



Though the new school year is just around the corner, I wanted to take a moment to honor the end of [Disability Pride Month](#) in July, which commemorates the 1990 passage of the American Disabilities Act.

Our campus in particular has a long history in the disability justice movement. Philosopher [Anita Silvers](#) played a crucial role in making California college campuses accessible in the 1980s and 1990s, and in 2015 historian Catherine Kudlick through the [Longmore Institute](#) mounted an exhibit called “[Patient No More: People with Disabilities Securing Civil Rights](#)” on the 1977 take-over of the San Francisco Federal Building. The Black Panther Party and the Gay Men’s Butterfly Brigade assisted with the 26-day occupation. Today, the Longmore institute continues to host the longest running disability film festival called [Superfest](#). With such a legacy and supportive environment, I once conspired with Wendy Tobias, our associate director of [Disability Programs and Resource Center](#) at the time, to advance SF State as a destination campus for disabled students. While the public face of disability often appears white and in a wheelchair, Longmore Institute Director Emily Beitiks pointed out that at least a third and up to one half of unarmed Black people gunned down by police are disabled. The [Urban Institute](#) has called for the need to center intersectionality to reduce harm.

I have been inspired by our faculty and staff who have been actively engaging in the success of our disabled students and staff. In winter 2020, Asian American Studies faculty member Anantha Sudhakar ran a workshop on how to [design a course centering disability justice](#). In 2023 we began offering a 12-unit interdisciplinary [minor in Disability Studies](#) that draws courses from across campus. During the CSU’s Juneteenth symposium this summer, Sacha Joseph-Mathews, Vice President of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion at Stanislaus State, detailed how to best incorporate [neuro diverse staff](#).

I write all this as a person who identifies as disabled myself. Many of you already know that I have a congenital heart condition, have undergone more than a handful of procedures since birth, and grasp each day as it comes. I feel bad about the worry I cause those around me and remain even more grateful that this campus has given me space to contribute meaningful work in between my medical commitments. I am moved by the countless people I meet managing mobility impairments, early arthritis, or type 1 diabetes with resilience and humor. From those of you able-bodied, I have seen great care and generosity as you have supported aging parents and ailing siblings or partners. As we begin

this new school year, let's continue to be a place of work and learning that supports one another, removes barriers for each other, and uplifts all of our successes in the midst of what will likely be a tumultuous year.



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