



ALUMNI  
HALL OF FAME  
CSU BAKERSFIELD™

20 Years

FEBRUARY 26, 2026

*presented by*



A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT  
**DR. VERNON B. HARPER, JR.**



Dear CSUB Alumni, Roadrunner Community and Friends,

Twenty years ago, CSUB was presented with one of the best ideas in the history of the university. It should surprise no one that the idea was the brainchild of two of our alumni:

*California State University, Bakersfield should establish a Hall of Fame to recognize the contributions of its most accomplished graduates.*

Tonight, we are gathered to celebrate the 2026 inductees of the Alumni Hall of Fame, and it would be difficult to imagine a more impressive class for our 20th anniversary ceremony.

Joining 75 other esteemed graduates who came before them are California Chamber of Commerce President/CEO Jennifer Barrera, retired Migrant Education Director Janie Flores, Kern County Superintendent of Schools John Mendiburu, retired Chief Financial Officer of Kern Medical Center Fred Plane, and Kern County Superior Court Judge David Zulfa.

I'd like to acknowledge Nancy Chaffin and Bryan Burrow, the dedicated and visionary alumni who advanced the campaign to establish the Hall of Fame in 2007, as well as then-President Horace Mitchell for his official blessing.

From that moment on, the dozens of men and women who have earned the recognition and gratitude of their fellow alumni have served as powerful examples of excellence to our current Roadrunners and outstanding ambassadors for this university and community.

Our current class adds even more luster to the value of a CSUB degree and the importance of service as the foundation of a meaningful life.

To Jennifer, Janie, John, Fred and David: Thank you.

Some of you have traveled far and wide to spread your brilliance and dedication, while others have remained here in this community to uplift our friends and neighbors and enhance our way of life.

But no matter what route our honorees have chosen to take, they have never forgotten where they are from nor the people who nurtured their talent and dreams here in Kern County.

These distinguished alumni are the best of California.

*They are the best of us.*

Congratulations!

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Vernon B. Harper, Jr.", written in a cursive style.

Dr. Vernon B. Harper, Jr.  
President, CSU Bakersfield



# A MESSAGE FROM THE ALUMNI ASSOCIATION PRESIDENT



On behalf of the more than 70,000 alumni of California State University, Bakersfield, thank you for joining us in celebrating our Alumni Hall of Fame inductees and for your continued support of CSUB and the Alumni Association as we mark the 20th anniversary of the CSUB Alumni Hall of Fame.

I am proud to congratulate the 2026 Alumni Hall of Fame class [as we recognize five extraordinary leaders](#) whose work spans education, business, healthcare, and public service in Kern County, the Central Valley and beyond:

- Jennifer Barrera, President and CEO of the California Chamber of Commerce
- Janie Flores, retired Migrant Education Director of Region 21, Bakersfield City School District
- John Mendiburu, Kern County Superintendent of Schools
- Fred Plane, retired Chief Financial Officer of Kern Medical
- The Honorable David Zulfa, Kern County Superior Court Judge

Each honoree exemplifies leadership, service and a deep commitment to the communities they serve.

We are also deeply grateful to our sponsors, whose generosity strengthens our alumni community and helps us invest in the next generation of CSUB leaders. Particularly, this year's presenting sponsors: Chevron, California Resources Corporation and Tejon Ranch Company. Thank you for your partnership and continued belief in Kern County's university.

A core priority of the Alumni Association is supporting graduate education through the CSUB Alumni Scholarship Endowment. The endowment has grown to more than \$300,000 since its founding in 1990. It supported the award of \$12,000 in scholarships to eight alumni pursuing graduate degrees in the 25-26 academic year.

Mentorship is another cornerstone of our work. Through the `Runner Alumni Mentor Program (RAMP)—[recognized by the CSU system as a model mentoring program](#)—51 student mentees were matched with 44 mentors this year, leading to the creation of meaningful ways for students to gain professional access, guidance and long-term career momentum.

Our alumni community also comes together each spring during [CSUB's Raising for `Runners Giving Day](#). The Alumni Association hosts the Rowdy through the Eras Alumni Decade Challenge, recognizing the decade with the highest participation. Congratulations to the Classes of 2010-2019, last year's winning decade! The challenge returns April 14-15, from noon to noon. Rally your classmates to have your decade recognized at next year's Alumni Hall of Fame ceremony.

Thank you for helping Kern County's university succeed and for celebrating with us this evening. Your support makes a lasting impact on CSUB students and alumni alike.

Go, `Runners!



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Tyler Moyer".

**Tyler Moyer, '15, '19**  
2025-2027 President, CSUB Alumni Association

## 2026 ALUMNI HALL OF FAME INDUCTEE

# Jennifer Barrera

1999



Barrera has been a leader at the California Chamber of Commerce since starting at the organization in 2010 as a policy advocate, leading the organization's advocacy efforts on labor, employment and taxation. She was named the senior vice president of policy in 2018 and a year later was promoted to the role of executive vice president.

In 2021, the CalChamber board of directors appointed Barrera to serve as the president and CEO. She is the first woman to lead the organization. Under her leadership, Cal Chamber has continued to successfully advocate for all businesses in California before the government and assist small businesses with compliance.

One of Barrera's goals as CEO has been to shift CalChamber from being largely focused on defense and allocate more resources toward advocating for proactive policies that would have lasting benefits for businesses, and by extension, the communities they serve.

That proactive approach has led to many policy wins for CalChamber, such as supporting California's Equal Pay Law in 2015 and the state's Equal Pay Pledge in 2023, an initiative that encourages businesses and organizations to take more concrete steps toward closing gender pay gaps.

Other notable achievements during Barrera's leadership include the launching of the Women's Leadership Council, which recently commissioned a study on women-owned businesses in California, and the reform of the Private Attorney General's Act to add provisions that provide more protections for both employers and employees. The California law allows employees to sue their employers for various labor code violations.

Barrera worked nearly eight years as a defense attorney for the Sacramento-based law firm Carothers DiSante and Freudenberger LLP prior to joining CalChamber. She represented employers in state and federal court on matters such as wage disputes, discrimination, harassment and wrongful termination. In addition to her CSUB degree, Barrera holds a Juris Doctorate with high honors from the California Western School of Law.

[Read the full profile here](#)

## 2026 ALUMNI HALL OF FAME INDUCTEE

# Janie Flores

*1976, 1983*



Flores transformed her lifelong passion for migrant and bilingual education into an over 45-year career in prekindergarten through 12th-grade education across Kern, Kings and Tulare counties. She began her career in 1976 as a migrant education resource teacher hired by the McFarland Elementary School District. She was one of only a few teachers in the district at the time who were female, Hispanic and bilingual.

Flores stayed with the district until 2001. She held other roles over the years in addition to being a teacher, including serving as a summer school administrator, community liaison, English Language Development coordinator and as an

interim assistant principal at McFarland High School.

Flores served as the principal of the Coalinga-Huron Unified School District in 2001 before joining the Bakersfield City School District (BCSD) in 2002 to oversee the district's Migrant Education Region 21 Program.

She served as the director of the program until her retirement in 2021, during which time Flores was able to bring more programs to the district. Among them, an after-school Mariachi music program that eventually became part of BCSD's general music program and has served as a model for other districts in Kern County.

Flores has been actively involved with CSUB since her graduation in 1976. She worked with California Mini-Corps program, which provides tutoring and other support services to migrant students and provides mentorship to students interested in becoming bilingual teachers. Flores herself participated in the program when she attended the university.

While serving as the director of BCSD's Migrant Education Program, Flores also partnered with the Mini-Corps Program, High School Equivalency Program and College Assistance Migrant Program (HEP/CAMP) to implement summer residential and non-residential programs, Saturday academies and trainings for migrant parents.

Flores has also been an advocate for bilingual students at the state and regional level by serving for nearly a decade on the Kern Association for Bilingual Education's board of directors.

[Read the full profile here](#)

## 2026 ALUMNI HALL OF FAME INDUCTEE

# John Mendiburu

*1995, 2000*



Mendiburu has over 30 years of experience in Kern County's education system. He spent most of his career in the Rosedale Union School District (RUESD), where Mendiburu himself was an alumnus. He began as a teacher before transitioning to become principal of Almondale Elementary School. He then moved into the district office, where he helped manage RUESD's finances as the assistant superintendent of business services.

He was selected to serve as RUESD's superintendent in 2009 and helped lead significant projects in the district, including campus modernizations, the construction of a new gym at Rosedale Middle School and a renovation of the district office.

Mendiburu was recruited to join the Kern County Superintendent of Schools (KCSOS) in 2019 by Alumni Hall of Fame inductee Mary Barlow to serve as an associate superintendent. After Barlow's retirement in 2023, the county Board of Education appointed Mendiburu as the new superintendent.

Mendiburu has overseen a major expansion of the office since assuming the role, including the creation of the Kern Future Readiness Center, the opening of the Kern County STEAM Yard and an expansion of the county Network for Children's Dream Center.

In addition to his responsibilities at KCSOS, Mendiburu has served on the boards of several local and statewide organizations, including the California Living Museum, the Kern Economic Development Corporation and the California County Superintendents Association. He is also a member of the Rotary Club of Bakersfield.

Mendiburu has also stayed connected with CSUB over the years. He has served on the President's Community Ambassador Council and in 2024 reinstated the KCSOS Office Welcome — a gathering of the district's employees — at CSUB's Icardo Center.

Mendiburu has also partnered with CSUB to host the Kern Healthcare Academy, which gives high school students interested in a career in the medical field the opportunity to get hands-on learning experience and meet with health care professionals.

[Read the full profile here](#)

## 2026 ALUMNI HALL OF FAME INDUCTEE

# Fred Plane

*1978, 1994*



Plane has a long history of serving his community. He spent most of his career in county government and has been a lecturer in public administration at CSUB since 1997. Plane got his start in 1980 as a senior buyer for Kern County's General Services Department, a position in which he would review and process purchase requests from other departments.

After eight years in the role, Plane was hired as a deputy county administrative officer in the County Administrative Office (CAO). He was then promoted in 2000 to being a senior deputy county administrative officer, a role Plane held before leaving to work for Kern Medical Center in 2007.

Through his work at the CAO, Plane oversaw the entire development process of the county budget. He worked with fellow administrators to prepare and review budgets, oversaw the implementation of spending plans and provided guidance to ensure that county policies were being followed.

Before his retirement from Kern County in 2011, Plane worked for four years as Kern Medical Center's chief financial officer.

Plane has also been active in the community through his involvement with several organizations.

He has served on the Community Action Partnership of Kern's board of directors for 34 years (9 years as chairman), the CAPK Foundation board for five years and as chairman of the Ridgecrest non-profit independent living facility Desert Willow Apartments for 17 years.

Plane is also the vice president of mentorship on the CSUB Alumni Association board and has helped with the operation of the Runner Alumni Mentorship Program.

He has served on the boards of other organizations over the years, including the American Society for Public Administration, Kern County Management Council, Pathway Family Services and multiple church boards. Lastly, for the past 11 years, Plane has volunteered in the Rosedale School District and Panama-Buena Vista School District assisting first- and second-grade students in math and reading.

[Read the full profile here](#)

## 2026 ALUMNI HALL OF FAME INDUCTEE

# The Honorable David Zulfa

1991



Zulfa has served as a judge in Kern County Superior Court since his appointment in 2014 by then-Gov. Jerry Brown. He had previously worked for over a decade as a deputy district attorney in the county's District Attorney's Office, where he participated in over 80 jury trials and more than 200 juvenile hearings.

Zulfa almost never entered the legal field. After graduating from CSUB in 1991, he began working a public relations job at the Bakersfield escrow company Chicago Title. However, after a client suggested that he would be a good attorney, Zulfa decided to give law school a try. He attended the

California Pacific School of Law and earned his juris doctorate in 1999.

After spending two years working as an associate at the Bakersfield law firm Clifford and Brown, Zulfa accepted a position at the District Attorney's Office in 2002. He handled a wide variety of cases during his 12-year career there, from petty thefts to high-profile murders. He now presides over major criminal and civil cases as a judge.

While his judicial responsibilities demand lot of Zulfa's time, giving back to the community has long been important to him. He helped establish the Fred Zulfa Memorial Scholarship in honor of his older brother, which supports West High School graduates. More than \$300,000 in scholarships have been provided to students.

Zulfa has volunteered as a mock trial judge for more than a decade to help expose high school students to the legal profession. He has also served on the boards of several organizations, including the Fred Zulfa Scholarship Foundation, Kern County Officials Association and the Court Appointed Special Advocates of Kern County Golf Tournament Committee.

Zulfa has continued to engage with CSUB over the years by serving as a guest speaker on campus and supporting the `Runners sports teams.

[Read the full profile here](#)

# 2026 ALUMNI HALL OF FAME

## HALL OF FAME SOCIAL

Cocktail Reception

## EVENT WELCOME

Masters of Ceremony

Tami Mlcoch and Jim Scott

KGET Channel 17

## ALUMNI REMARKS

Tyler Moyer

Alumni Association Board President

## CSUB REMARKS

Dr. Vernon B. Harper Jr., CSUB President

## PRESENTATION OF AWARDS

Tami Mlcoch and Jim Scott

## 2026 HALL OF FAME INDUCTEES:

Jennifer Barrera, '99

Janie Flores, '76, '83

John Mendiburu, '95, '00

Fred Plane, '78, '94

The Honorable David Zulfa, '91

# PAST ALUMNI HALL OF FAME INDUCTEES

## 2025



Donna Barba  
Higuera



Janet Barnett  
Pierucci



Elizabet  
Rodriguez



Dan Shanyfelt

## 2024



Brynn Carrigan



Ken Haney



Matt Harris



Hajir Nuriddin

## 2023



Emily Duran



Jennifer Thurston



Kris Tiner



Cynthia Zimmer

## 2022



Terri Church



Stephen Neal



Paula Parks



Connie  
Perez-Andresen

## PAST ALUMNI HALL OF FAME INDUCTEES

### 2021



Mary Barlow



Raji Brar



Jeremy Gunn



Clark Jensen



John Means

### 2020



Alan Collatz



Blanca  
Cavazos



Colleen  
McGauley



Louie Vega

### 2019



Charlotte Brandt



Tom Corson



Jeff Huckaby



Gene Tackett

### 2018



Debbie Wood



Edward  
Paine



Bryan  
Burrow



Jeremy  
Adams

# PAST ALUMNI HALL OF FAME INDUCTEES

## 2017



David G.  
Reese



Michael A.  
Neal



Tara-Nicholle  
Kirke



Douglas R.  
Greener

## 2016



Greg Colson



Jeff Colson



Tom Hardt



Mike  
Maggard



Shanna  
Treanor

## 2015



Catherine  
E. Bennett



Kathleen  
O'Neal Gear



Geoffrey B.  
King

## 2014



Audrey Cochran\*



Lynne Hall



Russell Judd



John Nilon

## 2013



Don E. Carter



Beth Rienzi\*



Monique Rogers

\*Deceased

# PAST ALUMNI HALL OF FAME INDUCTEES

## 2012



Bernard C.  
Barmann Sr.



Nancy  
Chaffin-Joy



Jerry E. Scott

## 2011



Christine  
Frazier



John  
Hefner\*



Ben  
Stinson



Jon  
Van Boening

## 2010



Jim  
Bock



Irma  
Carson\*



Sheryl  
Chalupa



Jeff  
Green

## 2009



Joel  
Heinrichs



Pauline  
Larwood



Wayne  
Montgomery\*



Bill  
Rector

\*Deceased

# PAST ALUMNI HALL OF FAME INDUCTEES

## 2008



Cesar  
Aristeiguieta



Melvin D.  
Atkinson



Wendy  
Wayne\*

## 2007



Manuela  
Albuquerque



Gregory D.  
Bynum



Joseph E.  
Drew



Eric W.  
Matlock\*



Kevin  
McCarthy

\*Deceased



ALUMNI  
HALL OF FAME  
CSU BAKERSFIELD™

20 Years

*Thank you for celebrating with us!*

THANK YOU TO OUR PRESENTING SPONSOR

# Celebrating difference makers

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We believe in celebrating those who make a difference.  
It's how we strive to lead the way, every day. We're  
proud to celebrate the hard work, commitment, and  
skill of those who help make the world a better place.

**Congratulations to the 2026 CSUB  
Alumni Hall of Fame inductees.**



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ALUMNI  
HALL OF FAME  
CSUB BAKERSFIELD™

# *Honoring Leaders*

WHO SHAPE CALIFORNIA'S FUTURE

Tejon Ranch Company is proud to sponsor the CSUB Alumni Hall of Fame and to celebrate alumni whose leadership, service, and achievement reflect the values that continue to define California.

This year's inductees have built a legacy of innovation and ingenuity that has served our region and shaped our state.

# *Congratulations*

TO THE 2026 INDUCTEES



TEJON RANCH

[WWW.TEJONRANCH.COM](http://WWW.TEJONRANCH.COM)

THANK YOU TO OUR PRESENTING SPONSOR



# Together We Power Kern County

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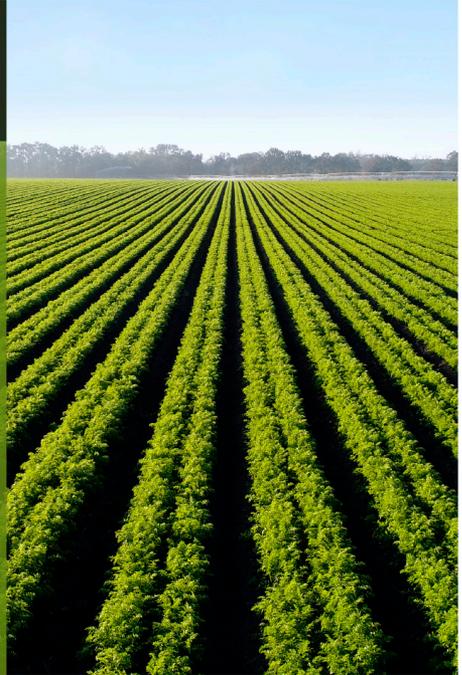


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**THE 2026 ALUMNI HALL OF FAME INDUCTEES**

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College of Natural Sciences, Mathematics and Engineering  
College of Social Sciences and Education  
CSUB Antelope Valley  
Walter W. Stiern Library

# **THANK YOU TO OUR TABLE SPONSORS**

**32nd District Assemblymember Stan Ellis**

**California Chamber of Commerce**

**Community Action Partnership of Kern**

**CSUB Athletics**

**CSUB Office of the President**

**CSUB Student Affairs and Strategic  
Enrollment Management**

**CSUB University Advancement**

**Frank Ramirez**

**Fred Plane**

**Janie Flores**

**Jim Burke Ford**

**Kern County Superior Court Judges**

**Kern County Superintendent of Schools**

**Kern Energy**

**McFarland Unified School District**

**The Honorable David Zulfa**

**Youth 2 Leaders**

# WELCOME HOME!

# ALUMNI *Family* 2026 WEEKEND



ALUMNI  
ASSOCIATION  
CSUB BAKERSFIELD™

*Homecoming*  
'26

**We welcome alumni families home for a weekend of activities and reconnecting!**

**Friday, February 27 and Saturday, February 28**

**Tickets: \$60-21+over, \$40-11-20 yrs., \$20-10 and under**

Each ticket includes events for the whole family starting Friday night and culminating with a CSUB men's basketball game on Saturday.

**CLICK TO BUY TICKETS**

# A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE CSUB HALL OF FAME



The California State University, Bakersfield Alumni Hall of Fame was established in 2006 during a period of renewed vision and momentum within the CSUB Alumni Association. It was an era which also saw the creation of Alumni Park and the launch of the Alumni Party in the Park event. The Alumni Board of Directors, under the leadership of President M. Bryan Burrow, recognized the additional need to strengthen alumni pride and engagement by celebrating the accomplishments of CSUB graduates.

An ad hoc committee, including Burrow and former Alumni Board presidents John Nilon and Nancy Chaffin-Joy, was appointed to bring this vision to life. They proposed the creation of a CSUB Alumni Hall of Fame—a formal recognition program honoring alumni for professional achievement, service to CSUB, philanthropy, personal character and resilience. The proposal received enthusiastic support from CSUB's fourth president, Dr. Horace Mitchell, whose endorsement helped ensure the program's successful launch. The committee then worked closely with the CSUB Alumni Office to develop selection criteria, event protocols and an overall design informed by best practices across higher education.

The inaugural CSUB Alumni Hall of Fame celebration was held on March 24, 2007, at Seven Oaks Country Club. The Alumni Board oversaw every aspect of the event, from nominations and honoree recognition to fundraising, sponsorships and event design. Proceeds from the event were designated to support scholarships for CSUB alumni. What began as a strategic initiative to increase alumni visibility and engagement quickly became one of CSUB's most enduring traditions. Today, the CSUB Alumni Hall of Fame commands a lasting legacy—honoring distinguished alumni, strengthening the CSUB community and celebrating the transformative impact of a CSUB education.

## **Celebrating 20 Years of Alumni Excellence**

The California State University, Bakersfield Alumni Hall of Fame stands as one of the university's most enduring and meaningful alumni traditions. This February the university will celebrate the landmark 20th Alumni Hall of Fame, honoring five graduates whose professional achievements, service, leadership and character reflect the values and mission of CSUB.

The CSUB Alumni Hall of Fame has grown beyond a single event into a lasting legacy. Each class of inductees represents the diverse paths and profound impacts of CSUB alumni across industries, communities and generations, while also supporting student scholarships and strengthening connections between alumni, students and the university.

As the CSUB Alumni Hall of Fame marks this milestone, it continues to honor the past while inspiring the future—celebrating those who have paved the way and reaffirming the powerful role alumni play in shaping the success, reputation and promise of CSUB - Kern County's University.

## ABOUT THE



# ALUMNI ASSOCIATION

CSU BAKERSFIELD™

The [CSUB Alumni Association](#), more than 70,000 strong, builds community among the university's graduates and empowers future generations of 'Runners through mentoring, scholarships and events.

A growing, vibrant Alumni Association helps create a network of opportunity, information, support and engagement that enriches the lives of every 'Runner graduate and empowers economic development, academics and innovation in Kern County, the state, the country and beyond. The CSUB Alumni Association awards scholarships to CSUB alumni pursuing graduate degrees on campus through the Alumni Scholarship Endowment, established in 1990 with a \$5,000 gift and now valued at more than \$300,000. For the 2025–2026 academic year, the Association awarded more than \$12,000 in scholarships to eight alumni continuing their graduate studies at CSUB.



**Gabriel Moore,**  
2025-2026 Alumni  
Association scholarship  
recipient



**Joanna Ramirez Leon,**  
2025-2026 Alumni  
Association scholarship  
recipient



Alumni Mentors and Student Mentees,  
2025 RAMP End-of-year Celebration

Our ['Runner Alumni Mentor Program \(RAMP\)](#) pairs alumni with CSUB juniors, seniors and graduate students who need help transitioning into their careers. This year, we matched up 51 mentees with 44 mentors. RAMP was one of the mentoring programs recognized by the CSU in [an article last year](#).

We celebrate the exceptional accomplishments and community service of alumni by publishing their profiles on our [alumni news website](#), which are promoted on social media.

For more information about the CSUB Alumni Association, please [email](#) the Office of Alumni Engagement or [visit our website](#). Stay connected with us on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), [TikTok](#), [LinkedIn](#) and [Twitter/X](#)!