

The Sundial

Issue 3 | Fall 2024

CSUN Recognizes Indigenous Heritage



Native Artist Carries Tradition

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Letter from the *editor*



Dear Sundial readers,

As the seasons change and the semester reaches its peak, we often find ourselves in a period of reflection. This issue of our magazine presents a unique and necessary blend of topics that connect us to both culture and well-being—highlighting Native American culture, films, artists and traditions, as well as the mental and physical support we need during this busy time.

In exploring Native American culture, we delve into a world rich with history, creativity, and resilience. Recognizing the depth and diversity of these narratives not only educates us but also challenges us to think critically about cultural representation.

This is an opportunity to elevate awareness and honor Native American culture by embracing authentic understanding, supporting Native artists and choosing to celebrate with genuine respect rather than perpetuating stereotypes.

By connecting the celebration of Native American culture with the discussions on mental wellness, we aim to inspire a sense of community and shared growth. Understanding and honoring Indigenous traditions enriches our perspectives, while practical approaches to self-care empower us to take charge of our well-being. Let's continue to learn, respect, and grow together.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Valeria Y." with a stylized flourish.

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The "Continuum of Time" art mural dedicated to the Tatabaviam tribe. The mural sits in the CSUN University Library.

CSUN Recognizes Indigenous Heritage with Tatabaviam Land Acknowledgement

WRITTEN BY ASHLEY SANCHEZ PHOTOGRAPHED BY ALIYAH HINCKLEY

CSUN has embraced a commitment to honoring the indigenous history of the land it occupies through a formal land acknowledgement recognizing the ancestral territory of the Fernandeño Tatabaviam Band of Mission Indians.

This acknowledgement is more than a ceremonial gesture; it is a vital recognition of the rich Indigenous history that continues to influence the community at CSUN.

The creation of the land acknowledgement involved a collaborative effort between CSUN administration, faculty and staff working together with members of the American Indian Studies program representatives from the Fernandeño Tatabaviam Band of Mission Indians.

Historically, the first people of the land where CSUN currently resides used to belong to the Sesevitam and the land was once called Sesevenga. As a consequence of colonization, many lineages of the Sesevitam have been lost over the years, with few surviving today. One of the tribes that continues to exist is the Fernandeño Tatabaviam Band of Mission Indians, which reside in Northern Los Angeles County.

"We are still here, so I think it's good to know that people recognize that tribes still exist, that you are on land that belongs to the tribe," said Jesus Alvarez, tribal senator of the Fernandeño Tatabaviam Band of Mission Indians.

During major events such as graduations and athletic gatherings, the land acknowledgement serves as a reminder of the indigenous people who first inhabited this land. By incorporating land acknowledgment, CSUN invites students and faculty to reflect on the significance of the land they occupy.

"We consider our land acknowledgment to be more than a one-and-done statement—it is a values-based affirmation with room to evolve in the years and decades ahead according to the interests, needs and perspectives of the region's indigenous communities as together we build a brighter and more equitable future for us all," said CSUN President Erika Beck.

CSUN has made key efforts to support indigenous students and faculty beyond just land acknowledgement. In 2023, Dr. Jeffrey Reeder was named the first Senior Tribal Liaison Officer. Reeder helps strengthen relationships with Native nations and Indigenous groups by guiding campus policies that foster inclusiveness and create a supportive environment for Native American, Alaskan Native and Native Hawaiian communities on campus.

Reeder helps strengthen relationships with Native nations and Indigenous groups, by providing/implementing campus policies that create an inclusive and supportive environment for Native American, Alaskan Native, and Native Hawaiian communities on campus.

Supporting indigenous students is a priority at CSUN. Initiatives such as the American Indian Studies Program and student organizations foster a sense of belonging and cultural pride. These programs provide educational resources, community-building opportunities and spaces for indigenous students to connect and thrive.

As CSUN continues to evolve, it remains committed to uplifting indigenous students, preserving their cultural heritage and fostering long term partnership with local Native nations.

American Indian Heritage Month ends with a Powwow

39th Annual CSUN Powwow to close out American Indian Heritage Month

WRITTEN BY QUINN ALEXANDER
PHOTOS BY WILLIAM ESPINOSA

Through traditional dance, song and art, the campus comes alive with Native American culture as tribes from across the country participate in the annual CSUN Powwow, hosted by the American Indian Student Association (AISA) and American Indian Studies Department.

This year marks the 39th Powwow at CSUN, which was first held where the University Student Union (USU) now stands. The event will be on Nov. 30 from 10:30 a.m. to 8 p.m. on the Sierra Quad grass.

The focal point of Powwows is the dancing circle, surrounded by participating tribes. The event officially begins after the grand entry opening ceremony, led by four head dancers who follow closely behind an eagle staff. The staff represents all tribal nations and the connection between American Indians and their homeland.

Following the procession, representatives of the Fernandeño Tataviam Band of Mission Indians bless the circle. After the blessing, only those participating in the dance may enter the circle.

One of the most important aspects of Powwows are the traditional regalia the dancer's wear. They are commonly handmade from beads, feathers and porcupine quills and hold deep cultural significance. Eagle feathers are very prominent in regalia but must not come loose and fall. If a feather does fall, it is believed to be an omen of death.

The drums play a vital role in the ceremonies, since the majority of the gathering is based in song and dance. A northern and southern drum take turns guiding the dancers throughout the day. While there are some aspects that appear at every Powwow, such as the Gourd Dance and the grand entry, events have different songs and cultural ceremonies which make each gathering unique.

Vendors selling food, arts and crafts are also a staple of the Powwow. Frybread, a common staple, will be available, with other items such as handmade crafts being sold by local artists. In the past years, vendors have lined the crosswalks in front of the library.

The CSUN Powwow concludes the observance of American Indian Heritage Month, honoring ancestral traditions. Students can engage with the community by attending AISA meetings, which are held every Thursday at 5 p.m. at La Casita and their corresponding events such as guest speakers and workshops.



Top: The eagle staff awaits to begin the grand entry followed by flags in the "37th Annual CSUN Powwow" at CSUN on Nov. 26, 2022.



Bottom photos: "37th Annual CSUN Powwow" participants dance at CSUN on Nov. 26, 2022.

Costume or Culture?

WRITTEN BY ARANZA GARDUNO-SANTANA

Every Halloween, it is a chance for people to get creative with costumes, but for Native Americans, seeing their culture turned into a costume highlights a persistent problem of cultural appropriation.

According to the Native Governance Center, cultural appropriation is defined as, “a particular power dynamic in which members of a dominant culture take elements from a culture of people who have been systematically oppressed by that dominant group.”

Ethan Molina, president of CSUN’s American Indian Student Association (AISA) delves deeper into what cultural appropriation means. “I would say, [it’s] the taking of someone’s culture. And also because specifically for native folks, it’s like a mockery of their culture. And a lack of sensitivity to those cultures,” said Molina.

There is a long history of Native American culture being appropriated during Halloween. ... Costumes advertised as “Indian Princess” (or Pocahontas), “Indian Warrior”, or “Indian Chief” are quite common. Costumes described as “sexy” or “hottie” cause greater harm as Native American women are 2.5 times more likely to be sexually assaulted in the United States, according to a 2021 report from Amnesty International USA.

That same report states that 1 in 3 Native American women will become a victim of sexual assault during their lifetime. This is compounded by an ongoing epidemic of missing and murdered Native American women at an alarming rate.

Christian Mota, the Treasurer for AISA, thinks that non-native people wearing Native American attire like



Samuel Sierra participates in the grand entry of the "37th Annual CSUN Powwow" in Northridge, Calif., on Nov. 26, 2022. (Sundial File Photo, William Espinosa)



Example of cultural appropriation of Native American women’s wear in costumes being sold on Amazon.

headdresses should be banned.

“The main point about it is that it’s not a costume. It’s regalia. It’s attire that’s very important and significant to a culture,” said Mota. “When you start to dress up as that culture, you disrespect that culture. Because you are doing something you don’t even understand the significance behind that headdress, and that becomes a whole issue.”

Native American headdresses have deep cultural and significance. Traditionally worn by chiefs and warriors during important ceremonies, the feathers on the headdresses symbolize acts of bravery or great achievement, and they must be earned.

Tomiear Ortega, a member of AISA, explains that while there is a “thin line” between cultural appropriation and appreciation, there is an important distinction. “The things we will wear are, like, very sacred to us. We wouldn’t just wear [headdresses] as a costume for Halloween. There is a very thin line with people trying to show appreciation indirectly,” said Ortega.

Online campaigns and hashtags such as #NotYourCostume and #MyCultureIsNotYourCostume has raised significant awareness of cultural appropriation in recent years.

Cultural representation holds significant importance for many individuals, including Mota.

“I feel like culture means a lot because it’s part of your identity. Culture is something a lot of people are still trying to protect due to past issues such as colonization,” said Mota. “That deeply impacts your culture... Some people struggle to live, conceive and reconnect with who they are or who their identity is. Culture means a great deal.”



Orange logo Warwick Public School,
Warwick North Dakota

“Educate, Not Eradicate,” The Use of Native Imagery from Native Voices

WRITTEN AND PHOTOGRAPHED BY YULISSA GARCIA

“We love it. Who wouldn’t? - Eunice Goodstar Woman Davidson, founder of the Native American Guardian Association.

Activists have fought hard to remove the names and logos of Native Americans from schools and sports teams across the nation because they believed they were derogatory and a symbol of disrespect towards the Native American community.

According to the Native American Guardian Association (NAGA), they were wrong. The majority of the Native Americans living in reservations actually love to see their names, vocabulary and logos representing them.

“As long as they’re using it respectfully, we’re fine with it. It puts us out there even more,” said Eunice Goodstar Woman Davidson, a full-blood Dakota Sioux and a member

of the Spirit Lake Tribe in North Dakota and Davidson, the founder of NAGA, a “non-profit organization advocating for increased education about Native Americans, especially in public educational institutions, and greater recognition of Native American Heritage through the high profile venues of sports and other public platforms.”

The non-profit represents about 90% of the Native American population.

“All of our Indian names and images around the country that were being used in sports were being told by a few people in the country, and a few Indians, that they did not want this. That it was derogatory,” said Davidson. “Redskins was a derogatory name, and it meant scalping, which is all fabricated.”

For centuries, sports teams have used names based on

Native American tribes. Using these are a symbol of pride, honor and respect for the first inhabitants of this nation, according to NAGA, and the removal is considered to be racist to these tribes.

“We wanted to get our story out there, but the media decided they were going to silence us,” said Davidson.

Native Americans are admirers of the old NFL football name, the Washington Redskins. The team was named after their first coach, a Sioux Indian named William Henry “Lone Star” Dietz, out of respect for Native American

“We filed a lawsuit in Colorado to stop them from banning Native names and imagery. You have a few activists, Indians that they hide behind, but mostly it’s white academia,”

-Tony Hansen, the President of NAGA

heritage and culture.

Blackfeet Tribe Chairman, William “Blackie” Wetzel, encouraged the team to use an image of an American Indian to honor the Native American heritage.

In 1974, 20th-century Blackfeet Tribe Chief, John Two Guns White Calf, became the official logo of the Washington Redskins, which was then retired in 2020.

“We know to lose those icons, those images and our names is only going to cause more genocide to our people,” said Davidson.

Tony Hansen, the President of NAGA and part Cherokee Indian explained that the term “redskin” was used to distinguish men between the redskins, whiteskins and blackskins. It was used as an identifier and not meant to be radicalized.

In 2018, the MLB team, the Cleveland Guardians, retired their logo, Chief Wahoo, an Indian caricature with a toothy smile and red skin because it was considered degrading by activists and a small minority of Native Americans.

“Most of us Indians, we didn’t even care,” said Davidson.

Hansen mentioned that NAGA offered to bring in Bennett Brien, a renowned Native American artist, to create a new logo with a better representation of Native Americans but the team denied, in what felt like an instinctive movement to eradicate everything Native American.

According to NAGA, most of the audience that they hear from are from K- through 12 schools who have come under attack, “We have helped a number of Native themed schools fight off this effort,” said Hansen.

“We filed a lawsuit in Colorado to stop them from banning Native names and imagery. You have a few activists, Indians that they hide behind, but mostly it’s white academia,” Hansen added.

In 2005, the NCAA issued a policy discouraging schools



Blue logo Four Winds High School, Fort Totten ND

from using “hostile and abusive racial/ethnic/national origin mascots, nicknames or imagery” associated with Native Americans.

18 Eighteen schools used names or images related to Native Americans and after the policy, 10 made changes, three kept their nicknames, but they stopped using them to represent Natives, and five schools showed they had received their local tribe’s approval and kept their names.

Davidson stated that the NCAA stepped out of their lane and had no business getting involved in the situation, “Right now, my tribe out here, they want the NCAA abolished. A lot of us do, because what business did they have to tell us they can’t use our name,” Davidson said. “How could we say that they’re derogatory? We would never say that about our ancestors.”

Reservations use their own logos of Native Americans. Be it a warrior, chief, or somebody in a headdress, they are used because they are proud of their ancestors and what they did. They are forever grateful for the survival of them because they know they wouldn’t be here without them, Davidson explained.

Instead of completely getting rid of Native American symbols and imagery, the non-profit’s goal is to educate, not eradicate. The Native American Guardian Association states that Native American culture and history isn’t talked about much, but embodying their imagery, vocabulary and symbols is supported and is huge when it comes down to educating those about Native Americans and who they are.

“As long as we’re doing things with a heartfelt desire to honor Native Americans, to remember them in an age of cancel culture, we absolutely will support them. And if they want our opinion on how they can do better, we’ll tell them,” said Davidson.

Native Artist Ca



WRITTEN BY KRISTAL GUEVARA
PHOTO COURTESY BY LEAH MATA FRAGUA

As a member of the Yak Tityu Tityu Yak Tihini (the people of Tihini) Northern Chumash Tribe, artist and educator Leah Mata Fragua uses traditional practices and mediums to create hand-crafted jewelry and elaborate regalia.

In the past, Fragua has preferred to use the traditional medium, abalone, to create her pieces. However, she was prompted to switch mediums as access to abalone shells became restricted. The state of California placed a moratorium on the harvesting of abalone until 2026, due to the population decline caused by environmental factors and overfishing.

She has since shifted to papermaking, particularly for its ephemeral quality. Fragua uses this medium to create paper baskets. Her intention of shifting to this medium was to generate less of a carbon footprint with her practice, being mindful of how certain mediums can be toxic or have negative impacts on the environment.

The environment serves as a major influence on her work. Fragua is a place-based artist, meaning that she draws inspiration and materials from place. She uses her work to explore the



Leah Mata Fragua honors heritage

relationship between land and people, often communicating her cultural values of environmental advocacy and sustainability through her intentional, mindful use of materials and the finished pieces. According to her website's artist statement, Fragua says

her work "provides a narrative about the importance of tribes in exercising our sovereign gathering rights."

Her work and philosophy centers around the ephemeral. Fragua shares her belief that people struggle to live in the present moment, often turning to

Carrying Tradition



Carrying Tradition through her place-based practice

technology to archive moments in time. Fragua's artist statement says that her goal is not meant to create art that will last forever, but to create unique pieces that exist "in transient moments and challenges our own perception of time and mortality."

"I really want to create work that challenges both humans and institutions to be present with the work so that you are engaging with it in real-time," says Fragua. "Somehow we always try to hold on to things without really experiencing them while they're

actually happening."

While cultural traditions and practices play a critical role in creation, Fragua states that she doesn't create with the intention of showcasing a Native story through her work. Instead, it organically aligns with her practice based on place.

"I don't think I really focus on the Native story. I think I just make work that is rooted in place. So therefore, the work becomes a story of that place and the people that occupied that place for thousands of years," she says. "So when I think of my culture, it's an extension of that place."

Fragua stresses the importance of authentic Native American art, explaining an issue she has observed in the art world: ethnic fraud and cultural appropriation. "For me, it's really important that authentic Indigenous voices are represented in the Native art world," says Fragua. "Sometimes, some of those messages or narratives might be falsely representing a value system that is completely made up or fraudulent."

"There's a lot of people who self-identify as Native American or Indigenous, and they do not meet the political definition, or they do not have the genealogy, and they do not belong to a community," says Fragua.

Woon-A-Tai's Emmys Statement in Solidarity

WRITTEN BY NYAN GAVINO

“Reservation Dogs” star D’Pharaoh Woon-A-Tai made a bold statement at the Emmys this year, showing up to the event in a sleek all-black tuxedo contrasted with a shocking blood-red handprint painted across his face. To many of the attendees, the meaning of this statement was lost, however, there is a tragic and heartbreaking story to tell behind his appearance.

Woon-A-Tai is the very first Indigenous North American to be nominated in the Emmy’s leading actor category according to Variety, an achievement earned from his performance as Bear Smallhill in the FX series “Reservation Dogs,” a comedy-drama that follows the lives of Native American teens living on a reservation in Oklahoma.

The 22-year-old from Toronto is of Oji-Cree First Nations descent, according to CNN. The painted handprint symbolizes the thousands of Indigenous women who have been murdered or disappeared in Canada, where the government data shows they are 12 times more likely to go missing or be killed than non-Indigenous women.

Woon-A-Tai spoke to Deadline explaining his appearance, highlighting his solidarity with the women and girls lost, along with his goal of getting the message out to as many viewers as possible.

“This epidemic has been ignored for far too long and has devastated the lives of countless Indigenous people,” said Woon-A-Tai “I’ve been waiting for the right moment to make this statement, and when I received the Emmy nomination, I felt an obligation to use the opportunity to spark these conversations.”

The makeup was done by makeup artist Martha Phelan, an Indigenous woman whose sister was unfortunately another victim of the ongoing crisis. The red handprint has become a symbol within the Missing or Murdered Indigenous Persons (MMIP) movement, which aims to raise awareness about the disproportionately high rates of missing and murder cases

impacting Indigenous people. Red was utilized specifically because many Native cultures believe the color is the only one spirits can see.

“Most people backstage and at the show were confused and didn’t fully understand its significance,” he said. “I hope this will inspire more conversation and curiosity within my industry about this and encourage those who are fighting for the voices that cannot be heard.”

There are 5,712 unsolved MMIP cases in the United States according to the Bureau of Indian Affairs. Advocates on the other hand say that the number is likely much higher due to errors and inconsistencies in the recording of data.

The Bureau reports that the rates of murder, rape, and violent crime are all higher than the national averages for Native American and Alaska Natives. Data also reveals that

Native American and Alaska Native women make up a significant portion of missing and murdered individuals in the United States.

The crisis in the U.S. prompted the formation of The Not Invisible Act Commission (NIAC) in 2021. The commission is composed of 41 members, including tribal leaders, Native community members, advocates, law enforcement, family members, victims and survivors. The group submitted a 200+ page report with recommendations to Congress in hopes they would address the crisis. One major factor highlighted in the report being that these cases are

severely underreported in media coverage.

A few days before the Emmys, Woon-A-Tai told The Canadian Press that he hopes his nomination will inspire Indigenous youth around the world.

“I don’t know what an Emmy Award will really do for stopping issues that we face on a daily basis,” said Woon-A-Tai. “It just gives us hope. It gives hope to a kid on a reservation that they could also be on that stage and do it too, and they can.”



Illustration by Valeria Yanez

Matador Marquee

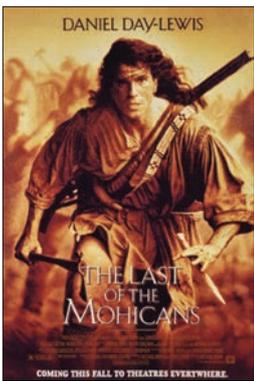
WRITTEN BY JESSE ILLANES



© Warner Bros. Pictures

“The Mission”

The film highlights the harsh reality of Christianization as 18th century Jesuit priests attempt to convert the Guaraní people, while still recognizing their traditions. However, after the Treaty of Madrid shifts control to the Portuguese, indigenous people along with the priests and their allies, fight to protect the Guaraní people and defend their land.



© Twentieth Century Fox

“The Last of the Mohicans”

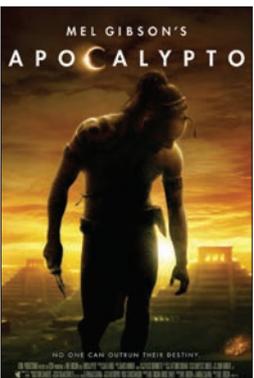
Director Michael Mann transforms a controversial story into an action-packed, dramatic and adventurous experience. A white man, raised by Native Americans, attempts to stop a tribe seeking vengeance. Set in the 18th century, during the French and Indian war, Native characters are portrayed in both protagonist and antagonist roles, with strong reasoning behind their actions.



© FX Networks

“Reservation Dogs”

This modern day TV series features indigenous teenagers striving to fulfill their late friend's dream of moving to California, all while offering a comedic twist. The show strikes a good balance of drama and comedy, featuring a distinctive cast of characters with unique quirks.



© Icon Productions

“Apocalypto”

Set in early 16th century Mesoamerica, this film follows Jaguar Paw, a hunter from a small tribe at odds with the Mayan Empire. Filmed in the Mayan language, it illustrates the brutal tactics the Mayan Empire used to stay dominant while following an underdog's quest to protect his village.



© Paramount Pictures

“Killers of the Flower Moon”

A story rooted in greed, corruption and resiliency. Set in 1920s America, where the discovery of oil on Osage land triggers a series of murders of the Osage people and a sinister conspiracy.

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Season of giving: How to support Native-Owned businesses

WRITTEN BY TEAGAN DAVIDGE

Indigenous Peoples' Day and Native American Heritage Month present the perfect opportunity to mindfully exercise your purchasing power while honoring the cultures of Native American communities. Supporting Indigenous entrepreneurs and charities not only uplifts Native economies, but also helps to preserve traditions and promote sustainability. Individuals have the chance to make a lasting and meaningful impact on underserved communities while celebrating Indigenous history this month and all year long.



Salish Sea Earrings \$44

Eighth Generation

Eighth Generation is a Seattle-based art and lifestyle brand owned by the Snoqualmie Tribe. Founded in 2008, the company became the first Native-owned in the U.S. and Canada to produce wool blankets in 2015. It provides an ethical alternative to “Native-inspired” art and products through its artist-centric approach and 100% Native designed products. <https://eighthgeneration.com/>

Cheekbone beauty

Cheekbone Beauty, founded by Jenn Harper, is one of the first Indigenous-owned cosmetics companies. Drawing inspiration from Indigenous teachings, the company has developed products that are sustainable, high-quality, clean, vegan, and cruelty-free. Cheekbone Beauty strives to create a space in the beauty industry where everyone, including Indigenous people, feel represented and seen. <https://www.cheekbonebeauty.com/>



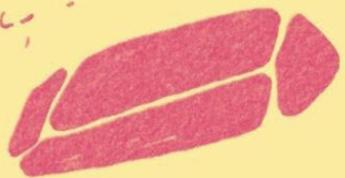
Horizon Lip Penic I \$20



ThunderVoice Hat Co

ThunderVoice Hat Co. carries on the lineage of Native fashion that emerged from a collaboration of several cultures. Over 95% of the company's products are made entirely from reclaimed materials. The organization also provides emergency assistance to families of the Navajo nation recovering from the Covid-19 pandemic by donating care packages and funds generated by purchases. provided by customers. <https://thundervoicereco.com/>

Thunder Voie Originals 11 \$1,500



ماتریکس



How to Effectively Manage Seasonal Depression and Exam Anxiety—With Advice from Experts

WRITTEN BY NYAN GAVINO

ILLUSTRATION BY MALIAHGUIYA SOURGOSE

Many students experience short periods where they feel down or unlike their usual selves. These mood shifts coincide with the changes in the seasons, particularly when the days get shorter and colder in the fall and winter. However, these changes can sometimes be more than just passing feelings, and may affect how a person thinks, feels, and behaves. If you or someone you know has noticed significant changes in mood and behavior when the seasons change, it might be a symptom of Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD).

SAD can be a difficult disorder to manage. According to the National Institute of Mental Health, symptoms typically start in the late fall or early winter and end during the spring and summer. This is known as winter-pattern SAD or winter depression. It is a type of depression that is characterized by a recurrent seasonal pattern, with symptoms usually lasting four to five months each year.

The NIMH estimates that millions of Americans experience SAD, but many may not realize they have it. This disorder often begins in young adulthood, typically affecting high school and college students. It also occurs more frequently in women than in men.

Seasonal Affective Disorder can be a cause for concern, but it can also be effectively managed with the right approach.

“During my time working within college mental health counseling centers, I have had students seek mental health support to address their seasonal pattern of depression,” said CSUN staff counselor, Dr. Abram D. Milton.

“Within our CSUN population, for many students, the Fall semester has so much transition going on that someone dealing with seasonal depression could possibly struggle with the heavy class workload, adjusting to their major, and adjusting to the many different life events that occur as a result from their college experience,” said Milton.

Dr. Milton strongly urges students to utilize University Counseling Services (UCS) as soon as possible for support.

“We have individual and group therapy. More importantly, we have workshops, such as the workshop called ‘Getting Unstuck’, which is a brief workshop that teaches psychoeducational skills related to dealing with the symptoms

of depression,” said Milton.

There are a lot of anticipatory steps students can take to help mitigate the chances of developing mood disorders. He explained that identifying thought patterns linked to depressed feelings, getting consistent physical activity, proper sleep and nutrition and maintaining social connections are key strategies.

Anxiety from midterms and exams can be a significant issue for students. It’s important to focus on mental well-being and build healthy coping strategies. Similarly to SAD, exam and midterm anxiety can be treated and in some cases, prevented.

“Many of the techniques I mentioned earlier can also help with anxiety and stress. A few additional considerations are to realize that stress is a normal process we all experience. Stress can help us focus and complete challenging tasks,” said Milton. “It is when stress becomes distress or generalized anxiety that a student finds that it is a struggle to control the feeling and may need support at UCS. Students can always check out our resources on our UCS website or come to our anxiety reduction workshop called ‘Anxiety Toolbox’ to learn skills to reduce anxiety.”

Finally, Dr. Milton stressed the importance of responsible substance use, in hopes students never develop reliance or addictions.

“If they feel that their substance use is affecting their everyday life and they want help, we have a mental health specialist at UCS who specializes in supporting students dealing with addiction. When dealing with excessive substance use, or if the student feels they are dealing with an addiction, it is a good idea to work with a mental health professional who specializes in helping the student identify triggers that increase use,” said Milton.

The UCS office is open Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Students can call the office at 818-677-2366 or visit room 520 on 5th floor of Bayramian Hall to schedule a telephone screening. There is also an after hours crisis line available at 818-677-2366.

Brain Boosting Foods for Studying

WRITTEN BY ALLISON MALTUN PHOTOS BY NICHOLAS DINO

Brain boosting foods are essential for improving concentration and memory. By incorporating the right meals and snacks into our everyday lives can help us stay healthy as well as productive. There are various food options that can help when studying. Here is a list of a few foods known to improve brain function:



Cacao

Dark chocolate is a great snack that is yummy with several health benefits. According to the CSUN Food Pantry, “Dark chocolate and cocoa have shown to potentially help reduce mental fatigue, improve blood flow to the brain and boost reaction time.” The key ingredient cocoa plays a significant role in these effects. The National Library of Medicine states the “Beneficial role of dark chocolate is entirely dependent on the characteristics of cocoa beans. They are rich in cocoa butter, but they also contain proteins and methylxanthines (caffeine and theobromine) along with minerals and antioxidants.”

It is important to remember that not all fats or sugars are harmful. As the CSUN Food Pantry explains, “Foods that contain sugar like dark chocolate or foods like avocados which contain unsaturated fats aren’t always a bad thing. It is the quality of fats, sugars, carbs and more that matter. Moderation is key, and it is important to have something balanced in your stomach to get through a big exam or assignment.”



Fruits

Berries and citrus fruits, such as grapes and oranges, are rich in vitamin C and make refreshing snacks that enhance concentration and memory. According to Healthline, “berries contain compounds, including anthocyanins, that may enhance mental performance. Similarly, citrus fruits are highly nutritious and contain flavonoids which may have the ability to promote learning and memory, as well as protect nerve cells from injury, therefore warding off mental decline.”

Greens

Leafy greens such as kale, spinach and broccoli are known for their brain boosting properties. The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) says that “Vitamin K is an important vitamin for brain function.” Making these greens a great choice for boosting productivity and brain health.

There are various brain boosting food recipes available online, offering students a variety of ways to incorporate these foods into their diet. Smoothies are an especially popular option, as they are easy to customize and pack a variety of nutrients into one drink. For example, a spinach and berry smoothie provides a combination of greens and antioxidants in a single serving.



Proteins

Food rich in protein—like eggs, salmon, nuts or dairy products are a great source of protein. According to Healthline, proteins are made of up amino acids, which are essential for brain health. They also are the building blocks for neurotransmitters that help regulate mood and concentration. Proteins can be found in many foods, including high protein options such as protein bars, shakes and cookies. The CSUN Food Pantry states, “Protein can help improve your mood and help you stay full.”



Students are encouraged to do their own research ingredients to find the best brain boosting foods that work with them. A balanced diet can support brain development but promote overall health. Consuming the right foods can enhance focus and performance, helping students succeed academically.



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FEATURED EVENTS



StrongMatador: Squat Challenge

Monday, Nov. 4 – Friday, Nov. 8
 📍 Student Recreation Center



Murder Mystery

Wednesday, Nov. 6: 5 – 7 p.m.
 📍 Northridge Center



Karaoke Like in Oki

Thursday, Nov. 7: 5 – 5 p.m.
 📍 Veterans Resource Center



Salute to Service

Sunday, Nov. 10 – Thursday, Nov. 14
 📍 Various



Trans Day of Remembrance

Wednesday, Nov. 20: 2 – 5 p.m.
 📍 Plaza del Sol



Crunch Time

Monday, Dec. 2 – Thursday, Dec. 12
 📍 University Student Union

CHECK OUT



Games Room Tournaments

Stay up-to-date with our exciting and competitive tournaments throughout the semester.
 (discord.com/invite/MEG&Abs)



Oasis Nap Pod Campaign

From Nov. 1 through Dec. 13, earn rewards while napping to improve mental function and relieve stress.



Tech Tips

Upgrade your software skills at these free workshops, available Wednesday and Fridays throughout the semester. Register online.