalba is one of at least 10 tutor alumni from Fresno State who have gone on to run their own centers. Villalba serves as coordinator of the Writing and Reading Center at Fresno City College. Others have created or run centers at universities, community colleges and high schools throughout the West — as far away as the University of Colorado at Denver and as close as McLane High School.

Villalba says the best centers focus on the writers, not the writing. The Fresno State Writing Center, under the College of Arts and Humanities, serves all Fresno State students with any writing they’re working on, through small-group, walk-in or online tutoring.

Villalba’s center at Fresno City College sees writers from every demographic, not just different ages and ethnicities, but “students on parole, students who haven’t eaten in a couple days.” Their life needs, Villalba says, make her tutors’ jobs even more important — empowering writers to communicate.

“When I first started, the tutors had pens in their hands, which is something I discourage,” says Villalba, who tutored at Fresno State for two years while earning her Master of Fine Arts in creative writing. “I said, ‘Don’t do that.’ This is a writing center, and the writer controls the paper. The writer should have the pen in their hand.’”

“We don’t work on papers, we work on writers,” says Geist, who tutored at the Fresno State Writing Center for seven years. “We certainly want the paper to get better, but it’s much more important that the writer is learning something about how to write more effectively and how to make good decisions.”

Geist, who holds a Master of Fine Arts in creative writing, says his center operates on the idea that all writers face the same challenges, no matter their level.

“You’re still going to have that moment when you’re going to sit down and stare at the blank page and have no idea,” he says.

Both Geist and Villalba credit the current director of the Fresno State Writing Center, Dr. Magda Gilewicz, for their professional success. Gilewicz has coordinated the center since 1993.

Villalba says, “Magda taught from the inside out rather than the outside in. I think that she prepared us to make good decisions and to think about the ways we would train others.”

— Jefferson Beavers is a communication specialist for the MFA program in creative writing at Fresno State.
Finding Healing in Storytelling

Author Armen Bacon named Fresno State’s 2015 Top Dog

by Kathleen R. Schack

A rmen Derian Bacon is accustomed to the unexpected. So when a fire alarm twice interrupts her keynote speech to hundreds of Clovis Unified School District employees, she effortlessly switches gears, sharing a childhood memory that explains her fear of fire. Within minutes the crowd is charmed by her unique blend of humor and grace. “I’m always sharing my insides with the rest of the world,” she says with a smile.

As a featured columnist at The Fresno Bee, sought-after public speaker and author of two books (“My Name is Armen: A Life in Column Inches” and “Griefland: An Intimate Portrait of Love, Loss and Unlikely Friendship,” co-authored with Nancy Miller), Bacon is a master at finding insight into the human condition.

But she says her current success as an author and inspirational speaker was never an aspiration during her childhood in southeast Fresno, time as an undergraduate at Fresno State or in the two decades she served as administrator of communications and public relations for the Fresno County Office of Education. For Bacon, the spark that ignited her passion to write was an unexpected phone call delivering the unthinkable news that her son Alex had died as the result of an overdose.

“I remember the feeling of being thrown out in the middle of an icy ocean, surrounded by sharks,” she says. In the days and months that followed, Bacon found herself writing compulsively as a tool to help navigate her grief. “Words became my oxygen. I was writing to save my own life.”

This new passion led Bacon back to Fresno State, where she spent four summers honing her writing skills as part of the CSU Summer Arts program. It was also through the Madden Library, the Division of Student Affairs and the Division of Graduate Studies.

On Oct. 9, Bacon was honored as the Distinguished Alumna — the highest honor given by the Fresno State Alumni Association — during the Top Dog Alumni Awards Gala at the Save Mart Center. Her story of transformation echoes the life experiences of the 13 individuals who were recognized as distinguished alumni of each of the University’s academic colleges, the Department of Athletics, the Madden Library, the Division of Student Affairs and the Division of Graduate Studies.

“The honorees this year represent the very best of what it means to be a Bulldog, and we are excited to have celebrated each honoree’s inspiring accomplishments,” says Jacquelyn Glauner, director of the Alumni Association.

It’s been 11 years since Alex passed away, and Bacon is quick to admit that some days are better than others. “It’s our scars that turn into beauty marks.” Nonetheless she is giving herself permission to be happy — and in the process inspiring thousands to do the same. “It’s our scars that turn into beauty marks.”

“A Role Model of Service

Dr. Robert Monke earns the Arthur Safstrom Service Award

T he problems facing America and the world are numerous, but according to Dr. Robert Monke, the solution is simple: “A good education is what is going to make America go or not go. Now more than ever.”

In this spirit, Monke has dedicated his career and retirement to improving educational opportunities for students in the San Joaquin Valley by supporting the Kremen School of Education and Human Development at Fresno State.

Monke came to Fresno State as a faculty member in 1969 after earning a Ph.D. in counseling at Arizona State University. During his career he focused on counseling and teacher preparation, gender equity and diversity and community collaboration for improved learning. In 1985 he was named associate dean of the Kremen School and served as interim dean from 1988-1989 and 1996-1997.

Monke was instrumental in the development, construction and relocation into the school’s current building on Maple and Shaw avenues in 1994. He has served on numerous boards to enhance the teacher credential program at Fresno State. In 1993, Monke helped develop the concept of the Teacher and Friends of Education Honor Wall outside of the Kremen School and served as the chair of the Bricks Committee for more than 20 years. To date that project has raised nearly $332,000 to improve learning. In 1985 he was named associate dean of the Kremen School and served as interim dean from 1988-1989 and 1996-1997.

Now more than ever.”

Monke retired in 2002 but never stopped giving back to the University. He currently serves on the Kremen Alumni Chapter Board, helping to drive one of the most engaged alumni chapters at Fresno State.
34

The Apprentice Tooth Fairy.”

Robert H. Oliver

Raymond F. Ensher (1956) received two awards from the California Retired Teachers’ Association: Ron Eby Award for Communications and Molkey Matheson Award for Advocacy.

Robert “Bobby” Fena (1979) retired as president of new Japanese restaurant Kitchen, an Italian-inspired restaurant. (1968) opened The Annex (1966) was named chairman of the board. Kissler plans to his CEO role at Manco Abbott to become Hal Kissler (1968) stepped down from World War II. (1945), administrator, had a Fresno school posthumously named after him on North Clark Street.

Hal Kisler (1966) stepped down from his CEO role at Marinos Abbott to become chairman of the board. Kisler plans to retire in 2018.

Robert R. Oliver (1964) was named Granite Groves’ Person of the Year in the 2015 Winter edition of Graniteville Lifestyle magazine.


Michael Allen (1995) is now professor at Harvard University, received a $150,000 grant to start a center for information officer, was named one of Gobierno Technoology Magazine’s Top 25 Dreamers, Dreamers and Drivers for 2015. Traicy Hostmyer (1988), producing director and artistic director of the Rose Theatre Company in New York City.

Janet Gaard (1985) is now managing editor for The Fresno Bee.

Michael Lulejian (1988) is now the director of marketing at Valley Children’s Hospital. Christopher Jay Long (1987) is now managing editor for The Fresno Bee.

Patricia Ann Eichhorn (1970) retired as executive assistant at Fresno City Hall. Mike Krikorian (1979), Yolo Superior Court judge, was named Tulare County Panhellenic Senior Advocate for the University of California Cooperative Extension in Merced and Mariposa counties, retired after 26 years.


Pamela Shaw (1961), costume and makeup director at Santa Barbara City College, has made costumes for the movie “The Artist,” has dressed the cast of the TV show “The Vampire Diaries” and helped design the Emergence Bunny.

Daniel Silva (1983), the No. 1 New York Times bestselling author, has released his novel, “The English Spy.” Fred Smith (1965), athletic director for 31 years at Bakerfield College, was inducted into the California Community College Athletic Trainers’ Association.

Jean Stoll-Lee (1980) was featured in the cast of the TV show “The Vampire Diaries.” Daniel Silva (1983), the No. 1 New York Times bestselling author, has released his novel, “The English Spy.” Fred Smith (1965), athletic director for 31 years at Bakerfield College, was inducted into the California Community College Athletic Trainers’ Association.
1990s
Mary F. Lenner (1997) was named by Northern California Super Lawyers and Rising Stars as one of the top up-and-coming young attorneys in Northern California.
Tegpal Singh Mahil (1999) of Medora was named to the University Advisory Board.
Jadee Lynn Marcellin (1992) is the grants and program coordinator at Sanger Unified School District.
Gina Meyers (1994) is the author of "Love at First Bite: The Unofficial Twilight Cookbook."
Brent Miller (1995, 2001) is now sergeant at the Visalia Police Department.
Timothy John Woods (1992) is vice president of instruction at Fresno City College.
Dan Zack (1997) is assistant planning director for Fresno’s high-speed rail.
Debra Zamora (1999) is quality management officer for the Veterans Affairs Medical Center in White River Junction.

2000s
Peter Carrion (2001) of JP Marketing was awarded the Fresno Advertising Federation’s 2015 Creative Talent of the Year award.
Sandy Cha (2009) is community affairs officer for Wells Fargo Foundation.
Matt De Fina (2001) and wife Denise are owners of De Fina Family Cellars winery in Napa Valley.
Barry Falke (2001) is director of the American Red Cross Central Valley.
Allison Ferry-Abee (2009) is viticulture adviser for the University of California.
Ricardo Alejandro Gabaldon (2002) is teaching ballet folklorico at Righetti High School.
Rafael Iniguez (2006) organized the second Central Valley Concussion Symposium.

David Vartanian (2007) created an annual $5,000 scholarship for a Fresno State pre-veterinary major in memory of his English bulldog Mr. Murphy.

Submit an alumni class note and high-resolution photo to: magazine@listserv.csufresno.edu

Do you have news to share?

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NOW ACCEPTING APPLICATIONS

The Pharmacy Program offers a four-year Doctor of Pharmacy degree program. Its innovative curriculum emphasizes team-based learning and prepares graduates to work in collaboration with physicians and other health care professionals in a primary care setting.

Robert Musso (2012) is an officer for the Selma Police Department.
Paul Myers (2011, ’13) is associate editor for the Fourthsun Sun-Gazette.
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Paul Barron Neal (July 23 in Tulare.
Mary Smith (April 3 in Fresno.
Jean C. Pocht (1949, May 4 in Fresno.
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Paul Tamayo (2012), September 16 in Fresno.

FRIENDS

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Kenneth Huang, May 14 in Fresno.
Kir Kerkorian, June 15 in Beverly Hills.
Raymond Melklick, March 16 in Fresno.
Frank Nicholas Stopenko, March 1 in Fresno.

ALUMNI NEWS

CHSU COLLEGE OF PHARMACY

Transforming Pharmacy into a Primary Care Profession

About CHSU
CHSU provides a local option for health care professionals seeking doctoral and continuing education programs and a remedy to the shortage of health services available in Central California. Students can enjoy the unique combination of high quality of life, affordable cost of living and plentiful health care opportunities the region offers.

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SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENTS

5. Brooke and Bo Lindblad had a baby girl, Liana.


Katie Rodgers (2014) and husband Cullen had a baby boy, Maddox.

Travis Stephenson (2011) married Richard Perez in May in Fresno.

In 1997, Fresno State became the first university in the nation to operate a commercially bonded, on-campus winery. Today, students at the winery produce 20 varieties of wine and have won more than 600 awards. Join the wine club free at www.fresnostatewinery.com.

— Joel Beery is a graphic designer for University Communications. He created this original oil painting.