



## The California State University

### OFFICE OF THE CHANCELLOR

Dear Colleagues,

I am very pleased to inform you that Michelle Kiss has accepted the position of chief of staff in my office, effective June 1, 2021.

For the past 10 years, Michelle has served with distinction in several important roles in the CSU's Office of the Chancellor, including her current position as trustee secretariat. In this role, she is responsible for strategic, high-level executive support for the 25-member Board of Trustees in advancing systemwide policy goals and priorities.

During the past five years as trustee secretariat, Michelle served as chief liaison between the Board and system leadership, presidents, government officials, and various internal and external constituents. Her professional experience will be foundational to the chief of staff position, which also requires the utmost integrity, flexibility and ability to work well with a wide range of people.

While serving as a campus president and now as chancellor, I have worked closely with Michelle and witnessed her interactions with CSU trustees, presidents and others, and have been consistently impressed with her professionalism, judgment and exceptional organizational skills.

I am confident that Michelle will be similarly effective in my office, providing a high level of analytical, strategic planning and implementation support with respect to current and emerging issues and opportunities. In addition to supporting executive searches and serving on and coordinating the work of the Chancellor's Council and the Chancellor's Senior Leadership Council, she will oversee all operations in my office, including the operating budget and financial activities, operational and human resources functions, and administrative services.

As a transfer student from Long Beach City College, Michelle went on to earn two bachelor's degrees in political science (with a concentration in international relations) and in sociocultural anthropology from the University of California, Los Angeles, and a master's degree in public administration with a focus on urban affairs from Cal State Long Beach. The granddaughter of immigrants from Colombia and Hungary, her first connection to the CSU was as a pre-school child while her parents were finishing their degrees at Long Beach.

You may recall an announcement in October 2020 about Karen Nakai's gracious decision to delay her planned retirement from the CSU in order to support Chancellor Emeritus White and me during the transition between our administrations. I am grateful to and thank Karen for her consummate professionalism and valuable assistance through the end of June 2021. This will allow Michelle a full month of overlap with Karen, ensuring a smooth transition.

With Michelle's imminent move to this new role, the search for a new trustee secretariat will begin shortly. Chair Kimbell and I encourage qualified internal and external candidates to apply for this important position.

Please join me in congratulating Michelle on her new role as chief of staff.

Sincerely,

Chancellor  
Joseph I. Castro