Dear College Faculty and Staff,

We have much to be grateful for on this side of Election Day: Proposition 30 is a positive step forward in what has been increasingly dismal support of public education. Had it failed, the CSU would have faced an additional cut of $250 million dollars. Thankfully, Prop 30 passed. The Legislative Analyst Office estimates that this sales and income tax package will bring an estimated $6 billion annually through 2016-17, with smaller revenues in the final two years (2017-19).

In spite of this good news, we must keep in mind that state budget presumed the passage of Prop 30. This means that the voters now have helped the state meet its planned obligations to fund education, but it does not signify a windfall for education. Instead, the Proposition introduces a relatively stable funding stream for public services, including education, over a seven-year period.

Prop 30's success means that the CSU will be refunding the tuition hike to all students enrolled in fall 2012: $249 will be returned to each and every full-time student in the system. Students also will have their financial aid repackaged based on the tuition rollback. The measure's success means that we will not face further cuts in this fiscal year. In and of itself, this is a reason for us to be optimistic about the future of California’s re-investment in public education. As you know, the long trend of divestment has had adverse effects K-16. Over the last four years, the state has cut the CSU by $1 billion (33%). Student tuition increases have been implemented, but those only cover 50% of the cut.

As we go forward, it is important that everyone who cares about education in this state continue to be an informed advocate about the role of education in the state’s health. I would like to encourage everyone in the College to read the Campaign for College Opportunity’s 2012 report: “California’s Economic Payoff: Investing in College Access and Completion.”

The report makes compelling arguments about why we should invest in higher education, including:

- For every $1 the state invests in public higher education, it gets $4.50 back on its investment.
- For college graduates, the return is $4.80 (vs. $2.40 for those with some college).
- UC and CSU graduates return $12 billion annually to the state.
- College graduates earn $1.34M more in a lifetime than people with a high school diploma.

In this context, I want to thank all of you for everything you do to contribute to the mission of the College, SJSU, and the CSU. Ours is an important responsibility and we should all be thankful that voters have helped restore a small measure of budgetary stability to one of the pillars of California’s past, present, and future: public education. I look forward to continuing to work with you to make our College the best it can be in these trying fiscal times.

Sincerely yours,

Lisa Vollendorf, Dean
College of Humanities & the Arts