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## Message from Humanities Dean Elizabeth A. Say

As we begin the 2012-13 Academic Year, the CSU is facing some significant challenges brought about by California's ongoing budget crisis. Additionally, Chancellor Reed is retiring after 14 years at the helm of the California State University. Despite challenges and transitions, the College of Humanities continues to thrive. This newsletter will introduce you to one of our talented faculty members, some of our exceptional graduate students, and remind us all of how community support can and does impact the lives of all those in the college who persevere in difficult times.



Elizabeth A. Say,  
Ph.D. Alum 1981

Linguist Fred Field is a great example of the multi-talented faculty who teach within the College of Humanities. Not only a gifted teacher and outstanding scholar, Fred recently shared with me the story of his musical talents and I asked him to share it with all of you as well. We are honored this year to recognize three of our students who were awarded the prestigious Casanova Pre-Doctoral scholarship. Though they come from different departments and have different interests, they share a commitment to serving diverse populations in their future endeavors. Finally, we feature a story about a former faculty member, Mitchell Marcus, and the legacy endowment established by his family. In remembering the work of her father, his daughter reaches out to future generations of CSUN students.

## What do Aretha Franklin and Dr. Fredric Field have in common?

*Submitted by Teresa K. Morrison*



Photo courtesy of  
Fred Field

Dr. Fredric Field is well regarded as a professor and scholar. A member of the Department of English and a popular instructor in the Linguistics/TESL program, Field has also published widely, including his most recently released book, *Bilingualism in the USA*, which examines "many of the linguistic, social, political and educational issues found in an increasingly multilingual nation and world."

What many may not know about Field is that this summer he was inducted into the Gospel Music Association Hall of Fame. He was honored—in a 2012 class of inductees that included legends like Aretha Franklin and Ricky Skaggs—as a founding member and original songwriter for the group Love

Song, which in the 1970s infused gospel music with rock and pop elements that were at the time revolutionary for the genre. Field said the Hall of Fame induction ceremony, held in August in Nashville, was "quite moving. It was great to hear the comments of my peers as they recounted the impact that the band Love Song had on them."

The linguistics professor says he can't remember a time in his life when he didn't play some kind of musical instrument. He took his first violin lessons at age 4, and by age 7 was playing in community symphony orchestras in the greater Los Angeles area, where he was born and raised. Playing and performing always felt natural and easy to him, he says.

Adding bass and guitar to his repertoire of instruments, Field joined his first rock band and began recording his own material in the '60s, in his senior year of high school. Over the years, various bands in which Field has played have shared concert bills with acts as diverse as the Byrds, the Temptations, Three Dog Night, Alice Cooper, the Grateful Dead, the Staple Singers and Jerry Lee Lewis. Field has recorded several albums, including the solo project *Fred Field and Friends*, two musical concept albums based on the Book of Acts, and studio and live albums recorded in Germany.

When asked how he transitioned from life as a professional musician to academia, Field says that he became interested in how Europeans learned languages while touring Europe. Later, while living in Israel, Field observed that almost as many languages are spoken there as in the United States. "[In Israel], you used every language you knew every day," Field says. At Tel Aviv University he took several linguistics classes, one of which was taught by the influential linguist Robert Lees. "[Lees] changed my life," Field says. "He explained how linguistics offered the clearest window into the human mind, how it opened doors to knowledge of our humanity. I was hooked."

Field went on to earn his Ph.D. in linguistics at University of Southern California in 1998. In 2000 he came to CSUN, an opportunity that proved particularly meaningful as his mother suffered a stroke in his first semester of teaching and he was grateful to have a position that enabled him to continue living in his native city of Downey. He continues to live there with his wife and three children.

Field has published three books, including the aforementioned as well as *Linguistic Borrowing in Bilingual Contexts* and *Key Concepts in Bilingualism*. Cambridge University Press will publish his next book, which Field reports is "a comparative look at the spread of English and Spanish in the U.S., how they've taken separate paths towards even greater contact."

As for music, he continues to play with the Fred Field Band occasionally, "mostly for fun," and remains as versatile with musical genres as he is with languages. The band played gospel and blues at a CSUN Day of Diversity event, and, as Field reported in an e-mail exchange regarding this story, "I've got a gig tonight playing klezmer music in Irvine—on fiddle."

The College of Humanities thanks Field for sharing his passion for linguistics with his colleagues and students every day, and congratulates him on his induction into the Gospel Music Association Hall of Fame.



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## English Professor Mitchell Marcus's legacy — and his family's ongoing generosity

*Submitted by June Penrod*

The College of Humanities has received a generous gift of \$25,000 from Helen Marie Marcus—daughter of the late Professor Mitchell Marcus—increasing the Professor Mitchell Marcus Endowment and raising the annual English award given in his honor from \$2,000 to \$3,000. "Given the rising cost of education in the state of California, I believe a larger annual scholarship will better benefit future recipients," says Helen Marcus.



Photo courtesy of Helen Marie Marcus

The endowment was originally created in 1991, shortly after the death of Dr. Mitchell Marcus, a professor emeritus and founding faculty member of CSUN's Department of English. His wife, Helen Helms Marcus, continued to contribute to this endowment until her death in 2002. Their two daughters, Mary Ellen and Helen Marie, increased the endowment to \$50,000. With Helen Marie Marcus's recent contribution, the endowment presently has a value of \$75,000. The Mitchell Marcus Award is distributed annually to a deserving graduate student who possesses the most distinguished record in the study of English literature, language or writing—a fitting tribute to the distinguished role Professor Marcus has played in the history of Cal State Northridge. During his tenure, he witnessed significant evolution at the institution. A satellite campus of Los Angeles State College when he began his career in 1953, the institution formally separated and was established as San Fernando Valley State College in 1956, at which time Marcus became a founding member of its Department of English. By the time he retired as professor emeritus in 1980, the institution, by then known as California State University, Northridge, had grown from its origins as a handful of temporary buildings to a large campus situated on 356 acres. Throughout those 27 years, Professor Marcus was deeply dedicated to the university. As Helen Marcus stated, "My father was a passionate teacher, a great father and a man whose breadth of knowledge was always staggering."

The current English chair, Professor Jackie Stallcup, says that working with Mitchell Marcus Award recipients is incredibly gratifying. "It is such a pleasure to be able to work with these students, and in fact, many of the winners are still here at CSUN teaching in our department," Stallcup said. "One of our very first winners, Stephanie Satie, was just in my office this morning talking with me about the class she was about to go teach. It is

such a lovely example of the student-teacher cycle to have the former winners of this award here, carrying on the work that Professor Marcus did with such grace and passion."

College of Humanities dean Elizabeth Say said of Helen's tribute to her father, "At the college, we are seeing more children of emeritus faculty establish endowments to secure their parents' legacy at CSUN. This recognition of the exemplary reputation of Professor Marcus, a member of the college from its inception, stands as a tribute that I hope will also inspire others."



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## Humanities students among distinguished Casanova Pre-Doctoral Scholars

*Submitted by Teresa K. Morrison*

Three College of Humanities students—Norma Aceves, Nicholas Medina and Bryant Partida—have been awarded 2012-13 California Pre-Doctoral Scholarships. This prestigious California State University merit scholarship program is focused on high-achieving upper-division or graduate CSU students who are interested in pursuing doctoral work toward a university teaching career. Aceves, Medina and Partida are among an elite group of 11 CSUN students and just 72 students system-wide to share the distinction.

The program supports doctoral aspirations among students from economically disadvantaged backgrounds where university teaching is generally a less common career goal. Recipients are designated as Sally Casanova Scholars in tribute to Dr. Sally Casanova, who founded the Pre-Doctoral Scholar Program in 1989 both to ensure that traditionally underrepresented students have more access to doctoral-level degrees and to broaden the pool of talented faculty inclined to teach at the CSU.

The program has been quite successful in achieving those goals, producing nationally recognized faculty like Dr. Denise Sandoval, Casanova Scholar 1994-95, now a professor in the College of Humanities' Department of Chicana/o Studies.

Aceves, who is currently a master's student and teaching associate in the Department of English, says that she would be honored to return to teach at a Cal State University campus after she earns her Ph.D. "It is very important to me that I reach out to campuses that cater to diverse populations, including low-income, first-generation students like myself," Aceves says. "I was very fortunate to work with many programs at CSUN that cater to students that come from these backgrounds, so I know how great it feels to give back to my community."

Medina, a master's student in the Department of Chicana/o Studies, with specialized interest in ethnomusicology, echoes Aceves's desire to give back to the community. "One of the best ways to improve graduation rates for Latina/o students is to provide them with an environment that allows for their success, with resources and course offerings that attract and inspire these students to pursue their academic goals to the fullest," he says. As a student he has dedicated himself to fostering a culturally inclusive environment through his work in the CSUN Latin@ Music Ensemble, which performed at last year's College of Humanities Commencement. He hopes that in the future he can help further the development at institutions like CSUN of "progressive programs with a global perspective and transnational focus such as ethnomusicology, musical folklore, popular music studies or anthropology of music."

Aceves, Medina and Partida will each receive funding for academic and career development opportunities, such as participation in a relevant summer research internship program, graduate school application and test fees, visits to doctoral-granting institutions they are considering, membership in professional organizations, journal subscriptions and travel expenses related to attending national conferences in their chosen field.

A hallmark of the program is its intensive mentorship component. Each student must be recommended for the scholarship by a sponsoring faculty member, who will work with them during the fellowship period to help them develop as scholars and plan an academic roadmap toward enrollment in a doctoral program. Faculty advisors help students to identify relevant professional societies, discuss academic goals, and may accompany students to campus site visits and professional conferences.

Aceves's faculty sponsor, Dr. Ranita Chatterjee, began her mentorship of Aceves as her English graduate studies advisor. "As a mentor, Dr. Chatterjee is relentless with an eye for detail," Aceves says. "She has always pushed me hard so that I may become a great writer and succeed in all my endeavors." With Professor Chatterjee's support, Aceves has already presented scholarship at the conferences of two of the most prestigious academic societies in the field of literature—the Modern Language Association and the American Literature Association.

Medina met his faculty sponsor, Chicana/o Studies ethnomusicology professor Peter García, when he approached him for help with research during his first year in the McNair Scholars Program—a federally funded undergraduate program designed to increase graduate degree awards among traditionally underrepresented students with strong academic potential. "This essentially was the beginning of what has proven to be a fruitful and loving mentor/mentee relationship," Medina says. "I owe much to Dr. García, for he has become my number one supporter and a first-rate role model to me as an aspiring ethnomusicologist and future academic."

With Casanova Pre-Doctoral support, Aceves and Medina will continue to advance their scholarship with their faculty sponsors in the 2012-13 academic year, and both plan to attend major academic conferences with their mentors to present their research and network with leading experts in their fields. The College of Humanities congratulates all three of its Casanova Scholars as they complete their fellowship year.



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### The Mission of the College of Humanities is to create a community of learners who...

**E**xplore and value the diversities of cultures, thought, perspectives, literatures and languages of humanity;

**C**ritically reflect on and analyze multiple dimensions of human identity and experience;

**C**ontribute to scholarship and creative production and innovation, and;

**A**ct as responsible global citizens committed to principles of freedom, equality, justice and participatory democracy.