



Dr. Cynthia Teniente-Matson, President

Dear Spartan community,

Last fall, we began the new academic year with an eye to the future, a commitment to advance the Spartan student experience and to elevate the reputation of this extraordinary university. As we looked at the horizon, we spoke about being optimistic for the future.

The Investiture celebration in February gave us an opportunity to gather together to celebrate the rich history of this university while centering our focus on how we envision SJSU will play a vital role as the epicenter of the future. We are uniquely positioned to be the anchor institution in Silicon Valley for core industries like AI, robotics, space travel, climate science and so much more. Our trajectory is ascending and we will continue to lead as justice-oriented, strategic change-makers.

As we reflect on the past nine months, with unforeseen changes and challenges locally and around the world, I want to emphasize that our students and the safety of our campus community will always be our top priorities. We acknowledge the grief felt by many members of the university community over the past few months — grief that has prompted some to protest, as a call to action, and, for others, the angst of feeling their perspective was not welcome or heard. Our leadership team will continue to focus on a holistic, inclusive mindset as we support the well-being of our students, faculty and staff.

Fiscal health of the university

As noted in several [campus communications](#) and the fall 2023 [Budget Summit](#) and spring 2024 [Budget Town Hall](#), one of the most pressing challenges we face is our financial situation. The impacts of the 6% budget cut across the university have prompted difficult conversations across campus as we look to build long-term budget sustainability. Our reality is that no matter the financial model, moving forward necessitates sacrifices and thinking differently about how we manage our resources.

During the spring semester, we began the process to refine our hiring practices and we realigned our student-to-faculty ratios. I understand that these changes have been felt by every division and for many of you as you carry out your daily work. Our financial health also relies on our ability to protect certain mission-critical projects, such as the work of Research, Scholarship, and Creative Activity (RSCA). As we elevate our reputation and Carnegie designation, the work of the faculty and our students in the areas of research, discovery and creativity is critical to the university's work in knowledge creation and student success.

I am deeply appreciative for the thoughtful conversations, visioning exercises and insights shared from across the university, including the efforts of the Budget Advisory Committee and four subcommittees as members reviewed our organizational structures and financial processes. This work will continue into this summer and we will communicate updates to the campus community throughout the coming months and on the [Budget Updates](#) website.

Where optimism abounds

In the face of these challenges, we also identified new opportunities, recalibrated our [Transformation 2030 Strategic Plan](#) and [Mission, Vision and Values](#), set records in research and fundraising, celebrated important milestones and achievements of the university, our students, faculty and staff. Each day, I saw first-hand how each of you “showed up,” how together we solved problems, and dreamed big while supporting one another with actions and expressions of compassion and empathy. These experiences are undoubtedly shored up by the very [values](#) that guide our institutional mission.

Last week, we celebrated the [nearly 8,000 Spartans](#) of the Class of 2024. During our [commencement ceremonies](#), we had the honor and privilege to recognize these individuals who are well-prepared to take on the world. Among the graduates were the [first-ever cohort of our clinical doctorate in audiology \(AuD\)](#) students, the first four graduates of SJSU Online’s economics program and 67 graduates from the fully-online information science and data analytics and interdisciplinary studies, educational and community leadership programs. At the same time, we recognized the contributions of our faculty and staff, who each day provide immeasurable expertise, knowledge and support. I am grateful to each of you.

We can point to extraordinary accomplishments over the past few months in academics, research, leadership, athletics and our alumni. Here are a few highlights:

- An unprecedented output of publications and public scholarship by our faculty;
- An increased number of grants awarded;
- Launched a new computer science and linguistics degree;
- Set a record for enrollment for self-support programs while reaching our assigned CSU target at a time when many campuses are facing lower enrollment;
- [Dominic Quan Treseler](#) served as president of the [Cal State Student Association \(CSSA\)](#), a student-led organization that supports and advocates for students across all 23 California State University (CSU) campuses. In all 64 years of CSSA’s existence, it is believed that only one other San José State student has served as president;
- Celebrated SJSU students who [won multiple top awards](#) in the 38th Annual California State University Student Research Competition and Sunstone CSU Launch Competition, among other competitions;
- Opened the [Interdisciplinary Science Building \(ISB\)](#) and [Spartan Athletics Center \(SAC\)](#);
- Delivered multiple forums and critical opportunities to lead efforts in [Artificial Intelligence](#);
- Raised more than \$21.6 million through the efforts of our University Advancement team, including a record \$1.8 million during SJSU Annual Day of Giving;
- Increased student living options with the completion of [Spartan Village on the Paseo](#), opening this fall;
- Celebrated a [century as Spartans](#);
- Contributed to the cultural vitality of our region through exceptional performances, gallery exhibitions and concerts and lectures;
- Experienced significant successes in athletics, including the men’s water polo team reaching the NCAA Tournament for the first time in 50 years, eight Spartans qualifying for the NCAA Track and Field Championships in Eugene, including another All-American performance from long-jumper Emilia Sjostrand, and a third bowl game appearance in the last four years for our football team; and
- Continued to serve as a [driving force](#) to the downtown community

Take time to reflect and refresh

During this summer break, I wish you rest, rejuvenation and moments to realize what I have experienced every day since my first day on campus — San José State is a special place. Take time to reflect on what you accomplished, and celebrate a campus of extraordinary

individuals who each day are invested in inspiring futures and building leaders, innovators and visionaries. Most of all, we are invested in one another.

I encourage you to stay informed on the latest SJSU news and stories by visiting the [SJSU NewsCenter](#) and [Washington Square: The Magazine](#). Please consider sharing these stories with your colleagues, friends and others. I continue to be as optimistic as ever for San José State and the future of our students, who are both aspirational and inspirational. I look forward to seeing what the future has in store for us as we prepare to embark on the next chapter of our Spartan Life.

Enjoy your summer!

Sincerely,



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President
(She/Her/Ella)

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