CAL STATE LA

# DEPARTMENT OF History

## SPRING 2026 NEWSLETTER

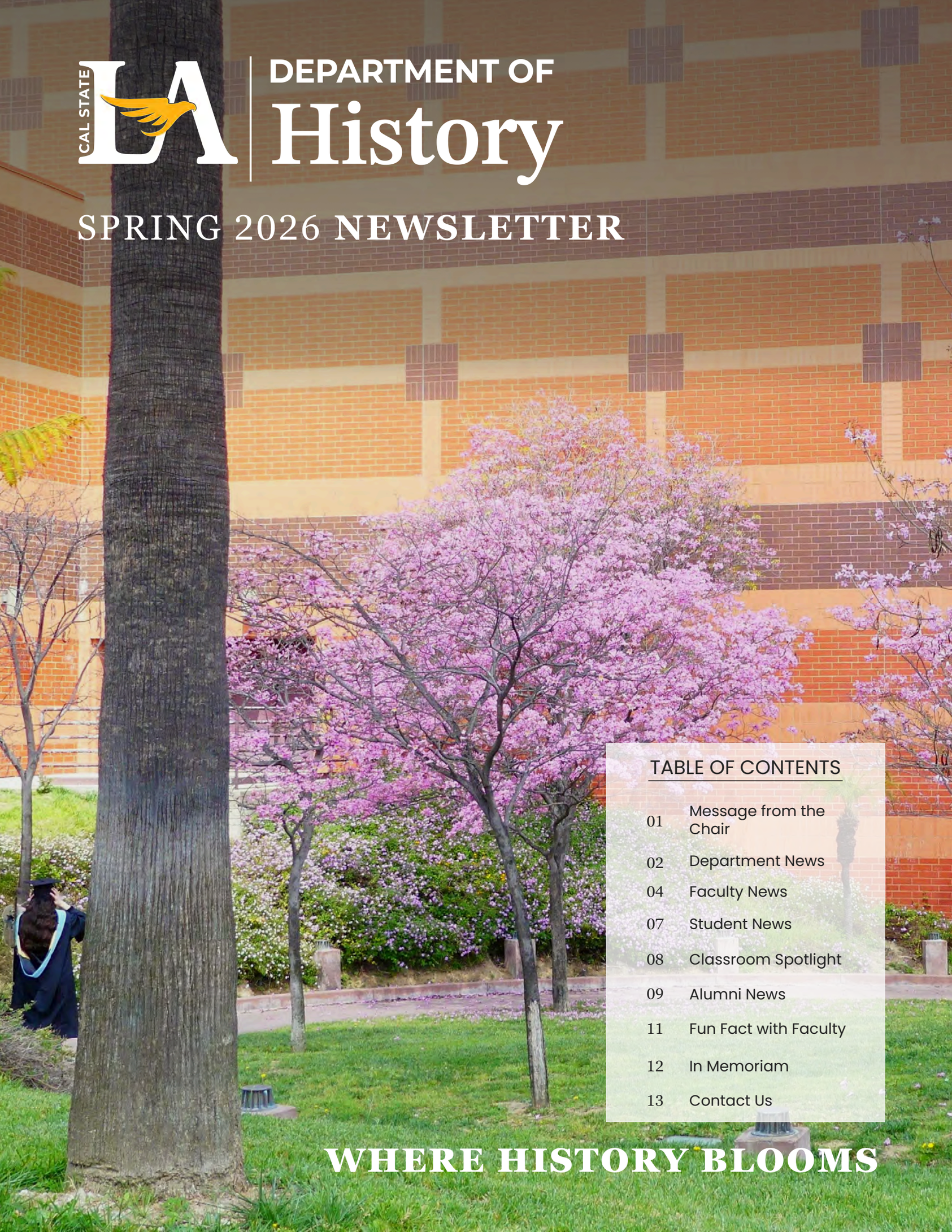


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**WHERE HISTORY BLOOMS**

# MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

Higher education today is preoccupied with "career readiness." From the American Historical Association to the CSU system, leaders are calling for career-relevant education.[1] Some even argue that skill-oriented "microcredentials" should replace traditional liberal arts degrees.[2] But what exactly is career readiness, especially for history majors?

At Cal State LA, a majority of our History faculty have participated in workshops on career readiness. Some of us, myself included, now devote class time to cover letters, résumés, and mock interviews. We want to help students see how historians' analytical toolbox prepares history majors for jobs in business, government, and elsewhere.

*The footnote symbolizes a way of thinking that is deeply valuable in diverse jobs.*

In this spirit, I want to celebrate an unlikely hero of career readiness: the Chicago Manual of Style footnote. If you have a history degree, mastering this footnote is a (perhaps frustrating) rite of passage. It is also great career training.

To be sure, the vast majority of history alumni are not using Chicago Style footnotes in their current jobs. But that's not the point. The footnote symbolizes a way of thinking that is deeply valuable in diverse jobs. Footnotes offer the best citation format for showing readers the nature of our sources. The APA and MLA formats foreground the author's last name but little else. Their slick but skimpy parenthetical citations send readers hunting on a separate "works cited" page for deeper context. Was the author addressing Congress, or writing a private letter to a parent? This context matters, and only a footnote provides this key info on the same page. In short, footnotes train both authors and readers to scrutinize the context behind each source. Historians call this habit "sourcing," and it prepares history majors for any profession that requires careful judgment about evidence, context, and credibility.

But few history majors learn to celebrate the footnote for this virtue. We historians need to become better advocates of our own intellectual training—to explain, especially in job interviews, how our historical training builds sourcing, analysis, skepticism, and other intellectual habits that drive successful careers.

Send me an email if you have your own story about what career readiness means, or if you have another reason to celebrate our intellectual comrade, the humble Chicago-style footnote.

**Chris Endy,** Department Chair, cendy@calstatela.edu

1. Julia Brookins and Brendan Gillis, "Career Readiness," American Historical Association, 1 January 2026, accessed 4 May 2026, https://www.historians.org/resource/career-readiness/; "Cal State LA Career-Engaged Departments Program," Cal State LA Center for Effective Teaching and Learning, accessed 4 May 2026, https://www.calstatela.edu/cetl/career-engaged-departments-program
2. Arthur Levine and Scott Van Pelt, *The Great Upheaval, Higher Education's Past, Present, and Uncertain Future*, 2nd ed. (Johns Hopkins University Press, 2025).

# 2026 NSS Honors Convocation




**Bailey Heftye**
History B.A.




**Vicente Vasquez**
History M.A.

# 2026 King Hall Display Case



(left to right): **Sunshine Hernandez** and **Joseph White**

Photo credit: **Dr. Endy**

# Spring 2026 Events

- On January 20th and May 5th, **Dr. Chris Endy** hosted M.A. Student Social Hours in the conference room. Also in January, he hosted an "AI for Historians" workshop on the pros and cons of AI for history students.

- On Thursday, February 19th, **Dr. Robert L. Harris Jr.**, Professor Emeritus and Vice Provost Emeritus at Cornell University, delivered the History Department's African American History Month Lecture. Dr. Harris spoke on "The Origins of Black History Month: The Hundredth Anniversary." Huge thanks to **Dr. Lamont Yeakey** for putting this event together!




- On Monday, February 2, **Dr. Mark Wild** hosted a video information session for the Mellon Mays Undergraduate Fellowship Program (MMUF). MMUF provides programming and financial support to undergraduates interested in pursuing doctorates in humanities disciplines.

- On Thursday, March 5th, **Dr. Ángela Vergara** led a virtual discussion on the new book, *Understanding and Teaching Modern Latin America*. Dr. Vergara also contributed a chapter to this anthology.

- On March 21st, **Dr. Tim Doran** lectured at Fullerton Public Library on Spartan reproductive strategies.

- On Tuesday, May 12th, the department hosted a retirement party in the Golden Eagle Ballrooms for **Dr. Choi Chatterjee**, **Dr. Scott Wells**, and **Dr. Lamont Yeakey**. Thank you all for your hard work and dedication over the years— you will be greatly missed!

- On Friday, May 15th, the department hosted it's annual end-of-year celebration for students, including PAT, *Perspectives*, and Fall 2025/Spring 2026 graduates.

## Interested in Phi Alpha Theta Merch?

Contact Dr. **Pfleger** (bpflege@calstatela.edu) to purchase a tote bag, t-shirt, or water bottle.

All proceeds for our Phi Alpha Theta chapter.



# FACULTY NEWS



**Dr. Tim Doran**
Professor

Dr. Doran gave a local history lecture on Spanish Colonial architecture for the Wilmington Historical Society.



PHOTO CREDIT: JORDAN RENVILLE/CAL STATE LA

**Dr. Enrique Ochoa**
Professor

Dr. Ochoa's book, *México Between Feast and Famine*, has won the award for Best Book in the Social Sciences from LASA Mexico.



PHOTO CREDIT: CAL STATE LA

**Dr. Ángela Vergara**
Professor

Dr. Vergara was named as one of two ASEH Fellows by the American Society for Environmental History.



**Dr. Carole Srole**
Emerita

Dr. Srole received the Lifetime Service Award from the Western Association of Women Historians in April 2026.



**Dr. Dawn Dennis**
Lecturer

Dr. Dennis received a CSU award to develop instructional materials for teaching data science using data about Black Union soldiers in the U.S. Civil War.



# DR. AFSHIN MATIN-ASGARI

On Wednesday, February 25, 2026, the department hosted a book talk celebrating Dr. Matin- Asgari's new book, *Axis of Empire: A History of Iran–US Relations.*

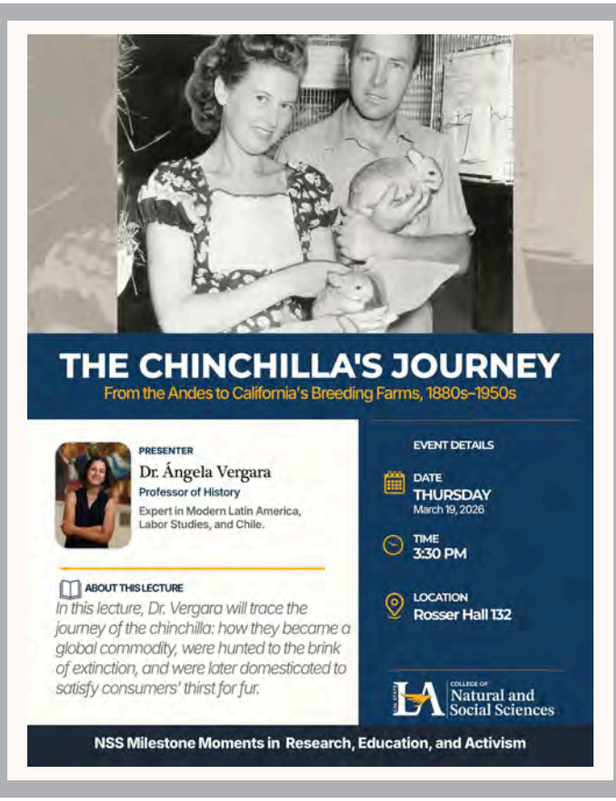
Dr. Matin also commented extensively in the media on the United States and Iran, including in the New York Times.

# DR. ÁNGELA VERGARA

Her latest publication appeared in 2026 in the journal, *Animal History:*
"The Chinchilla's Journey: From the Andes to California's Breeding Farms, 1880s–1950s."

Dr. Vergara also presented her Chinchilla research for the 2026 Milestone Moments Lecture sponsored by the College of Natural and Social Sciences.

Explore Dr. Vergara's research on her Faculty Page:
www.calstatela.edu/faculty/angela-vergara



# DR. CAROLE SROLE

Dr. Srole's latest publication *Marriage Making News: Working Women and Millionaire Men in the Progressive Era* will be published with the University of Illinois Press in June 2026.

The book explores working-class women who married very wealthy men. Blending social and cultural history, it examines both the women's struggles for independence and the media's sensational coverage of cross-class marriages.








# DR. TIM DORAN

Dr. Doran guided students through the Getty Villa on January 5th. He explained the Greek and Roman exhibits. Special attention was given to the Mycenaean exhibit there, centered on the Griffin Warrior of Pylos.



Photo credit: **Chris Saucedo**

# Undergraduate Student Highlights

- **Sunshine Hernandez**
- **Chris Saucedo**
- **Berlin Lopez**

History majors won three of the four Mellon-Mays Undergraduate Fellowships at Cal State LA this year. Congrats to Sunshine, Chris, and Berlin as they prepare for doctoral studies!

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# Graduate Student Highlights

- **Stephen Legaspi**

Stephen published an article on Monterey Park for the Monterey Park Historical Society. A high school teacher himself, Stephen and his students at Torres High School prepared a mural in Monterey Park.



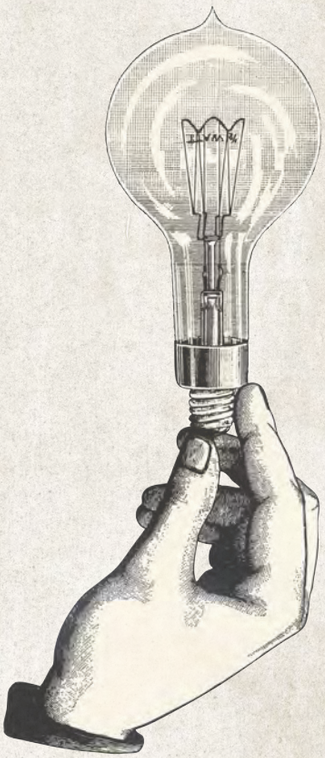



Photo credit: **Stephen Legaspi**



Dr. Ochoa's HIST 4900 took part in a Popular Education Encuentro and had conversations with students from the Claremont Colleges, Cal State Fullerton, and Lynwood High School. April 2026









Photo credit: **Dr. Ochoa**

MA alumni **Stone Peterson** and **Alejandro Guardado** both presented papers for a panel on "Projects of State Control in 20th Century Mexico" at the annual meeting of the American Historical Association in January 2026 in Chicago.

Stone, a third-year PhD student at Arizona State, presented on "Cold War Incarceration in Mexico: Political Divisions and Material Conditions of Prisoners."

Alejandro, a sixth-year PhD student at Emory University, presented on "Making Comunalidad Visible: Floriberto Díaz and the Role of Indigenous Intellectuals in Multicultural Mexico."



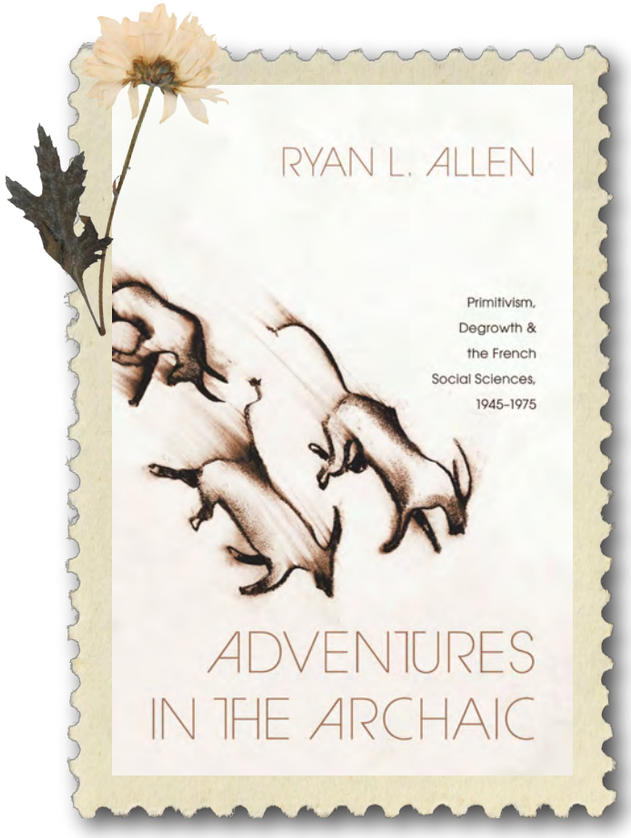
(left to right): **Stone Peterson** and **Alejandro Guardado**

In January 2026, **Katherine Hye-Ryun Yang** (BA 2014; MA 2017) defended her PhD dissertation with the History Department at George Washington University. Her dissertation, "The Making of Kisaeng Tourism: Women, Gendered Hospitality, and (Trans)Nationalism in Postcolonial Cold War Korea," involved extensive archival research and oral history interviewing. Congratulations, Katherine!

**Cole R. Costello** (MA 2023) is in his second year of the PhD program at the University of Montana. While at Cal State LA, Cole began researching topics related to mining labor of the Mountain West, particularly the role of Irish nationalism in radicalizing union politics at the turn of the twentieth century. In September of 2025, Cole presented his recent research on Edward Boyce, the Irish-born former president of the Western Federation of Miners, at the Montana History Conference in Helena, Montana, and hopes to have an article published soon based on this research. Here's a YouTube link of Cole at a conference in Montana.



**Ryan Allen** (MA 2013) is Assistant Instructional Professor in the Department of History at the University of Chicago. His book, *Adventures in the Archaic: Primitivism, Degrowth, and the French Social Sciences, 1945–1975*, was published by the University of Chicago Press in January 2026.




**Abigail Calderon** (BA 2021) appeared in a March 21st, 2026, Los Angeles Times article to discuss her research on the naming of César Chavez Boulevard in East Los Angeles. Abigail began research on this topic in HIST 3090 at Cal State LA, and she is now developing this research for her PhD dissertation in History at Yale University.

**Robert Coronado, Jr** (MA 2025) presented on “The Context of a Commissioning: Vasco de Quiroga, Collaborative Litigations, and the Roots of Purépecha Humanism in Sixteenth-Century Michoacán, c. 1533-1539" at the 2025 meeting of the UCLA Medieval & Early Modern Student Association. Robert also gave a paper on “Purépecha Humanism: Renaissance and Indigenous Elements in the Relación de Michoacán, c. 1533-1541” for the Annual Student Symposium on Research, Scholarship, and Creative Activities at Cal State LA. He received a Foreign Language and Area Studies (FLAS) Fellowship to study Nahuatl at the University of Utah for Summer, 2025. Not least, he has won acceptance to several PhD programs in history and art history.

# TWO TRUTHS & A LIE



## How to play

Hey historians!
We asked Dr. Pfleger to participate in this semester's game.

Two statements are true.
One is not.

Take your guess!

The answer is on the last page.

## Which is the lie?

1. I got an F on a French exam in 7th grade—the only F I ever received in school.

2. I played acoustic guitar when I was a teenager.

3. I was an avid tennis player in high school.



# Mark M. Dodge

1952 - 2026

Lecturer in History at
Cal State LA

Mark Dodge taught generations of students at Cal State LA and Pasadena City College. He earned his MA in History at Cal State LA in the late 1970s. As a student, he also served as editor-in-chief of our journal, *Perspectives*. He later served as faculty advisor for the journal, making him the only person to lead *Perspectives* as both student and faculty.

Dr. Rodolfo "Rudy" Acuña (BA 1957; MA 1962) helped establish the field of Chicano Studies. With two degrees from our department, Acuña taught K-12 and then earned a PhD in History from USC. He became CSUN's first Chicano Studies professor in 1969 and wrote over 20 books, including a landmark textbook, *Occupied America*. He received a distinguished alumni award from our department in 2014.



# Rodolfo F. Acuña

1932 - 2026

BA and MA alumnus at Cal State LA;
Founding figure of Chicano Studies

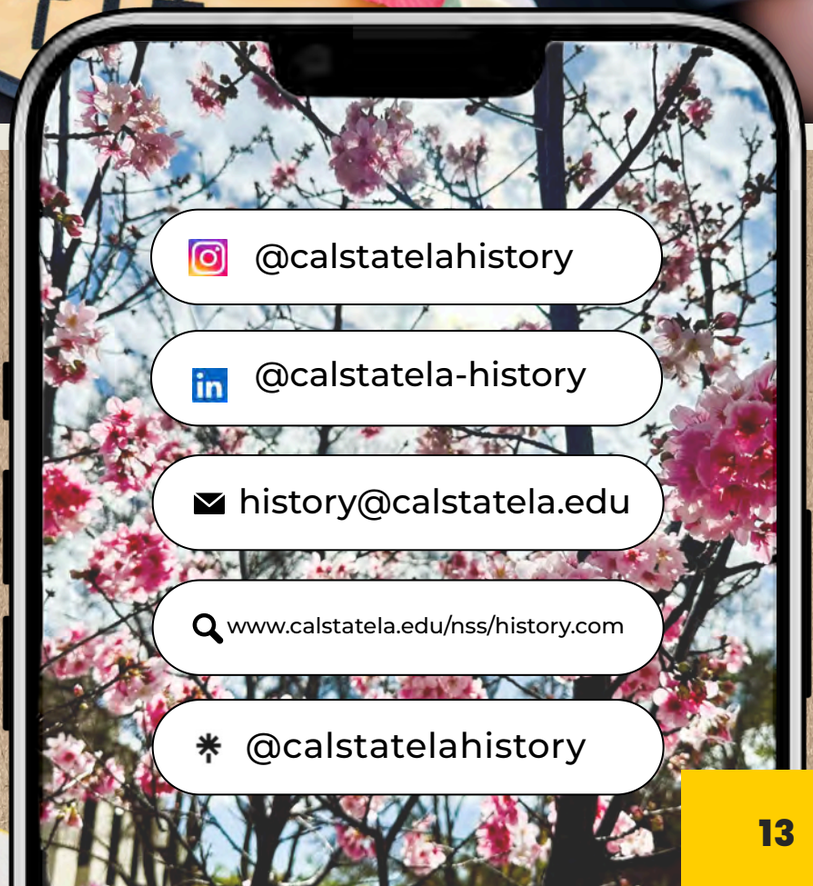
# CONTACT US




If you'd like to support the History Department, click the "Give Now" button.
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*Special thanks to our:*

Multimedia Communications Specialist

**Jocelyne Martinez**

**Administrative Support Assistant**



*and*

Newsletter Contributing Editor and Content Contributor

**Dr. Chris Endy**

**Department Chair**

## *Thank you for reading to the end!*

We appreciate your time and hope you learned something new about the work we do in the department.

If you would like to contribute a story or update for our Fall 2026 newsletter, please reach out to Dr. Endy (cendy@calstatela.edu).

Answer: **#3 is the lie**