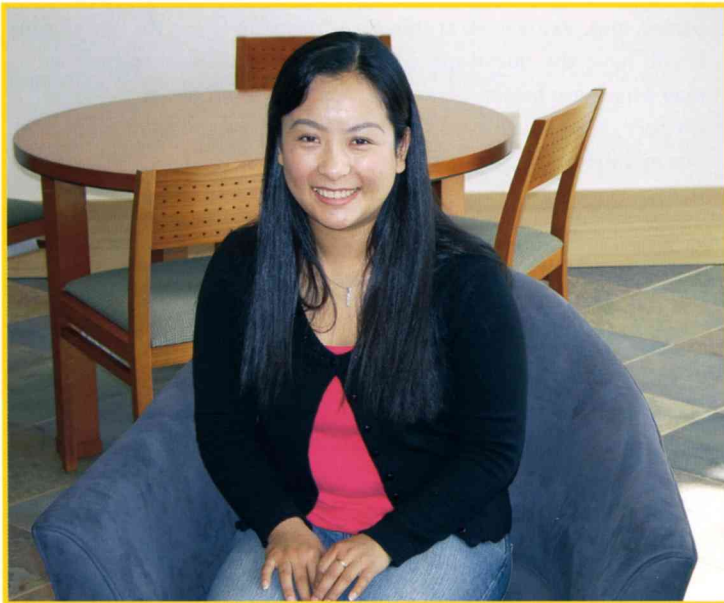


# Alma Otter

A newsletter for alumni and friends of California State University, Monterey Bay

## The road from China to CSUMB – and back again

China is the fourth largest country in the world. Only Russia, Canada and the U.S. have more area. It's also the most populous. With well over 1.3 billion people, there's a big need to educate the masses.



*Xina relaxes in CSUMB's Alumni & Visitors Center before returning to China to help economically disadvantaged students gain an education.*

Xina Ruheng hails from Luguho Lake in China's Yunnan Province, which borders Tibet. She returned to her homeland this summer after graduating with an M.A. in education. Xina is the first student from China to earn a degree from CSUMB and the first of the Mousou People, a matriarchal society, to earn an advanced degree from an American university.

Along the road to receiving a quality education, Xina faced a number of early roadblocks. "When I was 6, I started elementary school," she said, "but they didn't have a school for the Tibetan language, so I had to study Chinese." Recognizing this as a challenge to be overcome, she went on to learn English by age 11.

Xina distinguished herself as a top student while attending high school in her homeland. There are few schools in rural China

*(continued on page 3)*

## Setting sail with NOAA

Sean Finney, ESSP, '04, is one of 14 men and women who recently graduated from Basic Officer Training with the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Commissioned Officer Corps. It's a logical career path for an alum who had a concentration in Marine and Coastal Ecology.

The NOAA Corps, a part of the U.S. Commerce Department, is one of the nation's seven uniformed services. (The others are the four military services, the Coast Guard and the Public Health Service.)

A native of Monterey, Sean earned an A.A. from Denver Automotive Diesel College. He has worked as a certified Audi mechanic and as a crew chief for the RPMS Motorsports/Chiron USA racing team for 8 years. Sean also served in the Army Reserves.

NOAA Corps officers manage and operate the agency's fleet of 18 ships and 13 aircraft that are used to gather data and conduct research for the agency's environmental science mission. The officers can be assigned from Alaska to Antarctica. Their work can involve exploring the face of a glacier or the depths of the sea or flying into the eye of a hurricane.

Sean is currently assigned to the fisheries research vessel *David Starr Jordan*, a 171-foot trawler. He will call the ship home for about two years. After that, it's shore duty for about three years and then back to sea for another two years.

Officers assigned to a research ship receive specialized training in support of NOAA's mission through participating in fishery, oceanographic, atmospheric and hydrographic research.

"CSUMB has provided me with a myriad of tools that, I believe, will make me very successful in my career," Sean says.



*Sean Finney is now at sea with NOAA.*

*(continued on page 3)*

## More members, more benefits for Alumni Association

I hope all of you had a nice, relaxing summer!

The Alumni Association had a very productive spring, and I'd like to share with you what we've been working on.



*Greg Riley*

All lifetime members now have a dedicated FirstClass license, meaning they are guaranteed a "slot" to access FirstClass (barring any technical issues). Hopefully you've already noticed that you no longer receive an error message when logging on. Annual members have the option of purchasing a dedicated license for an additional \$15 each year. The board recognizes how important FirstClass is to our members and hopes you'll enjoy this improved membership benefit.

In reviewing the budget, the finance committee decided to increase scholarship awards by 50 percent for the 2005-2006 academic year. This means that the association will award a total of \$6,000 for scholarships! Capstone grants are earmarked for \$3,000, with another \$3,000 to fund the Alumni Vision Scholarship. In addition to scholarships, the association has allocated \$3,000 for university support. This is money set aside for clubs and organizations that request funding for an event being held on campus.

We are very excited about the alumni book drive. Groundbreaking for the library is scheduled to take place this academic year. The new library will have the capacity to hold over 650,000 volumes. You can help fill the shelves by purchasing one or more books via the Alumni Association's Book Drive through [Amazon.com](http://Amazon.com). Books are as low as \$10! Our campaign goal is 1,000 new books. More information is available on page 4.

In the past, CSUMB has held Kelp Kraze in the fall. Last year, the university celebrated its 10th anniversary with Founders Day. This year, the first homecoming is scheduled for October 8. We hope alumni will attend and enjoy the festivities. See the back page for more information.

The nominating committee, chaired by Danny Belitski, put together a fabulous slate of new board members. The general membership has approved the slate, and I'm pleased to announce that five new board members have joined us this year. Their bios and photos are included on page 11.

*Alma Otter* has been expanded to 12 pages and will now be published three times a year. We are always happy to hear from our alumni and encourage your submissions for Otter Fodder, which should be sent to [alumni@csumb.edu](mailto:alumni@csumb.edu). Share your successes with your fellow alumni!

Our events committee, chaired by Courtney Kuhn, has planned a number of great events for you throughout the year ahead. We hope to see you at some of them!

If you haven't already, please drop by the new Alumni & Visitors Center at the corner of Gen. Jim Moore and Third Street, and take a look at this great meeting space for our alumni. If you have any questions, concerns or suggestions on how we may serve you better, please feel free to e-mail me at [gregory\\_riley@csumb.edu](mailto:gregory_riley@csumb.edu). I always look forward to hearing from our membership.

All my best,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Greg Riley". The signature is stylized and fluid.

Greg Riley ('02)  
President, CSUMB Alumni Association



*The new Alumni & Visitors Center, home of alumni events and business meetings.*

## **Xina Ruheng (continued from page 1)**

— her high school was located about 375 miles from Luguhu Lake. Merely being selected to attend high school is an honor; Xina was one of only a few students to do so from her area.

"Many of my classmates in elementary school didn't even finish a junior high education," she continued. "After three years, I took the entrance examination for college and got the highest score in my county. I decided to attend the Central University for Nationalities in Beijing. Four years later, I graduated as a journalism major.

"In 1999, during my freshman year in Beijing, I was selected by the school to visit Washington, D.C. and New York City, representing Chinese college students. It was a very impressive experience for me. When I got back to China I thought about going abroad to study for a couple of years."

After hearing good reports about the university, Xina decided to attend CSUMB.

Having endured the struggle to gain a college education in China, Xina next faced a big cultural transition when she moved to the U.S. for her master's degree.

"When I arrived at CSUMB, I was only one of two Chinese students. When I first got here I couldn't figure out the menu choices in the Dining Commons." Not understanding the options, Xina ended up eating cookies for a week. With the help of other students she soon adapted to life at CSUMB.

"As a volunteer (in China) during my summer vacation, I went to a village to do some teaching for a couple of months. It was disappointing. Most kids don't have a chance to get more education.

"I felt I needed to do something for them. That's when I decided to get into the education field. I want to do something to help people get educated."

Xina is now the director of administration for the TANY Holding Group, LLC in Beijing.

"I help my company (an investment bank) run a foundation to help poor students of my country get an education. What they are doing is to help talented students, like those who play piano or violin very well — mostly arts majors. I suggested also doing something for people who really need help, like poor students. They agreed. I plan to take students trying to get the most basic education, mostly very poor students in the west of China.

"I've made a lot of friends at CSUMB and they wanted me to stay," Xina concluded. "I cannot be here for just myself — I need to go back and do something for my people." ❖

## **Sean Finney (continued from page 1)**

"For instance, the stand-alone projects (such as Capstones), allow you the opportunity to develop essential skills such as leadership, time management and the ability to work with outside agencies."

While serving aboard the *David Starr Jordan*, Sean will conduct fishery and living marine resources assessments off the Pacific coast of the U.S. and Central and South America. The ship's home port is San Diego. ❖

## **A grad last year, an entrepreneur this year**

It's been a fast track for Heather (Rotharmel) Strickland this past year. After graduating in May 2004 with a B.A. in liberal studies, she got married a few months later and during July of this year, started a business in Toro Park. It's a coffee shop called Peachy Cheeks, her childhood nickname. The shop is located in a local shopping center on Portola Drive.

"We live nearby and often came to this neighborhood for a walk," Heather says. "We noticed there wasn't a place in the area to grab a drink or a snack. So we started this place to serve those needs."



*Heather Strickland serves up espresso for a customer at Peachy Cheeks.*

Before starting Peachy Cheeks with her husband, Heather had worked at Plumes Coffee in Monterey on a full-time basis for three years — while taking teacher education classes at CSUMB full-time. After a year, she was promoted to manager. She also spent two-and-a-half years working with her husband in his medical billing business.

"CSUMB made me very understanding of people; that is, how people learn best. My service learning work taught me how to be non-confrontational in dealing with people in any situation.

"I learned to be a good trainer from being in the teaching program. My management style seems to work. I don't ask people to do things I wouldn't do myself. I'm part of the team."

Peechy Cheeks offers an array of pastries, sandwiches, salads and dessert items. Beverages include espresso, coffee, tea and cold drinks. For entertainment, pool tables are available.

As for future plans, Heather wants her business to become the sponsor of a softball team. From age 6 to 16, she played softball on a regular basis and has a desire to give back to the sport.

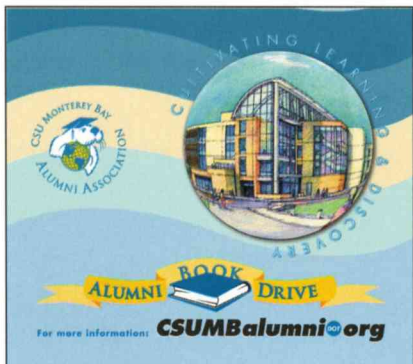
Her advice to other recent graduates: "Don't be afraid to try anything new. Take a chance. Do something you like to do. The day I hate coming to work is the day I quit." ❖

## Get involved in the alumni book drive

This academic year, CSUMB plans to break ground for its new library, which will have the capacity to hold over 650,000 volumes when it opens. You can help the new Tanimura & Antle Family Memorial Library fill its shelves by purchasing one or more books via the CSUMB Alumni Book Drive. The campaign goal is 1,000 new books for the library.

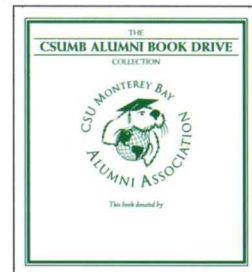
The library staff has created a CSUMB Library Wish List through amazon.com. There are currently 300 titles listed with some books priced as low as \$10.

Here's how you can contribute to the book drive:



- Visit [www.amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com) and type "CSUMB Library" in the Wish List section. Browse through the selection of books available and make your purchase. Books will be shipped directly to the library. New titles will be added to the Wish List on a regular basis.
- Make a monetary donation to the CSUMB Alumni Book Drive fund at the online store or by sending a check, made payable to the Foundation of CSUMB, to CSUMB Alumni Association, Alumni Book Drive, 100 Campus Center, Bldg. 97, Seaside, CA 93955.

To memorialize your donation for decades to come, a book plate, with your name printed on it as the donor, will be placed in every book you purchase and donate to the library. →



## Wear great clothing – and spread the word about your alma mater!



The Alumni Association is proud to showcase its new alumni merchandise. Check out the new styles and colors on the association's secure website. Go to [CSUMBalumni.org](http://CSUMBalumni.org) and click on *Clothing* under *Store Categories*.

Thanks to Laura Chen for coordinating the CSUMB alumni volunteers for this photo shoot. And special thanks to all the models for taking the time to be photographed and showing off all the latest merchandise. Thank you for giving back to CSUMB! ♦



## Laura Chen is new alumni relations assistant

Laura Chen (CHHS, '05) is the alumni relations assistant to the director of the Alumni Association. She joined the university as a staff member this summer, immediately upon graduating.

"My greatest professional accomplishment is graduating and beginning to work full-time right after graduation," says Laura. "My greatest personal accomplishment is being one of the few Greeks to spearhead the Greek System and the Multicultural Greek Council (MGC) at CSUMB."

Laura was also a founding mother of Rho Chapter of Lambda Sigma Gamma Sorority Inc., the first multicultural sorority at CSUMB.

"As a fellow graduate of CSUMB, I'm so excited to be part of this growing university and Alumni Association. I'm even more excited to see how much good the alumni of CSUMB can contribute to our society."

As the alumni relations assistant, she looks forward to helping association members, and prospective members, with information and specific requests.

Laura can be reached at 831-582-3595 or via FirstClass at [Laura\\_Chen@csumb.edu](mailto:Laura_Chen@csumb.edu). ❖



Laura Chen is eager to help all CSUMB alumni.

## Welcome from CSUMB's president

As CSUMB welcomes students and faculty back for the new academic year 2005-2006, we are stepping into our next 10 years with a year of transition. I am honored to serve as interim president this year and am prepared to move CSUMB forward on the important work that needs to be accomplished. We are ready to renew our strategic plan. We need to raise funds for our new Tanimura & Antle Family Memorial Library. We need to move our north campus housing project forward. And, last but not most important, continue to improve our graduation rates.



CSUMB is taking its first steps in implementing our revised Master Plan with the infrastructure project. Although we'll be seeing a lot of dust and trenches, the outcome will be the utilities infrastructure for the "heart of green."

So, as we start this new year, remember first and foremost that it's the Vision that gives us focus and direction, that helps us remember why we are here. Be assured that CSUMB is still Vision-driven!

*Diane Orendero de Teneza*

## CSUMB partnering with China

CSUMB has signed an agreement with SIAS International University in ZhengZhou, China, to collaborate on a variety of projects. A language and culture program is already in place that brings students from SIAS to CSUMB. The Chinese students live with host families on the Monterey Peninsula.

Dr. Chris Hasegawa, newly appointed director of the Office of Extended Education and International Studies, traveled to China this summer to spread the word about CSUMB's growing



Dr. Chris Hasegawa heads CSUMB's international programs.

international programs and to recruit students to attend CSUMB. In addition to international programs, Hasegawa is responsible for the expansion of continuing education and conferences at the university. ❖



## Alumni teams take on Otter varsity squads

In late August, the men's Otter varsity soccer team hosted a game against former classmates at the Soccer Complex. Comprised mostly of CSUMB alumni, the challengers made a strong showing but couldn't quite beat this year's varsity team. The varsity won 5-1.

Later that evening, the women's Otter varsity volleyball team played against a women's alumni team. The varsity team won the match in three games. ❖



*The CSUMB alumni team, bottom row, from left: Rodrigo Reyes, Brian Rutherford, Brett Jorgenson, Erik Ruggiero, Ernesto Pacleb and Jose Martinez. Middle row from left: Nick Lacky, Eric Suppnet, Jason Dalporto, Scott Muleady, Oscar Renteria, Mike Bielski, Andy Slater and Jonathon Reedy. Back row: Ismael Jiminez, Julio Diaz and Mark Schulty. All but Reyes, Diaz, Schulty, Renteria and Slater are CSUMB alumni.*

## The Samba Sensation

Six players from CSUMB, including alumni Nick Lackey, Nate Northup, Erick Supnet and Mike Bielski, were the catalyst for the Salinas Valley Samba amateur soccer team that pulled off an improbable victory in the U.S. Open Cup this summer.

But after beating the undefeated Cascade Surge at Willamette University in Salem, Ore. — a huge upset of a higher-level team — the Samba lost in the second round of play to the Seattle Sounders, 3-1.

"The CSUMB players gave me a foundation to work with in developing a team that only practiced once or twice a week," said Artie Cairel, coach of the Otters and the Samba. "Without their knowledge and commitment to the system and organization I employ, the Samba would not have had the success it did."

The team's two dozen players were a mix of veterans, current college players and recent graduates, and its popularity increased as the season progressed. Home games were played at the Salinas High Stadium, newspaper reporters and TV crews routinely covered them and fans showed up clad in team apparel. The contests had the feel of a minor league baseball game.

The Salinas Valley team completed play in the highly competitive National Premier Soccer League with an 8-7-3 record. ❖



*In action on CSUMB's soccer field are, from left, alums Jonathon Reedy, Ismael Jiminez (in black), Nick Lackey and, at far right, Brett Jorgenson.*

## CSUMB game schedules

For a complete schedule of upcoming games, visit the [sports.CSUMB.EDU](http://sports.CSUMB.EDU) website.

## CSUMB's World Theater presents . . .

Nancy Santullo



### **Perla Batalla** **Sept. 29, 7:30 P.M.**

A vocalist, composer and arranger, Perla Batalla first gained international attention as a backup singer for Leonard Cohen and k.d. lang. Her repertoire cuts across genre and language, combining traditional Mexican folk melodies, powerful ballads and pulsing rhythms. Comfortable in both English and Spanish and proud of her Mestiza heritage, Batalla's singing is an experience to be savored at every opportunity. The

evening will feature the world premiere of Batalla's new CD, which has been co-commissioned by the World Theater.

*Perla Batalla*

### **The Triangle Project: Journey of The Dandelion** **Oct. 26, 7:30 P.M.**

An international and multidisciplinary collaboration, Journey of The Dandelion explores the lives and musical journeys of three significant women of Japanese ancestry. From Japan to three generations in America, their songs, rhythms and stories encompass the complex layers of history, family roots and the cross-cultural pollination that defines them.



Shane Sato

*Journey of The Dandelion*

### **Turtle Island String Quartet and special guest** **Kenny Barron, jazz piano** **Nov. 2, 7:30 P.M.**

Experience what happens when one of the world's greatest jazz pianists collaborates with the undisputed masters of improvisational string chamber music. A veteran of both Dizzy Gillespie's and Stan Getz's bands, Barron and the twice-Grammy-nominated Turtle Island String Quartet present a program of original music and arrangements of jazz classics.



Lordes Delgado

*Kenny Barron*

### **Michael Wolff & Impure Thoughts** **Dec. 1, 7:30 P.M.**

Michael Wolff is a brilliant and innovative pianist/composer with a wealth of straight-ahead jazz credentials (Sonny Rollins, Nancy Wilson, Cal Tjader, Cannonball Adderley, Jean Luc Ponty), as well as an impressive body of movie soundtrack work (*Dark Angel, The Tic Code*). Impure Thoughts is an acoustic rhythm band featuring tablas, Afro-Cuban percussion, drum set, acoustic bass, saxophone and acoustic piano. Wolff and his band draw on many musical sources: the improvisation of jazz; the rhythms of India, Africa, and Oakland; the harmonies and colors of French impressionist orchestral music; and the emotions of the blues.



Ken Naboum

*Michael Wolff*

Discounted tickets for CSUMB Alumni Association members to attend these performances are \$22.00. Tickets are \$25.00 for the general public.

For tickets or further information, call the World Theater box office at 831-582-4580 or purchase tickets online at the [www.csumb.edu/worldtheater](http://www.csumb.edu/worldtheater) website. For disability-related accommodations, please contact the World Theater box office no later than 10 business days prior to the event you wish to attend. All dates, programs and artists are subject to change. ❖

# Otter Fodder

## 2005



**Christi Crutchfield** (LS) is an English teacher at Aptos High School. She is also writing a series of historical fiction novels she hopes will be used in classrooms. "CSUMB opened a whole new myriad of doors to critical thinking on my part," she says. Christi lives in Watsonville.

**Ermes Ricardo Becerra** (BUS) is a marketing analyst for Hong Kong Shanghai Banking Corporation (HSBC). He says, "CSUMB has made an impact in my success in being able to work with people from different cultures. CSUMB's classroom teamwork projects have allowed me to implement the teamwork skills required in my employment." Ermes lives in Salinas.



## 2004

**Danielle Lynn Wapner** (BUS) is a bookkeeper/receptionist at Kendall & Potter Property Management. She is planning to attend school in the fall to prepare for the CPA exam and obtain a master's degree. "Having to work in groups has prepared me for the outside world," she says. "I was able to learn how to approach different types of people in the groups. I am now more aware of how business is handled in different cultures." Danielle was married recently to **Joseph Pagano** (BUS, '05). The couple lives in Aptos.



**Jorge Covarrubias** (TMAC) owns the Covarrubias Insurance Agency in Seaside. He has earned a number of insurance licenses, including life, property and casualty. He cites starting his own business as a major accomplishment, noting, "TMAC has helped me use technology to streamline my business." Jorge lives in Seaside.

**Emily Daniels** (BUS) is the accountant at Daniels & House Construction Co., a family-owned business started by her grandfather. She survived a back disorder, called idiopathic scoliosis, when she was 15. Following surgery, she had to learn to walk again. "My greatest accomplishment is in overcoming learning disabilities and graduating first with my A.A. and now my B.S.," she says. Her advice to fellow alums: "Never give up and always work harder so you can be successful in life." Emily lives in Monterey.



**Jason Patch** (HCOM) is a full-time art and architecture student, working on a master's degree in architecture. He is also a part-time caretaker. Jason has particular interest in "how art and architecture influences us socially, aesthetically and technically." CSUMB helped him "develop social, aesthetic and technical endeavors within and outside the major I seek to implement in a professional environment — of which 'social' is the most important." Jason lives in La Jolla.

**Simonne Robidoux** (CHHS) is an administrative support assistant with the U.S. Department of Agriculture in Washington, D.C. She plans to attend grad school to get a master's in social work and, eventually, a doctorate. She wants to focus her research on the "effects of person-centered planning on the growth and success of developmentally disabled children." Before she transferred to CSUMB, she "had a career goal of working in business. However, after taking a couple of courses, I realized I was traveling down the wrong path and knew there was something else that would better fulfill my desire to help others who are most in need."



## 2003

**Summer Ray (Middleton) Russell** (LS) is a teacher in the Garden Grove Unified School District. She earned an M.A. in elementary education and secondary education in 2005.

"CSUMB definitely prepared me with everything I know," she says.

"Honestly, the service learning in the classroom really helped me become the teacher I am today. I also met my wonderful husband (**Nathan Russell**, BUS, 2003) at CSUMB during my freshman year." Summer and Nathan live in Sunset Beach.



**Joaquin Bridges** (TMAC) is a programming specialist at the Defense Manpower Data Center (DMDC) in Seaside. "Without CSUMB, I would not be working where I am," he says. "In my job I have to be able to look outside the normal box of things. CSUMB gave me that skill. My wife Ashley has followed in my footsteps and is now attending CSUMB as a liberal studies major and working at the DMDC as a student intern." Joaquin lives in Watsonville.

**Crystal de Soto** (ESSP) is a marine science instructor/naturalist at the Birch Aquarium at Scripps Institution of Oceanography in La Jolla. She does a lot of outreach activity in local schools and provides marine education to low-income institutions. At CSUMB, she says, "the classes that focused on real world assignments and public speaking definitely made a difference." Crystal lives in San Diego.





**Princess Pope** (SBS) is the education committee chair of the Monterey County NAACP. She earned an M.A. in education in 2005. She cites her greatest accomplishments as "obtaining a master's degree with a 4.0 GPA, after undergoing brain surgery, and being the mother of five children." Princess lives in Seaside.

**Marisa (Bond) Eytalis** (TAT) is a freelance scriptwriter for Global Training Technologies. "Making my Capstone video was my greatest accomplishment," she says.

"It was a difficult and long journey, but well worth it in the end." Marisa gives credit to CSUMB's project-based curriculum. "I had a lot of training that has helped me in my current job." Married in April 2004, Marisa lives in Las Vegas, Nevada.



## 2002



**Jim Duensing** (CST) is an operations coordinator for the Center for Homeland Defense and Security. He holds a 7th degree black belt in Jujitsu. "CSUMB gave me the computer skills and peers to help me out in any way possible," he says. "I'm glad the school is progressing well." Jim lives in Monterey.

**Madonna Paquette** (TAT) is a third-grade teacher at the Engelhard Elementary School in Louisville, Kentucky. She is also a minister with Epiphany United Methodist Church, where she uses her theater background as a tool to share the gospel. Madonna earned an M.A. in early elementary education from the University of Louisville. She is proud of "becoming a third-grade teacher, where I have an opportunity to help children succeed." Madonna lives in Louisville.

**Evan Jernagan** (TMAC) is an instructional technologist working for the Anteon Corporation, a contractor to the Naval Postgraduate School. "It was frustrating, at first, to be a generalist and not a specialist," he says, "but it has really come in handy and I've become valuable now because of it. The network of friends and other contacts that I made during my time at CSUMB has come in handy also." Evan lives in Marina.



**Liz Silos** (WLC) is a financial analyst with Robert Half International. She also earned an M.B.A. in global management. Because of CSUMB, she says, "I was technically prepared for the real world. I believe that the technology classes and requirements enabled me to succeed in my career path." Liz lives in Dublin, California.

## 2001

**Merlyn Calderon** (GS) is a senior legislative aide for Assemblymember Judy Chu. "I have had the opportunity to staff legislation that would provide greater access for indigent families to clinic health services, establish new opportunities to modernize dilapidated schools, and improve the quality of care for the mentally disabled," she says. Merlyn recently earned an M.P.A. from USC. "CSUMB laid a solid academic foundation where I can build upon my knowledge and directly apply core academic concepts in real public policy situations." Merlyn lives in Sacramento.

**Aaron Solano** (TMAC) is the RF Network Administrator at CSUMB, but is currently on military leave with a U.S. Army National Guard unit studying Mandarin Chinese in a two-year program in Monterey. "CSUMB's computer science program allowed me to experience several aspects of the computer industry and decide which aspect was the best for me," he says. "By working hard and believing that each class, assignment and lecture was important, I was able to reach my personal goals."



## 2000

**Tracey Haneta** (LS) is the athletic director and physical education instructor at Moreland Notre Dame School in Watsonville. She's been involved with the Moreland Notre Dame Auction Committee, raising money for school expansion. Tracey has been nominated and selected for *Who's Who Among America's Teachers*. She lives in Aromas.



**Steven Wasserman** (TAT) is the Hanashi Oral History Program Manager for the Go For Broke Educational Foundation. He coordinates volunteer video crews who travel around the U.S. to document the life histories of American WWII veterans of Japanese ancestry who served the country during a time when their civil liberties had been taken away. "As a member of the pioneering freshman class (fall 1995), I honed my skills of adaptation, improvisation and pre-visualization," he says. "I consis-

(continued on page 10)

tently draw upon all of the hands-on technical experience and the interpersonal skills of working with volunteer crews, as I did in TAT." Steven lives in Torrance.

## 1999

**Shawn DeHaven** (WLC) works for a Japanese web design company in Torrance called Next Solutions America. He is fluent in Japanese and passed the CBEST and CSET for teaching Japanese. "With the flexible system that focused on individuals at CSUMB, I was able to customize my major, so to speak," says Shawn. "Also, I was able to study abroad (in Tokyo) as a CSUMB exchange student. That experience led me to work in Japan after graduating." Shawn lives in Arcadia.



**Keith "Jason" Duggins** (TMAC) is a data administrator for Community Hospital of the Monterey Peninsula. "The diverse number of projects I worked on, and the opportunities going to CSUMB opened up for me, have helped me to achieve my current status as an IT professional," he says. Keith lives in Marina.

## 1998

**Kari (Boylan) Serpa** (LS) is the language arts department head at Fitch Middle School. She has an M.A. in education. Kari is married to **Paulo Serpa** (ESSP, 2001). The couple had their first child (Enzo) in March and bought a home in Seaside two years ago.



**Joel Alexander** (IMIE) is a real estate and mortgage agent with Omega Real Estate and Loans. He previously started and ran a smoothie café for two years, before selling it and becoming a successful businessman in the wine country. He says CSUMB prepared him for success, "because it was a start-up university, it taught me that life is like a start-up venture, and it is up to me to build that start-up into a successful entity." Joel lives with his wife and 2-year-old son in Santa Rosa.

## 1997

**Sabrina Lawrence Coffelt** (LS) is an instructional technologist at Hartnell College, where she most recently administered the distance education online program. She earned an M.A. in education in 2000. "Going to CSUMB in its infancy allowed me to have new and exciting opportunities such as the archaeology dig at Mission San Juan Bautista," she says. "As the first graduating class we were presented with many challenges as well as unique opportunities." Sabrina lives in Aptos. ❖

## Get involved with your association

The CSUMB Alumni Association is always looking for new and fresh ideas at our committee meetings. We would like to encourage you to get involved in a committee or two that sparks your interest. Below is a brief summary of each committee's role. Giving back to our community is one of the best things we can do, and we hope that you will get involved and start giving back to the university through participation in the association.

### Event Committee

Develops events for alumni and current students. Coordinates and manages event logistics. Develops event co-sponsorships with on-campus organizations. Works and recruits volunteers to support events. The committee meets monthly.

### Finance Committee

Evaluates the financial status of the association and recommends to the board of directors changes in dues and assessments and other recommendations as may be necessary to provide income for the association to carry out its activities. Develops annual budget for the association. Approves and distributes donation requests. The committee meets bi-monthly.

### Membership Committee

Develops new ideas for membership recruitment, benefits and services. The committee meets bi-monthly in conjunction with the event committee.

### Scholarship Committee

Develops scholarship and Capstone grant criteria and application. Reviews and awards scholarships and grants. Committee meets on an ad-hoc basis.

We thank you for your time and consideration. Please feel free to contact us anytime at 831-582-4723 or send us an e-mail at [alumni@csumb.edu](mailto:alumni@csumb.edu)

We look forward to hearing from you soon!

### Alumni Association Board of Directors 2005-2006

## Let's hear from YOU!

Share news about your career, accomplishments and changes in your life with fellow alums through *Alma Otter*. Send information along with your address, phone, degree earned, major, graduation year and a current color photo. To submit information online, go to the Otter Fodder Submission Form under Otter Fodder on the [csumbalumni.org](http://csumbalumni.org) website. By mail, send to *Alma Otter*, CSUMB Alumni Association, 100 Campus Center, Bldg. 97, Seaside, CA 93955, or send an e-mail to [alumni@csumb.edu](mailto:alumni@csumb.edu). All Otter Fodder submissions are provided by the individuals profiled and printed as submitted.

## Five new board members take office



New Alumni Association board members are, from left, Melissa Reyes, Lisa Thomas, Jennifer Golomb, Anna Padilla and Farah Hussain.

### Alumni Association Board of Directors

*President*

Greg Riley, '02

*Vice President*

Courtney Kuhn, '02

*Chief Financial Officer*

James Frazier, '97, '01

*Secretary*

Farah Hussain, '03

*Directors*

Danny Belitski, '99                      Yesenia Parra, '00  
Jennifer Golomb, '03                  Melissa Reyes, '03  
Trina Coffman-Gomez, '00          Lisa Thomas, '97  
Anna Padilla, '04

*Alumni Relations Director*

Stephanie Regevig

*Alumni Relations Assistant*

Laura Chen, '05

*Alma Otter Editor*

Don Porter

*Alma Otter* is published three times a year by CSUMB University Advancement. Content is based on information available at press time. Submissions are invited and encouraged. Please mail information to Alumni Association — *Alma Otter*, CSUMB, 100 Campus Center, Bldg. 97, Seaside, CA 93955, send an e-mail to [alumni@csumb.edu](mailto:alumni@csumb.edu) or call 831-582-GRAD (4723).

As a new board member, Jennifer Golomb (BUS, '03) believes that her experience, gained at CSUMB and on the job, will help the board serve alumni. She is a Small Business Administration loan processor for California Coastal Rural Development Corporation in Salinas — a nonprofit offering business and agricultural loans to small businesses. Jennifer's vision is to "create a benefit for members of the Alumni Association by linking them to other student members for job and internship opportunities and create more ways for old friends to stay in touch."

Farah Hussain (IS, '03) is a senior marketing analyst for the GM Credit Card Portfolio Management Team at HSBC in Salinas. "I bring refined critical thinking, a deep understanding of the CSUMB Vision Statement and passion," she says. "Thanks to the founding board members, the Alumni Association is already off to a great start. So the vision for the board is to continue on the successful path laid out."

Anna Padilla (HCOM, '04) is a sales associate for Washington Mutual Home Loans. Although she didn't participate in activities as much as she wanted while at CSUMB, she feels that serving on the board is the "best way of giving back to my school." Her vision is to get "more alumni to be involved as we create an even more diverse association."

Melissa Reyes (HCOM, '03) coordinates a mentoring program for young adults at the YMCA of Monterey County. Her vision for the Alumni Association "is to increase overall awareness of the association's benefits and more importantly, the opportunities available at the university for higher learning."

Lisa (Piotrkowski) Thomas (LS, '97) has worked at Armanasco Public Relations in Monterey for five years. She is currently the company's managing director. Her vision for the Alumni Association is to have "an active, engaging and creative group focused on helping to bring awareness to CSUMB's mission and continuing education to diversity and academic excellence." ❖

### Alumni Association Financial Report

This is a summary of the alumni association's account balances through Aug. 12, 2005:

|                                     |             |
|-------------------------------------|-------------|
| Foundation Account                  | \$56,058.76 |
| Scholarship Fund                    | 9,921.23    |
| Lifetime Membership Endowment       | 35,000.00   |
| Alumni Vision Scholarship Endowment | 21,273.00   |

For more detailed information, please go to [www.csumbalumni.org](http://www.csumbalumni.org) and click on 'Association Meetings' under Membership.

— James Frazier, CFO

## Don't miss CSUMB's first homecoming!



*Come out and show your Otter Pride!*

### Mark the date — Saturday, October 8, 2005

Festivities include:

|                        |   |
|------------------------|---|
| 11:00 A.M. - 4:00 P.M. | Kelp Kraze — Main Quad                                      |
| 4:30 - 6:30 P.M.       | Alumni Pre-game Mixer — Alumni & Visitors Center            |
| 6:00 P.M.              | Bonfire   |
| 7:00 P.M.              | Women's volleyball vs. CSU Stanislaus — Otter Sports Center |

For more information and updates go to [CSUMBalumni.org](http://CSUMBalumni.org)

### Upcoming alumni events for 2005-2006

|         |  |                          |
|---------|--|--------------------------|
| Oct. 8  | Homecoming/Alumni Pre-game Mixer           | Alumni & Visitors Center |
| Oct. 27 | Coffee & Donut Hour                        | Main Quad                |
| Feb. 8  | Alumni Day at the AT&T National Pro-Am     | Pebble Beach             |
| Feb. 17 | Have a Heart for Students Dinner & Auction | University Center        |
| Mar. 20 | Alumni Networking Mixer                    | Sacramento               |
| Apr. 26 | Quetzal (alumni event)                     | World Theater            |



RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

AD205-1008

PRSR STD  
U.S. POSTAGE  
**PAID**  
NONPROFIT PERMIT  
NO. 76  
SEASIDE, CA