

# The CI View

SPECIAL EDITION

## President Yao talks path to presidency & CI's future

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### Plus...

#### Parking pandemonium

Page 2

From availability of spots to the cost of permits, students often have questions about parking on campus. We talked to the CI Police Department's Lt. Chris Jetton to shed some light on common concerns about our parking situation.

#### Club features

Pages 4-5

Joining a club is a great way to meet friends, explore interests and make professional connections on campus. Read on for the details on some clubs that are new to CI or re-started this academic year.

#### Fantasy review

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Fantasy author Jennifer L. Armentrout has sparked readers' interest with her newest release, "A Shadow in the Ember." This novel is set in an alternative universe and features magic, mystery, romance and adventure. See what a fan of the genre has to say about it.





# How to avoid CI's parking pandemonium

TJ Ramirez

For many commuting students, parking at CI is no easy task. Parking spaces are limited, and it can be difficult to secure a spot when there is a high volume of traffic as students arrive for on-campus classes.

Aurora Rugerio, a third-year environmental science and resource management major, told The CI View, "I would drive 20, probably 30 minutes...depending on what time I got on campus, just trying to find a spot." Ryan Orozco, a fourth-year business and political science double major, said, "I come a little bit early just so that I get a spot, but usually...there's already people with their hazard (lights) on, waiting for spots like vultures."

Finding a solution to this issue is not simple. CI has not implemented a strategy that has been utilized at other universities: building a parking structure. Unfortunately, a parking structure on campus is very unlikely for two key reasons: topography and cost. First, our campus is surrounded by a floodplain, which would not support such a building.

Second, a parking structure would cost around \$20 million. Since Transportation and Parking Services is not subsidized by the University, this money would come from student fees, which would require an increase in parking permit prices. Lieutenant Chris Jetton with the CI Police Department explained, "A surface lot alone costs us...around \$8 million just for 1,200 additional surface parking stalls." Current parking fees are still paying off debt from constructing the existing campus parking lots. Plus, the pandemic has significantly decreased revenue from parking permits; Lt. Jetton noted that "this last year we saw over a \$2 million loss in revenue."

Because building a parking structure is unrealistic for our campus, efforts have instead been focused on encouraging students to take advantage of alternative transportation such as biking or riding the bus. An Instagram poll which surveyed 35 students found that only 20% of them used alternative transportation to get to campus last semester. With the College Ride Pilot Program, students can take the Ventura County Transportation Commission Intercity Bus for free. Along with other operating costs, student parking fees help pay for this bus service, which costs around \$500,000 a year.

Another option available to students is CI's carpool program. The carpool parking permit costs \$195, the same as a regular permit, but the cost is shared between multiple students. It is also incentivized; the carpool spots are often the closest to campus buildings, and carpool permit owners are entered in a monthly drawing for prizes like dining cash or movie passes.

However, schedule conflicts and COVID-19 have made carpooling less than optimal for some students. Ayleen Trejo, a third-year political science and psychology double major, said, "I've definitely looked into (carpooling), but my roommates that also go to CI tend to not have the same schedule as me." First-year student Auden Montville-Wood, a global studies major, shared, "I personally don't feel comfortable with carpooling because of COVID-19 right now."

Still, for those who can carpool, it is worth looking into. For one, carpooling reduces the number of cars on the road, which helps with issues like air pollution and traffic. Sharing the carpool pass can also save students nearly \$100. Orozco shared, "I had the carpool pass two years ago and it definitely helped, but I feel like people don't know about the carpool spaces."

This knowledge does not change the often-frustrating experience of finding a parking spot before class, but it does help to explain the price of permits, which could help to reframe how students think about parking on campus. Though parking at CI is a challenge, that challenge is being met to the best of the University's ability, and students' concerns are not being ignored. Jetton remarked, "We want to be responsible stewards of the students' money...so we're doing everything we can to try to make it better with what we've got, and I just hope that everyone bears with us a little bit here."

If anyone has questions about Transportation and Parking, they are encouraged to email [parking@csuci.edu](mailto:parking@csuci.edu) or [christopher.jetton888@csuci.edu](mailto:christopher.jetton888@csuci.edu). For a more detailed explanation of the circumstances surrounding parking at CI, check out our Linktree for the broadcasting piece which accompanies this article, as well as an informational presentation from Transportation and Parking Services and the Parking and Transportation Demand Management Study Final Report.



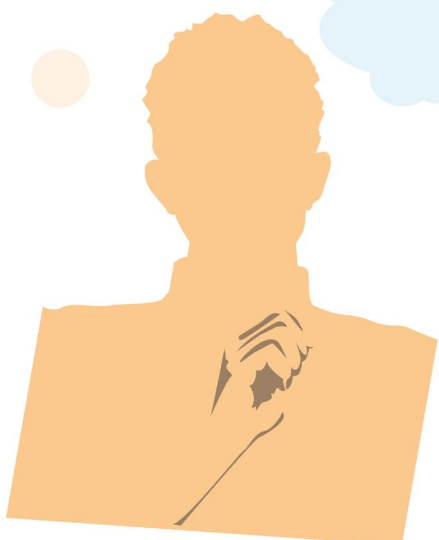
## WHAT STUDENTS ARE SAYING....

**“I personally don't feel comfortable with carpooling because of (COVID-19) right now and I also don't have the ability. I don't have anybody to be taking with me, so it's not really an option.”**  
**–Auden Montville-Wood, first-year global studies major**

**“I come a little bit early just so that I get a spot, but usually... there's already people with their hazard (lights) on, waiting for spots like vultures.”**  
**–Ryan Orozco, fourth-year business and political science major**

**“I would drive 20, probably 30 minutes sometimes depending on what time I got on campus just trying to find a spot...and there were so many times when I was late to class because I couldn't find a parking spot.”**  
**–Aurora Rugerio, third-year environmental science and resource management major**

**“I actually got (a carpool permit) my first year with a nursing classmate, but because of COVID-19...we didn't think we'd be on campus as much this semester, which we weren't, and so we didn't get it.”**  
**–Jeziel Balitao, fourth-year nursing major**



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## New construction at University Glen

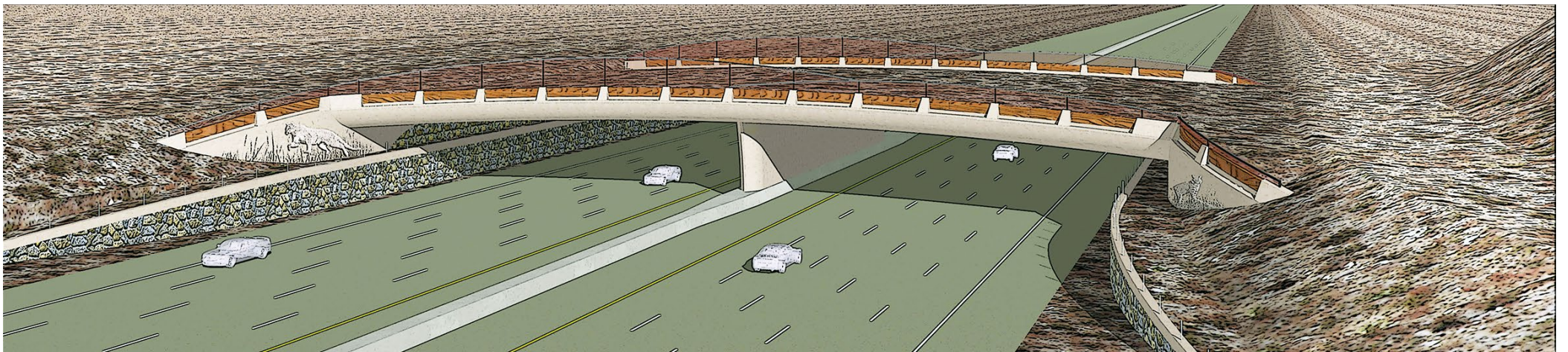


Graphic courtesy of Marketing and Communication

Notice any new construction near campus recently? Over 500 new units are coming to the University Glen housing development northeast of CI as part of an \$81 million project. Stay tuned to The CI View for updates on this new addition as they become available.

# Agoura Hills animal crossing on the horizon

Mina Inaba



Early concept of the bridge crossing to be put above the U.S. Route 101 in Agoura Hills. Photo courtesy of Caltrans

AGOURA HILLS—The world’s largest wildlife bridge is scheduled to break ground in spring, according to an article by the non-profit organization LAist. The wildlife crossing, dubbed the Wallis Annenberg Wildlife Crossing, will cross over the 101 Freeway in Agoura Hills and will help preserve multiple species of wildlife, including mountain lions.

According to a Los Angeles Times article by Laura Anaya-Morga, the bridge at Liberty Canyon is planned to be 200 –feet long and 165 –feet –wide and cost an estimated \$85 million. Anaya-Morga stated that it “will allow mountain lions and other species to cross safely over a busy eight-lane stretch of the freeway used by an estimated 300,000 vehicles a day.” The Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy explains on their website that “this project is a public-private partnership that draws on the ability, knowledge and leadership of dozens of public and private sector organizations and institutions.”

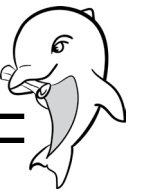
The purpose of the bridge is to create a connection between the Santa Monica Mountains and the Sierra Madre mountain range, which will provide a safe and sustainable passage for wildlife and help increase genetic variation in animal populations. On their website, the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy states that, for species like mountain lions, bobcats and coyotes, the construction of freeways has fragmented habitats and caused “increased inbreeding and territorial fighting, and very low genetic diversity,” all of which threatens the survival of species.

The project is only \$5-10 million away from its \$85 million goal, according to a press release from the National Wildlife Federation. Wallis Annenberg and the Annenberg Foundation are a principal donor, having committed \$25 million to the project. In January, California Governor Gavin Newsom announced that the state’s 2022-23 budget will include a one-time \$10 million general fund for the wildlife crossing. Boeing also became a recent large donor, announcing a \$1 million contribution earlier this month.

Construction of the wildlife bridge was planned to begin in late January, but the official announcement of the project’s start date has yet to be released by Caltrans. According to the Los Angeles Times article, the project will have two phases: “the first phase will cover the area across the 101 Freeway, and the second phase will cover the two-lane stretch across Agoura Road.” The project is estimated for completion in October 2023.

Several mountain lions were seen on campus last semester, highlighting the reality that wild animals live close to us. As such, human activity affects wildlife and their habitats and can lead to extinction. It is important to preserve their lives, as well as to keep the planet sustainable for humans. The wildlife crossing is designed to look like a natural environment and will still provide a habitat for native plants as well.

If you are interested in getting involved with the project, you can help spread awareness of the wildlife bridge and its goals to friends or through social media. You may also donate toward its goal of \$85 million on the link in our Linktree.



# Club features

For this special print edition, The CI View conducted a series of interviews with clubs on campus who formed or restarted during this academic year. Here is what these student organizations are up to.

## Dance Club

TJ Ramirez



Dance Club poses for group photo

New to our campus this school year is the CI Dance Club. Led by President Maddy Hitchcock, a junior performing arts major, Vice President Amanda Ruiz, a junior double majoring in early childhood studies and performing arts and Treasurer Savannah Hussey, a junior global studies major, the club aims to provide a welcoming environment where everyone can have the opportunity to learn how to dance.

Hitchcock was inspired to start this club after noticing that other dance clubs often functioned more as teams, which could make them feel exclusive. As a dance major, she learned that “dance is built on community” and set out to create a community for dance at CI. As such, students of all experience levels are encouraged to join.

The CI Dance Club practices many forms of dance. For example, throughout the fall 2021 semester, they held meetings that taught jazz, tap, contemporary, musical theater and heels, a dance form centered around wearing high heels. The club intentionally focuses on a wide variety of styles, rather than centering on just one. Hitchcock is passionate about including as many styles as possible because “dance isn’t based in one form.” The club aims for an inclusive and diverse learning experience that does not

emphasize one particular style over another, but rather embraces many types of dance.

The CI Dance Club has big plans for their spring semester meetings. Some will include new styles, while some will return to those taught during the fall semester. Others will cover subjects which were canceled due to weather, like hip-hop, as well as somatics, a dance form that focuses specifically on connection with the body. During the fall, dance club meetings had to take place outside due to pandemic restrictions, which unfortunately led to some cancellations.

This semester, the club is hosting meetings weekly on Thursdays from 8 p.m. to 10 p.m., beginning on Feb. 24. The meetings will be held indoors with masks. Students of all experience levels are welcome to come and learn different styles of dance and make new connections with peers through the CI Dance Club. There are no minimum meeting requirements; members are encouraged to come whenever they can, and to have fun. For more information, email [channelislandsdanceclub@gmail.com](mailto:channelislandsdanceclub@gmail.com), follow the club on Instagram @cidanceclub or check out our Linktree for the club’s CI Sync page.

# Delta Alpha Pi International Honor Society

Ariel Butler

In the fall semester of this academic year, Nickon Razi, a senior psychology major at CI, partnered with Michelle Resnick, the Disability Accommodations and Support Services (DASS) staff and Dr. Tiina Itkonen to create a chapter of the Delta Alpha Pi (DAPI) International Honor Society at CI, called Eta Zeta.

According to Razi, the club’s president, DAPI exists to acknowledge “high-achieving students with disabilities who are attending colleges and universities.” Razi explained, “In recognizing us high-achieving students with disabilities, DAPI helps eliminate the stigmas surrounding us by bringing awareness to our accomplishments.”

During the fall semester, DAPI made strides toward establishing itself as a recognized club. Razi, along with Bryan Strehl, a senior early childhood development major who is the club’s Vice President, aided in completing the necessary requirements for DAPI to be recognized at CI.

The DAPI club leaders have focused on promoting awareness on issues of mental health and wellbeing, while aspiring and

working toward increased awareness and engagement of the club on campus.

Razi noted the difficulty of starting a club during the pandemic, and acknowledged the dedication his officers displayed to starting a club that would serve the community at CI. The club began hosting hybrid meetings during the fall semester where “members speak, listen and share their experiences with one another while being heard and valued. Together, we celebrate our victories and give support when we have challenges.”

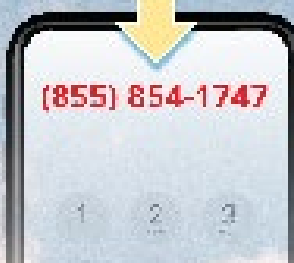
DAPI club meetings in the spring semester will continue to include guest speakers, fundraising events, mindfulness training and outdoor activities. Razi explained that students can check CI Sync or ask DASS to learn more about requirements to join the society. “We all support each other in our desire to grow and strive for greatness. That is why to me, the Eta Zeta chapter of DAPI is my second family, and it’s my honor to be their President,” Razi said.

### Counseling And Psychological Services (CAPS)

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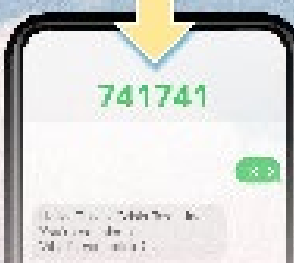
**24/7 CRISIS SUPPORT**



• **Call the direct crisis number at 855-854-1747**

• **OR call the CAPS main office at 805-437-2088 and select option 2 to connect to a crisis counselor.**

**NATIONAL TEXT LINE**



• **Text “Hello” to: 741741**

• **A crisis counselor receives the text and responds quickly**

**If you are experiencing an emergency, please call the Police immediately by dialing 9-1-1**

**OFFICE HOURS**


BELL TOWER EAST 1867  
MONDAY-FRIDAY  
8 a.m. - 5 p.m.

**CONTACT**


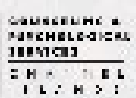
CAPS@CSUCI.EDU  
805-437-2088  
WWW.CSUCI.EDU/CAPS

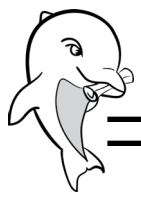
**SOCIAL**

@CSUCICAPS



The University encourages persons with disabilities to participate in its programs and activities. If you anticipate needing any type of accommodation, or have questions about the physical access provided, please contact Disability Accommodations and Support Services at [accommodations@csuci.edu](mailto:accommodations@csuci.edu) or call 805-437-3331 as soon as possible, but no later than seven (7) business days prior to the event.



# Pre-Dental Society

Breannah Ortiz

Formed during the fall semester, the Pre-Dental Society at CI strives to build a community of students who are interested in the dental field.

Sebastian Pallamari, a junior biology major and co-president of the society, aims to provide a space for students interested in the dental field. Pallamari explained, "We strive to teach and provide as much information as possible regarding the aspects of dentistry to any students who have potential interests in a career full of smiles."

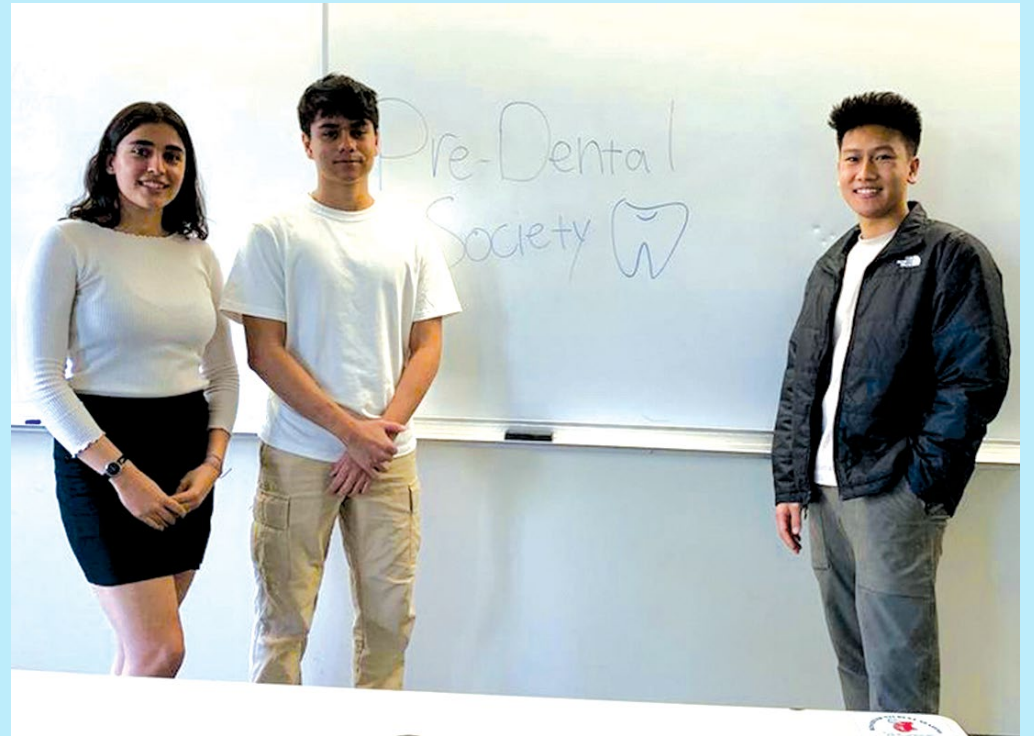
Before the society was established, there were no clubs available for pre-dental students on campus, making the Pre-Dental Society a unique and exciting opportunity at CI.

Pallamari, along with co-president Vincent Hoang, a junior biology major, noticed it was difficult meeting other pre-dental students on campus. Hoang stated, "There are many clubs here at CI, but none encompass dentistry. I have found that it's beneficial to build connections with other pre-dental students as we all have questions that can't be answered with a Google search." The formation of the society was a great opportunity to help bridge these gaps.

The society has plans to host guest speakers this semester, which will include dental students and professionals currently working in the dental field. An accomplishment from fall was their partnership with DAT Bootcamp, a service which provides tools and resources for pre-dental students to pass the Dental Admission Test. The partnership provides amazing resources to those studying for the DAT, including a member discount.

The Pre-Dental Society also plans on participating in various community volunteer events, related and unrelated to dentistry. Any student is welcome to participate with the club. This was expressed by Pallamari, who emphasized that "the Pre-Dental Society welcomes all students, no matter your major or career path. We love meeting new students and sparking potential interests in dentistry students."

To get involved, check out the club's page on CI Sync and follow them on Instagram @csuci\_predental\_society.



Pre-Dental Society Co-presidents Sebastian Pallamari, Vincent Hoang and Vice President Nona Marvian posing for photo

# Surfrider Club

Emily Chang



Surfrider Club posing for photo at sunset

The return to campus this academic year reopened possibilities for clubs to volunteer in-person in ways that were not available during quarantine. The CI Surfrider Club seized that opportunity to serve our beaches.

Natasha Saxena, a senior environmental communications major and the president of the club during the fall 2021 semester, explained that "the purpose of our club is to empower the next generation of coastal defenders by connecting our CI students with real-life nonprofit work at our local Ventura Chapter of the Surfrider Foundation." The Surfrider Foundation's primary goals are plastic reduction, ocean protection, beach access, coastal preservation and clean water.

Last semester, the CI Surfrider Club hosted more than 10 events, collected an impressive 272 pounds of trash on campus and welcomed over 20 new members. The Surfrider Club collaborated with the Green Generation Club to organize bonding events and combined campus cleanup and garden days. Saxena said, "We were able to certify the student therapy garden on campus as part of Surfrider's Ocean Friendly Garden program. This was a fantastic way to celebrate all of our members' hard work and a great way to honor our predecessors' work in creating the garden."

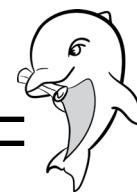
Saxena described her friendship with the previous CI Surfrider Club president as her inspiration to restart the club. According to Saxena, the leadership team for the spring semester "will continue to focus on collaboration, creating a sense of community and building friendships. In addition, the new president, Alexandria Alejo, will be introducing more ways for the club to support diversity."

Alejo, a junior environmental science resource management major, shared with The CI View that the club leadership this semester includes Gilda Gonzales, Vice President, Eli Lew, Treasurer and Hailey Popham, Events Coordinator. We look forward to seeing what initiatives the club will pursue this semester, building on the momentum they gained during the fall.

Saxena encourages students to get to know the team and members during the on-campus cleanups and other events. To get involved, students can join the club on CI Sync through their myCI portal or email [csuci@clubs.surfrider.org](mailto:csuci@clubs.surfrider.org). Students can also follow @csuci\_surfriderfoundation on Instagram. There are positions available for all students, and those who choose to join the leadership team can "attend exclusive team-bonding events on campus or join meetings hosted at Patagonia." For the chance to be part of a community that collaboratively improves coastal health on a local level, join the CI Surfrider Club!

**“The purpose of our club is to empower the next generation of coastal defenders by connecting our CI students with real-life nonprofit work at our local Ventura Chapter of the Surfrider Foundation.”**

- Natasha Saxena, senior environmental communications major



# President Yao talks path to presidency and CI's future

Sergio Mercado and Jordan Wehlage

*Dr. Richard Yao was appointed CI president in January following his year-long term as interim president. The CI View sat down with Dr. Yao to discuss his path to the presidency, his plans for CI's future and some lesser-known facts about his life.*

**So, before we hop into our questions, I'd like to just ask you to tell us a little bit about yourself.**

I came to Channel Islands in 2018...as our vice president for Student Affairs, and prior to that, I'd lived in Las Vegas for almost 25 years. I actually considered Vegas home, and I'm a clinical psychologist, so...the large proportion of my career really focused on clinical work in the Las Vegas community.

I worked over a decade in the nonprofit sector, working with those with chronic and persistent mental illness...and doing some therapy with children and families in the foster care system. In the late nineties, I started up a program for transition age youth; kids aging out of the foster care system and into the adult mental health system.

I started teaching part-time at the community college back in 1996, and then I moved on to Nevada State College as a senior lecturer in 2005 or 2006. And then my teaching required me to stay up-to-date on the research, (which) helped me to inform my clinical practice and my forensic work. My (clinical) practice was thriving, and at Nevada State College, which was a brand-new university...I had a heavy, heavy service load. That's when I had to make a decision (between) either going full-time forensic work, or full-time higher ed.

**“I love working with first-generation students, students from historically underrepresented and marginalized groups, and I truly believe that I've always had a big focus on student success.”**

**That must've been a difficult decision to have to make. What helped you make that decision?**

Funny story, but I did not have plans to go into higher ed. But when I moved to Vegas, I was just 24 years old. I moved there by myself to work this job in a Medicaid nonprofit organization, and I was loving it. I was only making about \$20,000 a year. Honestly, living in Vegas, single, at 24, I needed extra money. So, a colleague said, “Hey, I teach this Psych 101 class at the community college. Are you interested? I can't do it this year.” And I said, “Sure, why not? I need another job.” And I absolutely fell in love with teaching and working with students, particularly in Vegas. Vegas is a very diverse place. (I was) working with students from all kinds of backgrounds, from first-time full-time students; from first-generation to middle-aged or mid-career folks trying to start fresh, to folks coming off probation. It was incredible.

**Wow. So, what made you choose CI?**

For me, it's always about the students. I love working with first-generation students, students from historically underrepresented and marginalized groups, and I truly believe that I've always had a big focus on student success. It's not just about the diversity of our student body population, but it's about, “How are we promoting their success?” Because there's thousands of students, very intelligent, very qualified, who go to college every single year, but there's a significant proportion (of them) who don't finish.

**Where do you see CI being in five or 10 years?**

I think in terms of the long-term vision, it's really about strategic planning...That was something that I prioritized during my interim presidency. I know it's dicey as an interim president to be talking about strategic planning, but I was fairly consistent from day one. My focus was to build the structural pieces necessary for the strategic planning that'll take us into our next 20 years.

I think the beauty of what's happening is that this is underway. I believe we have over 50 faculty members who have engaged in collaborating with our provost, Mitch Avila, and other leaders on campus to move this work forward.

What I hope to see us do through strategic planning is really get clarification on our academic and institutional identity, and we have a lot of work to do—but the process has started.

The other piece that's really important here is enrollment, and everybody wants to talk about enrollment: “How big do you want to be? How many students should we have?” To me, you can't talk about enrollment management long-term, or

strategic enrollment management, until you have an academic plan. It has to be our academic excellence first and foremost, and our academic programs, that drive enrollment.

**What have you achieved at CI? What are you most proud of?**

Without a doubt, (when I was) vice president of Student Affairs, I (was) so proud of our division and how everyone got on board with our data and assessment plan in Student Affairs. We led a pilot program with nine other CSUs, looking at their student affairs data. For us to be recognized by (the National Association of Student Personnel Administrators) as a gold award winner nationwide...was great.

I would say as interim president—this is a little bit more qualitative in nature—but I (was) just really proud of our campus community. Leadership changes are hard, even in the best of circumstances, and here we are in some of the darkest times, in the middle of COVID and in a virtual learning and work environment.

(There was) the grief and trauma that we've experienced as a community, individually and collectively, and then to have this leadership change in the middle of it...Adding to that was we had just brought on our provost, Mitch Avila. That announcement came in the fall of 2020, and I believe it was two weeks later President Beck announced that she was leaving for (CSU) Northridge.

I'm just really proud of how our campus community rallied. Things can go off the rails very easily at times like that, but I truly believe that our campus community came together and worked through the challenges. That's something I'm very, very proud of and I couldn't be more thankful for the support that the campus community showed me moving into this new (position).

**So just to lighten it up a little bit, what are your favorite places to eat in Ventura County?**

What you have to know is I love food. I don't know if I'd call myself a foodie because I've got a pretty broad interest when it comes to food, and I don't know how this is going to come across, but living in Las Vegas for 25 years, I was very, very spoiled. You have some of the finest dining in the entire world in Las Vegas, but then you (also) have the most incredible hole-in-the-wall shops. I lived right on the outskirts of Vegas' version of Chinatown. In 2018, that was the trendiest, hottest spot for food in Vegas, and it wasn't just Chinese food. They had Chinese and Filipino and Korean and Vietnamese. It was just this mishmash.

So, when I came here to Camarillo, my first question was, “Where do I get some good Filipino food?” And honestly, I'm still looking, and I've had some good spots. But I would say the one spot that I've really fallen in love with within Ventura County is Cagami Ramen in Camarillo. The ramen is just incredible there, and I go there as often as I can.

**What is something else about you that you think would be surprising to most students?**

One (thing) is...a lot of folks are surprised when they get to know me a little bit more and see that I'm definitely much more introverted in nature. I prefer solitude. I don't particularly enjoy public speaking and all that. I do it, and I've learned to do it well, but it takes a lot. Even as vice president of Student Affairs, and now as president, obviously it's a very public position. You're always out-front speaking.

It takes a lot of energy, so for me in my downtime, I'm a homebody. I like staying home. I like quiet. I love being with my family, and so I can't say I have a very exciting life outside of work. That's one thing.

The other thing is...as a Chinese Filipino American, I understand the magnitude of me serving in this role and the responsibility that I have to honor all those that have continued to lift me up in our AAPI (Asian American Pacific Islander) community. One thing that might be surprising to some students is that my racial identity development is something that really continues to evolve.

Not until recently in the last few years, since I've come to Channel Islands, have I really done that level of reflective work to recognize how...throughout my entire life...at the root of those trials and tribulations really was just a lot of uncertainty and ambiguity around my racial identity development.

To come to Channel Islands and to be able to continue that process, to learn about myself and my racial identity and what that means for me (as part) of our community and me as a leader—it's continuing to evolve and it's exciting. It's also hard too, because it takes a lot of reflection, and it takes a lot of vulnerability to be in those spaces to genuinely grow

and develop.

Here I am at 50 years of age, and this is the most growth I've ever had in terms of racial identity. That's one of the things I love about Channel Islands, that our campus community pushed me and challenged me to grow personally, but also professionally and as a leader. It's all related. You can't separate those three things.

**What are some issues that you think are important to students at CI?**

I hear that students want a campus community that genuinely cares about their wellbeing...What I mean by that is a campus that embraces their intersecting identities and provides a... campus community that is truly inclusive for all of those intersecting identities.

That's a campus that provides support services that understand that college is hard even under the best of circumstances, but when you're working full-time, you have family commitments, you're (dealing with) COVID, that is stressful, and there's a lot of support that is needed. That's a campus community that...normalizes the stressors associated with the college experience, especially nowadays for this generation.

The other piece is that students want an exceptional educational experience. If you're a computer science major, you want cutting edge curriculum and you want to learn that content expertise. If you're a psychology major, you want to learn all the theoretical foundations of the field, but (also) what's new and emerging. You want hands-on experiences. Students want to engage in internships and undergraduate research. Students want high-quality academic excellence, because the next step that's important to students is that they want to be successful when they leave here.

**“As a Chinese Filipino American, I understand the magnitude of me serving in this role and the responsibility that I have to honor all those that have continued to lift me up in our AAPI community.”**

**What is your message to CI students and CI's community?**

I will continue to engage our campus community in addressing our imminent challenges, but (also) continually thinking about the long-term vision for our University. That'll take us into the next 10 to 20 years and that's going to include our community as well, because our University is nothing without our local community.

One of the things that I loved so much about the search process throughout my interim presidency was seeing how the community has so much pride in CSU Channel Islands as the only four-year public institution in the county.

It's amazing. I would say my message is to reinforce everything I've said today. I will continue to be as transparent as possible. I know folks may not agree with decisions that I make, but hopefully you will understand the context and factors that went into my decision...so that we can continue to grow and evolve as a campus community.





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# Book review: "A Shadow in the Ember"

Elise Bechtel

Jennifer L. Armentrout, a well-known author in the fantasy genre, has risen to prominence with her new "Flesh and Fire" series and her ongoing "Blood and Ash" series. "A Shadow in the Ember" ("ASITE") is book one of the "Flesh and Fire" series and is the prequel and companion series to "Blood and Ash."

Armentrout has done a great job of immersing the reader in the story. "ASITE" is told in first person from Sera's point of view, allowing the reader to experience the story and emotions through the protagonist's eyes.

"ASITE" takes place in a fictional, medieval world and follows two characters: Sera, known to many as "the Maiden," and the Primal of Death, who is akin to a god. This story takes the reader through a lot of emotions: happiness, sympathy, anger, confusion and beyond. What I love about Armentrout's books is that they all feature snarky, sarcastic characters. They often have very traumatic backstories, but these characters still maintain a compassionate nature. To be honest, I have grown rather attached to her characters. When reading, I love being able to connect with a character, which was accomplished in this book.

In the beginning of the book, we learn that one of Sera's relatives made a deal with the Primal of Death. In this deal, the relative would be granted healthy land and prosperity until the god took a first-born daughter of their family as his consort, at which time the deal's magic would run out. As a result, Sera, the first-born daughter, has been trained to kill and seduce from the minute she could walk. Hope for the survival of her family's kingdom rests upon her ability to trick the Primal of Death into falling in love with her so that she can kill him.

Much of the story explores the element of trust. As Sera and the Primal get to know each other, they slowly build up their trust in each other, something that is difficult for both characters. This trust evolves into friendship and beyond, which leaves Sera conflicted about her lifelong mission. By spending time with the Primal, she learns that the deal her ancestor and the Primal made is not exactly what she was told, and this new information turns her mission on its side. She is forced to grapple with the question of whether trust, once it is broken, can be rebuilt.

Like many fantasy books, "ASITE" is set in a world completely separate from Earth. There is magic, mystery, romance and adventure. Armentrout's story also tackles loss, loneliness and trust in a profound way, but to avoid spoiling the plot for you, I will not elaborate.

While I've gushed about how amazing "ASITE" is, I do feel the need to admit that Armentrout's

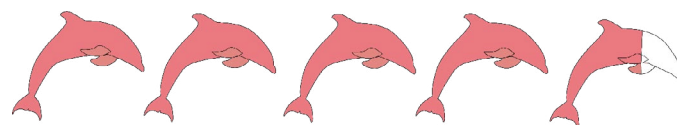
writing style is not my favorite. I find myself sometimes wondering which character is speaking and having to re-read sentences to try and grasp what is being said. However, as an avid reader who had almost exclusively been reading Sarah J. Maas books for several years prior, I may have had a bit of reading shock when I suddenly switched authors. However, I would encourage readers to keep reading if you have the same problem, as I got used to Armentrout's writing style quickly.

It is important to note that this series is meant to eventually merge with "Blood and Ash," which currently has three released books with another one coming out March 15. The "Flesh and Fire" series is the prequel to "Blood and Ash," and I would highly suggest reading the "Blood and Ash" series before reading "ASITE" because of the foundational worldbuilding done there.

Both series are filled with plot twists and cliffhangers that I personally have no problem with. However, I know that there are readers who cannot stand cliffhangers unless the next book, or even the whole series, has already been released. If you are one of those readers, then this is a fair warning that you may want to wait until the whole series is out to begin reading.

I absolutely loved "ASITE" and have preordered "The War of Two Queens," which is book four in the "Blood and Ash" series, so I think it's safe to say that these books leave you eagerly waiting for the next book. "ASITE" hits the ground running and snags the reader's attention immediately. I would say, however, that readers of "Blood and Ash" should stick it out as the first book is a bit slow until the second half. From there, I personally had no problem staying engaged in the story.

Overall, I would give "A Shadow in the Ember" a rating of 4.7 out of 5 dolphins for amazing character development, storytelling and worldbuilding. These are incredible books with well-developed characters, and I wouldn't want them any other way.



## Purpose

The purpose of The CI View is to provide the student body of CI with precise and accurate news about what is happening on their campus and in their community. It is run by students, for students, and provides a platform for the student voice. The CI View aims to be student-centered by giving students opportunities to become involved and learn about the dynamic field of journalism.

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