



Dr. Cynthia Teniente-Matson, President

Dear Spartans,

It lasted just over a minute, but the impact of two San José State student-athletes' silent protest 55 years ago this month was – and, to this day, remains – an iconic moment in both sports and cultural history. When Tommie Smith and John Carlos accepted their Olympic medals and stood shoeless atop the podium with their gloved fists in the air, they were sending a message to the world not only for themselves, but for so many of their fellow Americans struggling for civil rights.

The more things change, though, the more they stay the same, as the need for student-led protest and activism is no less prevalent on our campus in October 2023 than it was in October 1968. This is why our university continues to celebrate Smith, Carlos and their spirit of civic engagement with its annual [Legacy Month](#) celebration.

Running through the end of October, Legacy Month is produced by the [César E. Chávez Community Action Center](#) and features a variety of events, programs and speakers. The first of those happens today from 10 a.m. to 12 p.m., when you can stop by a table along 7th Street Plaza to learn more about Legacy Month (and receive a free pin and boba, while supplies last). As the month progresses, you'll also have opportunities to hear from world-renowned speakers like Dr. Ibram X. Kendi, appearing [live on campus](#) tomorrow evening; experience film, music and art; and take part in the [2nd annual Legacy Month Walk](#).

Last week, I sent you an email about the importance of promoting and preserving [free speech on campus](#). This is a pillar of the legacy of student activism that is ingrained in our Spartan identity, and is a critical part of the ongoing quest for social justice that defines this community. I look forward to celebrating SJSU's culture of civic engagement, and hope you will join me in keeping this tradition alive in the month ahead.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Cynthia Teniente-Matson".

Dr. Cynthia Teniente-Matson

President
(she/her/ella)

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