

# SAN FRANCISCO STATE UNIVERSITY FOUNDATION

Board of Directors Meeting  
Seven Hills Conference Center, SF State Campus  
Thursday, September 18, 2025

## Board Meeting Minutes

### DIRECTORS IN ATTENDANCE

C. Bengier	Director
K. Brandon	Director (virtual)
S.B. Ceja	Student Director
A. Chan	Director
D. Corvin	Director (v)
G. Cosko	Director
D. Endo	Vice Chair
B. Foley	Student Director
S. Gen	Director
T. Herrera	Director (v)
M. Huss	Chair
J. Jackanicz	Foundation President, VP/Univ. Advancement, SF State
F. Levin	Director (v)
L. Mahoney	Director/President, SF State
J. Marcus	Director
D. Nasser	Director
D. Neumann	Director (v)
D. Plousha Moore	Director (v)
O. Ramsey	Director
M. Rosenbaum	Director

P. Siguenza	Director
R. Stanley	Director
A. Sueyoshi	Provost, SF State
V. Thompson-Ramsay	Corporate Secretary & Treasurer
C. Wachira	Director (v)
L. White	Director (v)

### DIRECTORS ABSENT AND EXCUSED

V. Anicetti	Director
L. Bridges	Director
W. L. Brown, Jr	Director Emeritus
J. Gumas	Director
T. L. Jackson	Director
G. Kumar	Director
D. Lindo	Director
N. Nobari	Immediate Past Chair
K. Salgado	Director
C. Smith	Director
J. Wilson	Director/CFO & VP, Admin & Fin, SF State

### SFSU STAFF PRESENT

A. Billa	Associate Vice President, University Development & Comprehensive Campaigns, SFSU
M. Campbell	Executive Assistant to the Vice President of Advancement, SFSU
C. Domingo	Dean, College of Science & Engineering, SFSU
C. Grutzik	Dean, Graduate College of Education, SFSU
C. Johansson	Senior Director, Advancement Services, SFSU and Director of Programs and Technology, SFSU Foundation
N. Lange	Associate Vice President, Alumni Relations & University Engagement, SFSU
K. Lynch	Senior Associate Vice President for Enrollment Management, SFSU
S. McLaughlin (v)	Foundation Legal Counsel, Adler Colvin
I. Nwankwo	Dean, College of Liberal & Creative Arts, SFSU
J. Oppenheim (v)	Director of Communications, Strategic Marketing & Communications, SFSU
C. Relyea	Associate Vice President, Strategic Marketing & Communications, SFSU
E. Sivadas	Dean, Lam Family College of Business, SFSU
F. Smith	Associate Vice President, Equity & Inclusion, SFSU
L. Way	Vice Provost of Academic Planning and Dean of Undergraduate Education, SFSU
J. Wilson	Chair, Academic Senate, SFSU

**MEETING CALLED TO ORDER**

Chair Huss called the September 18, 2025 meeting of the Board of Directors to order at 3:10 PM.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS**

There were no public comments.

**STUDENT APPOINTMENT**

Debra Plousha-Moore, Chair of the Committee on Directors presented the nomination of Sebastian Busamonte Ceja as appointed by President Mahoney. Debra highlighted his extensive qualifications and record of service, including serving as Chief Justice, Associated Students and Graduate Teaching Assistant in Cinema at SF State. She said Ceja spent the past four (4) years working in student services at several institutions of higher education serving in positions such as vice president of Marketing and Student Success Peer Coach for Student Government at Santa Rosa Junior College as well as ASUCR Senate Intern, where he drafted and passed legislation to support underserved student populations. Plousha-Moore said Ceja was dedicated to the Latin community serving as founder and director for the CHISMES nonprofit organization, an entity that amplifies Latinx storytelling in media, literature and the arts. She said Ceja had also volunteered with the League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC) in Washington, DC where he managed Hill Day for deported veterans – coordinating training sessions and congressional meetings, while advocating for immigrant and veteran justice. Plousha-Moore said Ceja had a Bachelor of Arts degree in Media and Cultural Studies from the University of California, Riverside and was currently pursuing a Master of Arts degree in Cinema from San Francisco State University. On motion duly made, seconded, and unanimously carried, the following Minute Action was taken:

MINUTE ACTION: that the board ratifies the appointment of Sebastian Bustamante Ceja to the Board of Directors of the San Francisco State University Foundation.

Motioned by: Greg Cosko      Seconded by: Okorie Ramsey      Motion: Passed

**MEETING AGENDA**

Huss asked for a motion to approve the agenda for the board meeting of September 18, 2025, which was included in the board packet and distributed in advance of the meeting. On motion duly made, seconded, and unanimously carried, the following Minute Action was taken:

MINUTE ACTION: that the board adopts the agenda for the September 18, 2025 board meeting.

Motioned by: Cynthia Bengier      Seconded by: Brandon Foley      Motion: Passed

**CONSENT AGENDA**

The Board reviewed the consent agenda, which includes: 1) the minutes from the July 11, 2025 board meeting; 2) the Endowment Establishment & Administration Policy, updated to outline the fee exceptions for charitable organizations and 3) the Investment Policy Statement, updated to reflect the new endowment administrative fees as well as items identified by the Cambridge Associates compliance team. On motion duly made, seconded, and unanimously carried, the following Minute Action was taken:

MINUTE ACTION: that the board approves the consent agenda, as prepared.

Motioned by: Judy Marcus      Seconded by: Brandon Foley      Motion: Passed

**PURPLE & GOLD NUGGETS**

Vice Chair Don Endo provided updates on the work and accomplishments of members of the SFSU community, as follows:

1. Students from the departments of Journalism and Broadcast and Electronic Communication Arts (BECA) reported stories on KQED-FM from across the Bay Area in the fourth episode of “The Future of the Bay.” The one-hour news magazine show included special reports on a jazz-loving church, firefighting goats, a marine lab’s fight for survival and more. The special aired July 4.
2. SFSU added 83 new associate degrees for Transfer (ADT) pathways, significantly expanding opportunities for guaranteed admission to SFSU for California Community College (CCC) transfer students. The new ADT pathways span six key academic departments: Apparel Design and Merchandising, Race and Resistance Studies, Child and Adolescent Development, Communication Studies, International Relations and Journalism.
3. Graham Carpenter, assistant professor of BECA directed “The Athletics: An Ode to Oakland”, premiering on September 18 at the 2025 Oakland International Film Festival at the Grand Lake Theater.
4. NASPA, a U.S.-based organization for student affairs administrators in higher education, will honor President Lynn Mahoney and Vice President for Student Affairs Jamillah Moore in the fall. Mahoney will receive the Region VI President’s Award for advancing the quality of student life on campus by supporting student affairs staff and initiatives. Moore will receive the Region VI Distinguished Service to the Profession Award for her demonstrated outstanding contributions to higher education and the student affairs profession.
5. Three SFSU faculty members won two of the 63 awards in the CSU’s first-ever Artificial Intelligence (AI) Educational Innovations Challenge. SFSU winners are English Language and Literature Professor Jennifer Trainor, Economics Professor Anoshua Chaudhuri for “Investigating How Students Write with GenAI: Co-Creating Innovating Curricular Materials for Writing Courses” and Assistant Professor of Marketing Yiwen Chen for “Marketing Message Coach: An AI-Powered Lab for Marketing Communication.”
6. SFSU wrestling’s Hayden Ancheta competed at the U-20 World Championships in Sofia, Bulgaria, at 57 kilograms in freestyle on August 18 and 19. In addition, assistant coach Anthony Mancini was selected by the Philippines national delegation as the national team coach for Team Philippines. He coached Ancheta at Worlds.
7. SFSU named incoming Assistant Professor of Asian American Studies Cassie Miura as the inaugural Distinguished Chair in Nikkei Studies. Miura’s role as chair began August 2025 and will focus on advancing the awareness, understanding and appreciation of Japanese American experiences. In May 2024, SFSU received a \$4.2 million gift from the Henri and Tomoye Takahashi Charitable Foundation to establish the Takahashi Distinguished Chair in Nikkei Studies.
8. History Professor Trevor Getz won the 2025 Outstanding Service Award from the African Studies Association, an award that recognizes people and organizations that have distinguished themselves through their outstanding dedication to the association’s mission.

## **SAN FRANCISCO STATE UNIVERSITY REPORT**

University President Lynn Mahoney provided updates on the CSU and campus budget. She said the state reduced funding to the CSU by 3%, which was better than the originally projected 8% cut. She said the Legislature offered CSU an interest-free, one-year loan equal to the cut with repayment due July 1, 2026. She said the loan was not legally binding and did not carry enforceable legislative weight, but the CSU was still considering whether to accept as it was concerned about the risk of future cuts being compounded and the temptation to use one-time loan funds for ongoing expenses. Mahoney said the UC system accepted the loan, partly because State funding made up only about 15% of UC’s budget and the UC had deeper financial reserves. She said the CSU would have to decide soon.

At the local (campus) level, Mahoney said the university began FY2025-2026 with a \$7M structural deficit, compared to \$35M three years ago. She said over the past three years, the university had cut over \$60M from its budget, made reductions to cover unfunded compensation increases and implemented additional cuts following the 3% state reduction. She said had it not been for the recent state funding cut, the campus would have reached a zero deficit this year. Mahoney expressed pride in the campus community's discipline and sacrifice, noting that no other CSU had achieved similar reductions.

Mahoney also provided an update on enrollment. She said enrollment remained volatility with first-time freshman enrollment down 11% (noting that some universities grew enrollment by lowering their criteria). She said long-term trends showed 15 years of declining high school graduates. She said the international student numbers also declined sharply (Fall applications were down 11% and Spring applications were down 56%) mainly due to visa restrictions, travel bans, and fear of mid-program visa revocation. Nonetheless, Mahoney said the campus was working with EAB on enrollment stabilization and growth strategies (the campus received 190+ page analysis with recommendations) that included increasing investment in recruitment infrastructure and having Enrollment Management report directly to the President for faster coordination. Mahoney said the campus was also moving to modernize academic programs. She said national data showed that the "shelf life" of college-learned skills had dramatically shortened so the University must update its academic programs for relevance in a rapidly changing world, emphasize career development, which students have identified as their top priority and strengthen alignment with SFSU's mission of making education relevant.

Mahoney closed by sharing a number of awards received by members of the SFSU community. She said student Gabe Singer received a CSU Trustee Award. In addition, alumni Ken Fong was celebrated for his impact on research innovation at the Ken Fong Translational Research Award Symposium on September 5. Finally, SFSU's Office of Strategic Marketing & Communications won a Gold Circle of Excellence Award from the Council for the Advancement and Support of Education (CASE).

### **SAN FRANCISCO STATE STUDENT REPORT**

Associated Students Brandon Foley provided the student report. He said Associated Students (AS) successfully surpassed the \$50,000 fundraising goal set for Gator Groceries. He said the organization raised \$51,500 and was looking forward to an even better success for year 2. Foley said AS was also developing a long-term strategic fundraising plan to support sustained efforts toward reducing food insecurity. He expressed appreciation to all supporters and specifically thanked University Advancement and VP Jeff Jackanicz for their partnership and yearlong support.

Foley said that, in addition to Gator Groceries, AS Board of Directors' other priorities for the year included:

1. Tabling & Classroom Canvassing to increase awareness of AS and promote available student resources.
2. A new initiative called Junior Gators Program, which was a planned overnight, immersive campus experience for local Bay Area students (intended to strengthen enrollment interest in SF State).

Foley also talked about AS' upcoming initiatives, which would include a "Media Day" and an online Symposium with Northern California CSU campuses and local nonprofit organizations. Foley said the Purpose was to share best practices and build partnerships in the collective effort to address student food insecurity. He promised to share details and invitations when everything was finalized.

### **FOUNDATION PRESIDENT'S REPORT**

Jackanicz provided an update on University Advancement, reporting strong progress toward annual fundraising goals. He said that, as of the meeting date, the university had secured \$16.5 million, representing 66% of the increased \$25 million target for the fiscal year. He noted ongoing concerns about significant unmet student financial need, emphasizing that more than 13,000 undergraduates continue to face an average annual funding gap exceeding \$10,000, even after federal, state, and philanthropic assistance. He said to address these challenges, upcoming campaign priorities would focus on targeted financial support strategies, including First-Year Success Grants, senior-year completion initiatives, and expanded scholarship fundraising aimed at improving student retention and graduation.

Jackanicz further reported on strategic engagement and organizational initiatives. The Alumni Relations Committee had been successfully launched, board recruitment efforts were underway, and new regional engagement activities—including upcoming donor and alumni programs on the East Coast— were being developed. Additional updates included recognition of former Vice President Robert Nava’s retirement, participation in a regional convening on AI and Workforce Readiness, and announcements of several high-profile events: the Braven Annual Summit, the Hispanic Foundation of Silicon Valley Annual Ball, and the Alumni Hall of Fame, scheduled for November 7, where Foundation director Russ Stanley would be inducted.

### **FUNDRAISING CAMPAIGN UPDATE**

Jackanicz provided the fundraising campaign report in the absence of campaign chair, John Gumas (he noted that each board meeting would include a standing campaign update). He reported that the University had officially entered the quiet phase of its comprehensive campaign with a working goal of \$225 million, and that strong fundraising performance in recent years had resulted in significant early momentum. Jackanicz shared that the University had already secured 38% of the campaign goal, an extraordinary achievement at this early stage. He noted that industry benchmarks recommend reaching approximately 60% before the public launch, which was anticipated after the current and next fiscal years.

Jackanicz also announced the finalized composition of the Campaign Steering Committee, chaired by John Gumas, to include board directors Cynthia Bengier, Fred Levin, Judy Marcus, Deborah Plousha-Moore, Neda Nobari, Okorie Ramsey, Marsha Rosenbaum, Karim Salgado, Patty Siguenza, Lisa White, Mary Huss and Don Endo. He thanked each member for their service and commitment.

Jackanicz also shared that several key campaign positions had been filled: Anjali Billa had been appointed Associate Vice President for Development & Comprehensive Campaigns, expanding her leadership role in campaign strategy. Dafna Kapsud, currently Director of Development for the College of Health and Social Sciences, has taken on additional duties as Campaign Manager, responsible for campaign logistics, workflow coordination, staff support for the steering committee, and progress monitoring. Jackanicz said additional staffing investments were underway, including the recruitment of a new Associate Director of Alumni Engagement to strengthen the alumni pipeline – a role that was foundational to cultivating future donors. Jackanicz said further fundraising positions would be added at a later stage once the prospect pool analysis was complete.

Finally, Jackanicz highlighted ongoing work to develop campaign collateral and communications materials. He said the Prospect Strategy Team was actively reviewing potential donors and crafting qualification and cultivation plans, which would inform future events and staffing needs. He said some of the upcoming priorities included finalizing the campaign timeline, establishing a performance dashboard, setting annual fundraising targets, and maintaining active coordination with campus partners to ensure unified progress. He concluded by noting that the campaign was off to a strong start, and regular updates would be provided at each board meeting.

## **MEET THE NEW AVP, STRATEGIC MARKETING & COMMUNICATIONS**

Jackanicz introduced Craig Relyea, Associate Vice President for Strategic Marketing & Communications (SMC), noting his appointment following a national search and his extensive leadership background in global media, technology, and entertainment organizations.

Relyea thanked the Board for the opportunity to present and introduced his background and professional experience that included leadership roles at Universal Studios, DreamWorks Interactive, major marketing agencies, and eight years as Head of Global Marketing for Disney's Interactive Media Group. His significant career focused on emerging technologies, digital media, and leading organizations through periods of disruption and growth.

Relyea emphasized that higher education faces unprecedented cultural, economic, and technological disruption, including increased skepticism about the value of a traditional college degree. He said addressing these challenges requires new ideas, innovative communications approaches, and institutional reinvention. Relyea delivered an update on the strategic direction of the SMC unit. He reported that current efforts were grounded in four marketing pillars: (1) brand marketing, (2) product marketing, (3) performance marketing, and (4) content marketing. He emphasized the increasing importance of data-informed decision making (i.e. development of a recurring KPI and analytics dashboard); expanded content creation capabilities (such as AI prompting, algorithmic personalization, etc.); and the integration of student perspectives in marketing initiatives ensuring that messaging resonates with current audiences.

Craig outlined key initiatives underway, including enrollment and retention marketing strategies, the University's website redevelopment project, and campaign support for University Advancement. He further discussed the development of a differentiated value proposition designed to strengthen the University's competitive position by highlighting attributes such as affordability, workforce preparation, experiential learning opportunities, and the advantages of the University's location in San Francisco's innovation economy.

## **DIRECTOR'S OPEN FORUM**

There was no open forum discussion.

## **COMMITTEE REPORTS**

Huss reminded directors that committee reports were included in their board packet and encouraged them to review carefully and direct their questions to staff.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

Huss reminded directors that the next board meeting would be held on December 12, 2025, on campus. Amy Chan made the motion to adjourn the meeting; Okorie Ramsey seconded the motion. There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 4:56 PM.

Dated: September 18, 2025

*Venesia Thompson-Ramsay*  
Venesia Thompson-Ramsay (04/07/2026 12:45:59 PDT)

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Venesia Thompson-Ramsay, Corporate Secretary