

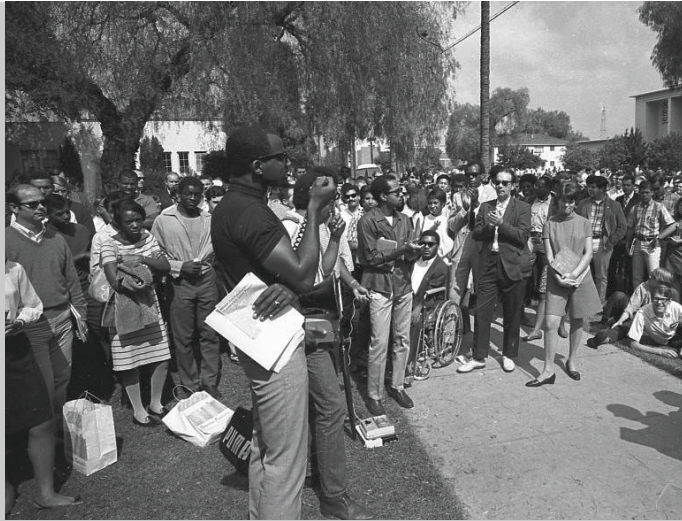
together

EXPLORING WHAT CAN BE

SAN JOSÉ STATE UNIVERSITY

COLLEGE OF SOCIAL SCIENCES

FALL 2019 NO. 13



[prax-is] noun

1. *action, practice: such as exercise or practice of an art, science, or skill or customary practice or conduct*
2. *practical application of a theory*



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COMMUNITY

from the dean

Thank you for reading the Fall 2019 edition of the College of Social Sciences' Together newsletter! July 2019 marked the beginning of my fifth year as dean. It seems like I started yesterday! I have enjoyed the previous four years working with faculty, staff, students and community members. I am excited about this fifth year, and look forward to many more years to come.

As usual, the main section of Together profiles faculty who are new to the college. This year six new assistant professors joined us: Melissa Beresford (Anthropology), Jack Caraves (Sociology & Interdisciplinary Social Sciences), Kristen Cole (Communication Studies), Marie Haverfield (Communication Studies), Metha Klock (Environmental Studies), and Christine Ma-Kellams (Psychology). Laxmi Ramasubramanian also joined us as professor and chair of our newly expanded Department of Urban & Regional Planning, which

merged with the former Department of Geography. Associate Professor Akilah Carter-Francique was hired to become the Executive Director of SJSU's Institute for the Study of Sport, Society, and Social Change. Her faculty home is in the Department of African American Studies. And finally, Alexis Pulos joins the Department of Communication Studies as a visiting associate professor this year.

There are more than 30 "Organized Research and Training Units (ORTUs)" at SJSU. These interdisciplinary faculty collaborations facilitate the conduct and dissemination of research, perform public services and provide special training to enhance technology, encourage the development of new products and improve education. In this issue we explore three ORTUs with strong College of Social Sciences connections: the established Institute for the Study of Sport, Society, and Social Change, which explores athlete activism and the influence of sport in effecting positive social change; the soon-to-launch Human Rights Institute, which will study and address social problems that confront our local communities while contributing to broader collaborative

efforts to realize universal human rights practice; and the Technology and Democracy Center, which will research the intersections of technology, social media, democratic institutions, elections and national security. We are very excited about these new initiatives!

The theme of this issue of Together is "praxis," the integration of theory, practice and problem-solving to address practical issues. College of Social Sciences faculty, students and community members apply their knowledge and skills to work productively as individuals and in groups while solving pressing social problems. Please see the back cover for information about how you can help us with these efforts. We very much appreciate those of you who have helped us in the past, and look forward to both continued partnerships and new collaborations.

Thank you!

Walt Jacobs
Dean

Plotting a Better Future

New Urban & Regional Planning Chair Laxmi Ramasubramanian uses geospatial mapping to give communities what they need

Laxmi Ramasubramanian might still be designing big expensive houses for the wealthy class in India if not for a nagging conscience. As a newly minted architect in Madras, India, in the early 1990s, Ramasubramanian went where the clients with money were and that meant creating mansions, not social change.

But after a few years she began to find it distasteful. “We all have a sense of fairness and justice innate in us, I think,” Ramasubramanian says. “I wanted to do something more aligned with my personal values and ethics.”

So she looked for a new career where she could do some social good and found a master’s program in city planning at MIT. From there she earned a Ph.D. in architecture and planning from the University of Wisconsin, Milwaukee, and became immersed in the use of geospatial sciences to create better communities and spur social change.

Ramasubramanian has taught at Hunter College, CUNY, since 2006 and comes to San José State as a full professor to chair the Department of Urban & Regional Planning.

Her approach to planning uses geospatial planning from the community level, a value she learned as a mentor in an after-school program at a middle school in Roxbury, Mass., while she was at MIT.

When the kids weren’t connecting with Ramasubramanian’s spiel about urban design concepts, she had an idea. “Why don’t you just draw me a map of your neighborhood?” she asked. That opened a flood of conversation about what was available in their neighborhood and where the needs were. It’s where she learned the value of asking people directly about their experiences and taking advantage of hyper-local information when using geographic information systems (GIS) to address planning issues.

“If you teach a community how to collect and map information,” Ramasubramanian says, “they are much more likely to use the technology and you get much better information. We want our citizens to be engaged with decision-making, and involving people in communities helps push out a lot of information that we might not otherwise have collected and helps toward the goal of actual social change.”

A case in point came from her early Roxbury work.

When the mapping showed an overgrown vacant lot and one of the students mentioned that her kid sister needed a safe place to play outside, mapping and human need collided. Ramasubramanian



helped the community present a plan to the city, got the lot cleaned up, and neighborhood kids had a new place to play.

As department chair, Ramasubramanian will be overseeing the integration of the geography program with Urban & Regional Planning, which she says will add a layer of strength to the department and mesh well. Geography and planning share disciplinary and professional interests, and GIS is integral to both fields.

She will also continue to encourage women to enter GIS and assume leadership positions.

“GIS historically was seen as a technical field and was somewhat of a male bastion,” Ramasubramanian says. “Many women are now using and teaching GIS and there are a lot of women in GIS in academia, but not in leadership positions.”

She is part of a multi-university team funded by the National Science Foundation to advance the professional development of women in the geospatial sciences.

And she will work to continue to build the department’s reputation as a leader in teaching and preparing practitioners with technical skills, as well as values of community engagement.

“We want to make our department and this university a center for GIS research and advocacy,” Ramasubramanian says. “And we’re well-placed to do that.” 🌍

New Faculty, New Ideas

"I've had a bit of a winding story," **Melissa Beresford** says by way of explaining the 14-year gap between receiving her B.A. in urban studies and planning from UC San Diego and starting her first faculty position in the Department of Anthropology as an assistant professor.

Her first stop was as an academic advisor at UC Berkeley, where a professor listened to her talk about her interest in pursuing a graduate degree in history and corrected her: "You're not a historian," she said. "You're an anthropologist."

"I had never taken an anthropology class, but I was really interested in understanding how people's cultures and values shape their ideas about the world," Beresford says. "And I realized I could talk to living people instead of sitting in an archive reading documents left by dead people."

That led to a master's in social science from the University of Chicago and another detour. Unsure whether she wanted to pursue a doctorate and life "in the ivory tower" or engage in a career with more societal impact, she began work in journalism. However, upon moving to Arizona in order for her husband to pursue his doctorate in history at Arizona State University, she was impressed with the engaged and impactful anthropological research being conducted at ASU's School of Human Evolution and Social Change, and in 2012 she began her Ph.D. in anthropology there.

As an economic anthropologist, Beresford investigates how people respond to economic and resource insecurity, focusing largely on water insecurity.

"The questions I ask are about how people acquire the things they need to survive outside of traditional market exchange," Beresford says.

Her research has taken her to Cape Town, South Africa, where she looked at how entrepreneurs adapt to scarcity. She is currently working with an international team of scholars to investigate how people in Puerto Rico got water in the aftermath of Hurricane Maria. 🌟



Jack Caraves, a new assistant professor in the Women, Gender, and Sexuality Studies Program in the Department of Sociology and Interdisciplinary Social Sciences, feels at home at San José State.

The child of parents who migrated from Mexico, Caraves was among the first in the family to graduate from high school and attend college, earning a bachelor's degree in Latin American & Latino Studies from UC Santa Cruz and a master's degree and Ph.D. in Chicana and Chicano Studies from UCLA.

"I can relate to many of the students in terms of being low-income, first generation," Caraves says. "They're the types of students that I want to engage with and empower and learn with every day."

Caraves' research has focused on the way social expectations of gender marginalize and threaten Latinx transgender people, contributing to harassment, violence and discrimination in employment, housing and health care, and how Trans Latinxs find strength and resilience in community, spirituality and activism. Caraves spent several years studying the Los Angeles Trans Latinx community, surveying 130 people and doing in-depth personal interviews.

Another aspect of Caraves' research looks at how gender policing — the way family and institutions communicate and enforce binary gender roles.

Caraves, who identifies as trans and nonbinary, hopes to add an understanding of the unique experiences of marginalized minorities to the transgender studies discipline.

"When we think about queer studies or we think about gender studies, often racialized minoritized communities are nonexistent in the literature," Caraves says. "So while there's a growth in Trans Studies, there's not a discussion of what it means to be a Trans Latino or a migrant. My work becomes really important because it's shedding light on this community that very much exists and is highly vulnerable to abuses and is often dehumanized in egregious ways." 🌟



How do people attracted to objects tell their story? How can medical providers be more present? And how do certain invasive plants take hold? New members of the College of Social Sciences faculty are delving into those questions and a host of other ideas as they begin the Fall semester.

Akilah R. Carter-

Francique has taught at the college level for a dozen years, ever since she earned her Ph.D. in sports studies from the University of Georgia-Athens in 2008.

She was an assistant professor of Sport Management at Texas A&M University, and most recently an assistant professor in the Department of Health and Kinesiology at Prairie View A&M University.

Her appointment as associate professor in the Department of African American Studies at San José State is the first time she has taught in a department outside of sports and exercise, but not the first time she has shared her work in the interdisciplinary field — and she thinks it is a perfect fit.

“I say I do ‘me-search,’ Carter-Francique says. “My doctoral degree is in Sports Studies, but I also had a strong emphasis of African American studies, desiring to understand myself within the African American diaspora experience.”

As a kid with asthma growing up in Topeka, Kan., she was encouraged to run in order to learn how to control her breathing. Her older brother was a member of a traveling track club and it didn’t take long for her parents to think of a way to keep younger sister occupied at meets. “They said, ‘We may as well put her in something,’” Carter-Francique says. She started running competitively at age 5. Her efforts eventually allowed her to attend the University of Houston, where she earned undergraduate degrees in kinesiology-exercise science and psychology, and competed on the track and field team, specializing in the 100-meter hurdles and the long jump.

Carter-Francique is also serving as the executive director of SJSU’s Institute for the Study of Sport, Society, and Social Change (see cover story). She will teach her first course in the spring semester — “The Triumph & Tragedy of Black Athletes in U.S. History.” 🌀



Kristen Cole, who was raised in Tehachapi, Calif., had no plans when she graduated from high school. Her father told her she could start college or start paying rent and she chose the first option, allowing her dad to sign her up at Bakersfield Community College and even pick her classes for her.

It was an introduction to political science class that sparked Cole’s interest and soon she was in love with education.

She spent three years at Bakersfield and then transferred to San Diego State to major in Communication Studies with the intent of teaching public speaking.

“My dream was always to come back and teach in the Cal State system,” Cole says.

With an M.A. from Colorado State University and a Ph.D. from The University of New Mexico, Cole is a new assistant professor in the Department of Communication Studies.

Cole comes to San José State after three years on the faculty at Indiana University-Purdue University Columbus in Indiana and three years at Denison University in Ohio.

The move to SJSU allows her to specialize in the emerging subfield of critical health communication.

“I’m specifically interested in the ways marginalized communities communicate identity and negotiate agency,” Cole says.

That has meant a broad range of research topics. Her doctoral study was on objectum sexuality — people who form loving and sexual ties to objects — and how the Internet has allowed them to form a community and frame their experience and communicate about their desires without being stigmatized.

Her research has also looked at reframing and understanding communication to be inclusive of neurodiversity, such as autism, rather than framing it as a communication deficit.

And she is studying how friends and family members frame stigmatized death due to drug overdose and suicide in obituaries and how they use the platform to advocate and create networks. 🌀



It's an all-too-common experience in the clinic or doctor's office: The provider seems rushed and spends much of the brief visit typing notes into a computer.

Marie Haverfield, a new assistant professor in the Department of Communication Studies who examines communication patterns in high-risk settings, has focused recently on how health care providers can be more present during patient interactions.



"My work often has this intersection between interpersonal communication and health communication – looking at health communication and relationships," she says. For her postdoc at Stanford University, Haverfield examined communication between health care providers, patients and their families, and with a team of researchers developed five strategies clinicians can practice to be more present. They range from gathering themselves before entering the exam room so they're fresh and focused to looking up from that computer screen and making eye contact.

And it's not just about good feelings.

"For a patient, understanding the information they're receiving and coping with that information, that's going to have implications on how well that patient manages their own health and how proactive they are in taking care of themselves and adhering to what their provider's asking them to do," Haverfield says.

Haverfield received an undergraduate degree from CSU Long Beach, and a master's from CSU Los Angeles. She did her Ph.D. at Rutgers University.

Much of her graduate work involved communication among families of parents with an alcohol use disorder, especially the role communication played in resilience among their children.

After a brief detour to Capitol Records, where she did brand marketing for stars like Katy Perry, Haverfield became what is known as a "freeway flyer," an adjunct who teaches at community colleges and CSUs around Southern California.

"It was a lot of juggling and definitely a great experience," Haverfield says. "But I am so excited to have an office." 🌟

Before she became an ecological researcher, **Metha Klock** spent time on two environmental restoration projects in the Bay Area. In her first, she worked in a native plant nursery at the Marin Headlands in the Golden Gate National Recreation Area, coaxing native grasses and shrubs to maturity in an effort to restore the rugged coastline to its natural habitat. In the second, she spent her days removing invasive plants like poison hemlock and yellow starthistle from the Pearson–Arastradero Preserve in the city of Palo Alto.



Klock, a new assistant professor in the Department of Environmental Studies, grew up in Fairfax in Marin County and was attracted to an academic career that would feed her love of hiking and the outdoors and help her understand the mechanisms that allow invasive plants to thrive.

"That's the big million-dollar question," Klock says, "and it's not answered yet."

But she is working on it. After earning a liberal arts degree from Sarah Lawrence College, she got her M.S. in forestry and Ph.D. in biological sciences from Louisiana State University and did her postdoctoral work in sustainable agriculture at Cornell University.

Much of Klock's scholarship has been associated with the *Acacia*, a genus of plants native to Australia of which certain species have become invasive in California. Acacias are in the legume family and Klock has grown thousands of the trees in an effort to understand their symbiotic relationship with nitrogen-fixing soil bacteria called rhizobia.

Her conclusion? "They're what we call more promiscuous," Klock says. "They can associate with more strains of this bacteria, and that gives them a ready source of fertilizer — and that contributes to them being more successful."

Knowing that, Klock says, the best mechanism to keep non-native plants from becoming invasive may seem simple but is ultimately complex: "It's not to introduce them," she says. 🌟

Christine Ma-Kellams

was in middle school, the dutiful daughter of Asian parents studying hard and already thinking about the SAT test, when her father gave her a copy of Daniel Goleman's book "Emotional Intelligence."

The book posits that the ability to recognize, understand and manage our own emotions and understand their effect on others is more important to success than intellectual ability.

The book prompted her to begin to understand the role culture plays in how people think, feel and behave.

"I loved the book," Ma-Kellams says. "It transformed my life."

Understanding emotional intelligence didn't cause Ma-Kellams to lighten up on her SAT prep, but it helped put her on the path toward a career spent examining the role social psychology plays in all aspects of life and society.

A new assistant professor in the Department of Psychology, Ma-Kellams has a stable of published research papers on topics as diverse as whether science majors tend to be more liberal than those in the humanities or whether attractive men and women are less committed to marriage.

Those relatable topics have also attracted media interest. The VICE headline on her attractiveness study was "Hot People Suck at Long Term Relationships," and Ma-Kellams has been quoted in the Wall Street Journal and the Boston Globe.

Born in China, Ma-Kellams moved around university towns in the U.S. as her father, a Ph.D. in inorganic chemistry, found teaching positions. She settled in California and studied psychology and Spanish literature at UC Berkeley, then received her Ph.D. in social psychology from UC Santa Barbara and did a postdoc at Harvard until 2014.

She most recently taught at University of La Verne in southern California.

Settled now in the Bay Area with her family, Ma-Kellams is excited to teach at a school she calls "the most diverse campus I've ever been part of." 🌍



It won't insult **Alexis Pulos**, a visiting associate professor in the Department of Communication Studies for the 2019-2020 academic year if you accuse him of playing games.

Pulos plays all sorts of games — video games, board games, card games. When he moved to the Bay Area from his home in Cincinnati, he had to pack up his collection of 200 board games.

Pulos has been playing games since he was a child and studying them as a media text — just as others study film or literature or other cultural artifacts — since he was in grad school at Colorado State University.

Whether it was playing board and card games while camping with his family or wearing out the new Nintendo or PlayStation with his brother, "For me," Pulos says, "games were the focus of quality time with people."

At CSU he got some pushback from a professor about whether games were important enough to warrant a field of study. Nevertheless, he did his thesis on video games.

"I really tried to explore the ways that games are just like any other cultural artifact, and they have deep, rich cultural meaning built into them," Pulos says.

At The University of New Mexico, where he got his Ph.D. in 2013, Pulos wrote his dissertation on two very different games, FarmVille 2 and Elder Scrolls V: Skyrim — one concerned with farming and one concerned with fighting.

Pulos looks at dominant trends in game design and analyzes them as frameworks for understanding a player's self and the world.

Gaming is one of the largest entertainment industries in the world and part of the lives of billions of people. And, Pulos says, "Games historically have been a significant resource to understand the world around us. They're as significant as any other cultural artifact that society produces." 🌍



Taking It To The Streets

When research and communities connect, change happens

Russian bots and trolls disrupt the 2016 presidential election. The Black Lives Matter movement ignites in the streets of Ferguson, Mo.

And San Francisco 49ers quarterback Colin Kaepernick takes a knee during the national anthem.

None of those events would seem to have a direct connection to San José State University's College of Social Sciences, where students work toward their degrees and faculty push the edges of academic knowledge. But those social issues and others just as important are at the center of three research centers growing in Washington Square.

A university campus can act like a cloistered haven from the non-scholarly world outside, or it can build a bridge between scholarship and all of the complexities of the human existence.

With leadership from the College of Social Sciences, the research centers — one in the works, one brand-new and one well underway — opt for the latter approach and aim to build a two-way street between academic research and some of the world's most pressing problems.

They center on human rights (the Human Rights Institute), the intersection of technology and democracy (the Technology and Democracy Initiative) and athletics and culture (the Institute for the Study of Sport, Society, and Social Change).

THE HUMAN RIGHTS INSTITUTE

William T. Armaline, an associate professor in the Department of Sociology and Interdisciplinary Social Sciences, who will direct the Human Rights Institute when it officially launches later this year, draws a direct line from intellectual pursuit inside the academy and on-the-ground work for social change.

The concept of praxis, an academic term that refers to the relationship between scholarship and action, will be front and center of the Human Rights Institute, Armaline says.

"Praxis suggests that we as scholars should be learning from experiences of activists on the ground who are actually doing the hard, dirty work of this change and of confronting problems and figuring out solutions," Armaline says. "And at the same time, our scholarship and research and data should inform and

be in conversation with those same people as well, in this kind of reciprocal relationship. That's how public intellectualism works best to serve the public."

"We are going to produce the best possible scholarship from our faculty, from our students, and in partnership with our community partners in such a way that not only forwards intellectual pursuits but informs public policy and practice."

Armaline came to SJSU in 2007 from the University of Connecticut, where he helped build UConn's respected Human Rights Institute.

SJSU ANNUAL HUMAN RIGHTS LECTURE EVENT



HUMAN RIGHTS, RACISM, & THE POLICE STATE

APRIL 16, 2015 • THURSDAY

- SOLITARY CELL ART INSTALLATIONS (12:00-5:00 SU RAISED PATIO) from the Prisoner Hunger Strike Solidarity Coalition
- LUNCH PANEL (12:00-1:00, MLK 225) with community organizers from Ferguson, Chicago, and the greater Bay Area
- WORKSHOP (12:30-2:30, STUDENT UNION RAISED PATIO) by the HipHop Chess Federation
- A KNOW YOUR RIGHTS PRESENTATION (1:30-2:30, MLK 225) by WeCopWatch
- TALKING CIRCLE (3:30-5:00, MLK 225) where students can engage with local and national organizers to build on current movements to end mass incarceration and police violence.

Keynote speech by

DR. ANGELA DAVIS, UC SANTA CRUZ
INEQUALITY AND THE ROLE OF RESISTANCE

SJSU, Morris Dailey Auditorium

Keynote is part of the Social Innovators Speakers Series
Pre-program performance by Jaliya

Students free w/ ID, community members suggested
donation \$5-10 at the door.

Visit humanrightsjsu.eventbrite.com for your ticket!
For more information see www.sjsu.edu/mosaic

KEYNOTE @ 7:00 PM
DOORS AT 6:30 @ MORRIS DAILEY

SPONSORED BY:

SCC Office Of Human Relations, SJSU Dept. of Justice Studies, Dept. of African American Studies, SJSU Associated Students
Partial funding provided by SJSU Fund, Chicana/Latina and African American Student Success Task Force

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At SJSU he began creating classes and building a minor in human rights. He also formed and directed the university's Human Rights Working Group and Collaborative, which crosses colleges and majors to connect SJSU faculty involved in human rights research and teaching.

"We see human rights for what it is — a truly multi-disciplinary field," Armaline says. "Any serious human rights issue that confronts us really requires people from all over the disciplines to address. There is room for hard scientists and philosophers and social scientists and educators and health professionals. That is the model we are trying to build here at San José State."

While it is in the final stage of approval by the University, Armaline and colleagues have been building its foundation.



They launched the human rights minor in 2012 and in 2014 started an annual lecture series on human rights issues, kicking off with prominent scholar-activist Angela Davis as a keynote speaker. Workshops highlighted human rights research and

practice, engaging the campus and broader community in cutting-edge issues related to social justice and criminal justice reform.

The Human Rights Institute will continue those two components — education and public programming — and will

also launch a Human Rights News Network under the leadership of Halima Kazem in the Journalism and Mass Communications Department.

Scott Myers-Lipton, a professor of sociology, will lead students in community-based organizing projects. Edith Kinney, an associate professor in the Department of Justice Studies, rounds out the team as legal coordinator.

Students and faculty will continue to support and try to have an impact on local human rights struggles using human rights research and legal standards.

"We already have successful projects spanning immigration to criminal justice reform to housing and poverty," Armaline says. "You name it, we've been in it. What we'll be doing after our launch is really expanding and deepening that work with a full budget and institutional thrust behind us."

San José State has a rich history of activism and human rights engagement, from Spartan sprinters John Carlos and Tommie Smith raising their fists in a black power salute on the podium in the 1968 Olympics to SJSU students helping César Chávez organize the United Farm Workers in the early 1960s.

Armaline is aware of the heavy history and intends to respect and continue the tradition.

"We are very much aware of that history and those legacies," he says. "We are actively trying to build upon that reputation and legacy."

If successful, the institute will see its scholarship play a critical, measurable role in policies and practices around issues threatening human rights in San José, across the nation and even the world.

"We're very serious about pursuing the application of human rights discourse to solve human rights problems that confront the population that we are literally charged to serve, while also participating in national and international conversations that are incredibly important," Armaline says. "If my email and phone are any sign, we are up to our eyeballs in issues and work to be done."

THE TECHNOLOGY AND DEMOCRACY INITIATIVE

The idea for a center at San José State that would address how advances in technology affect democracy has been around for years, but the timing has never been more critical to bring



together tech developers, politicians and university scholars to start a conversation about how technology can further and cripple democracy.

“Really what we’re concerned about is the increasing use of technological tools in new

ways that are potentially damaging — or at least changing — the democratic process,” says **Melinda Jackson**, a scholar on civic engagement and political participation in American politics and the chair of the Political Science Department.

Jackson, who is working with colleagues to organize the Technology and Democracy Initiative, aims to bring together factions that aren’t talking to one another, but should be. The goal is to launch the new center in 2021.

“We want to create a center on campus focused on the intersection of technology and democracy and, given that we are here in the heart of Silicon Valley, this seems like the ideal place to focus on these issues,” Jackson says. “We plan to bring together the tech world, the campaign world and the world of academics and scholarship to figure out how to navigate this brave new world in ways that are less damaging to democracy and more empowering.”

On the one hand, technological tools and social media can be of great benefit for information sharing, getting people engaged with issues, finding like-minded people to connect with, organizing, contacting public officials and exercising citizenship rights.

“But on the flip side,” Jackson says, “what we’ve been seeing, particularly in the 2016 election cycle, in 2018 and now in the 2020 campaign, is that these tools can also be used to manipulate, to spread misinformation and to spread divisions within society that lead to cynicism and mistrust that can actually cause people to disengage from politics.”

Engineers and developers in Silicon Valley operate in a different world than people working on political campaigns or other facets of the traditional political process.

“Sometimes these tools are developed in a vacuum without considering the policy and ethical implications, the potential downsides for the democratic process,” Jackson says.

“Democracy is more fragile and vulnerable than we may think. It depends on citizens being informed and engaged. This new center can serve as a resource for the tech community to gain access to some of the academic people who have been thinking about this.

“What we’d like to do is create a space to bring these worlds into conversation with each other,” Jackson says.

The third party to the conversation will be scholars who are studying the effects of new ways of spreading and processing information and students who will deepen their critical analysis of online information through digital media literacy education.

The spark for the latest initiative came from two former Spartans – Les Francis and Joe Trippi — who have deep roots in Washington, D.C. Francis, who graduated from SJSU in 1965, went on to serve as deputy assistant to President Jimmy Carter and deputy White House chief of staff. Trippi, who studied aerospace engineering at SJSU, managed Gov. Howard Dean’s 2004 campaign for president and was the deputy national campaign manager for U.S. Rep. Richard Gephardt’s 1988 presidential campaign.

The two Beltway veterans will help the Technology and Democracy Initiative involve campaigns in its work, Jackson says.

“There’s a growing interest in the government world, the tech world and the campaign world,” she says. “And a real sense of urgency related to what we’ve seen happening over the past couple election cycles. We think there’s more of a need than ever and the timing is right.”

THE INSTITUTE FOR THE STUDY OF SPORT, SOCIETY, AND SOCIAL CHANGE

New Associate Professor of African American Studies **Akilah Carter-Francique** is also the new executive director of the Institute for The Study of Sport, Society, and Social Change, which is housed in the Provost's Office — Academic Affairs.

Since its launch in 2017, the Institute has adopted the slogan “Words to Action” as it leads a national discussion about race and gender in sports. The timing and place of the institute could not have been better, as issues of race, free speech and gender equality bubble up in the world of professional sports. For Carter-Francique, a former NCAA athlete in track and field at the



University of Houston and a lifelong sports enthusiast, the mission of the institute is never far from her thoughts, academic research or lived experience.

Carter-Francique earned a B.S. in kinesiology - exercise science and another in psychology

from the University of Houston, and a master's of education in kinesiology — exercise science and a Ph.D. in sports studies from the University of Georgia-Athens.

Her parents were both K-12 educators in Topeka, Kan., and *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka*, the U.S. Supreme Court case that decided that state laws allowing segregated public schools were unconstitutional, was never far from the family's

thoughts. “Knowing about *Brown* was something that was very integral in my upbringing,” she says. “From a research perspective I cover things from the perspective of my initial experiential interest in black female college athletes to black athletes in sports at all levels. But overall, I’m interested in girls and women in sports, issues of racial and gender diversity, and ultimately issues of social change.”

Last October, on the 50th anniversary of the 1968 Olympics, the Institute brought together figures from the Olympic Project for Human Rights, established by SJSU sociology alumni Harry Edwards and Ken Noel to organize a boycott of the Olympics by black athletes to protest racism in the U.S.

Sprinters Tommie Smith and John Carlos, who raised their fists in a black power salute on the medal podium, Edwards, and other prominent civil rights activists and sports figures gathered to reflect on the past and look toward the future issues the Institute was formed to address.

“I was glad to be present for that program as a then-faculty affiliate. The Words to Action programs provide an opportunity to learn from experts and heroic figures about issues like this historic event. We don’t necessarily hear their stories anymore and understand how it connects to what’s going on present day. What I’m hoping is that those stories or narratives and the narratives of others that participate with the Institute town halls and educational and research initiatives will serve as a living example and a bridge for addressing current and future issues,” Carter-Francique says.

“For example, when we are thinking about Title IX, yes it was enacted in 1972, but today 47 years later, we’ve got Megan Rapinoe (of the U.S. women’s national soccer team) still talking about equal pay. This conversation is not new and it’s been something that’s spanned time and we’re continuing to have these very relevant conversations regarding equality and equity. I think the Institute serves as a platform to be knowledgeable about our past, so we can understand our present context, and thus make change for our future. These challenges still exist. They’re not over, or as Dr. Edwards says, “There are no final victories.”” 🌍

College of Social Sciences

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On the Cover

Harry Edwards, left, speaking to
a crowd of students during
campus protests.

Cover photos: SJSU Digital Collection

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