

THIRD ANNUAL

NORTHERN CALIFORNIA

# AUTISM

# SYMPOSIUM

SEPT. 20 & 21, 2019 • CHICO STATE

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# Welcome

## WELCOME TO THE 3<sup>RD</sup> ANNUAL

Northern California Autism Symposium. California State University, Chico is proud to host this event and we are pleased to welcome you to the symposium, our campus, and our community. The purpose of this event is to bring high-quality presenters who are experts in their professions within the greater field of Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD), as well as individuals with ASD who are experts in their own right, to the North State. It is our hope that families, professionals, and students will benefit from the information presented over the next two days and incorporate it in their lives and current or future professions.

In this program you'll find the symposium schedule, featured presenter information, and presentation descriptions. Each day we will have multiple concurrent presentation sessions. For each session, choose a presentation of interest and note its time and location. If you have difficulty locating a room, let one of our event staff know and they will gladly assist you.

We gratefully acknowledge the CSU, Chico College of Communication and Education, the CSU, Chico Department of Kinesiology, Far Northern Regional Center, and The Yellow Door for their support of this year's event.

## Some important event details:

- Parking is available at either of the campus' multi-story garages or on the streets adjacent to campus. Permits are required to park in campus garages on Friday. Please carefully read instructions posted in the garages so that you will not be ticketed. Additional information is provided on the back of the program.
  - Your name badge is your identification at the conference. Please wear it at all times so we know who we're saying hello to!
  - Wireless internet access is available during your time on campus. Please follow these steps:
    1. Select the "csuchico-guest" wireless network
    2. Launch your device's web browser
    3. If prompted, complete the online form to receive your username and password via text message
  - A quiet space is available throughout the symposium. For location details please see the registration desk.
  - Lunch each day is on your own. We are just steps from Downtown Chico and its wide variety of restaurants. Downtown guides are available at the registration desk. On day two, you are welcome to bring your lunch back to Colusa Hall 100 to watch a screening of *Asperger's Are Us* about the first comedy troupe composed of people diagnosed with Asperger's Syndrome.
- If you have any questions stop by the registration desk in Colusa Hall, the Continuing Education office, or ask one of our event staff or volunteers. You can also call Continuing Education at 530-898-6105. In case of an emergency, University Police at 530-898-5555, or 911 from any campus phone.

Enjoy the symposium!  
The Regional & Continuing Education  
Conference Services Team

# PLENARY SESSION SPEAKER — ALEX PLANK



## Alex Plank

WrongPlanet.net

**Alex Plank** is the 33 year old autistic person behind

WrongPlanet.net, the incredibly popular site for individuals with Asperger's Syndrome and Autism. Both Alex and Wrong Planet have been featured by CNN, *The New York Times*, *The Washington Post*, *The Los Angeles Times*, and *Good Morning America*. Wrong Planet has more than 100,000 registered members and its discussion forums contain millions of messages.

Alex graduated from George Mason University with a degree in Film and Video Studies. Alex's areas of interest and expertise include public speaking, the Internet, writing, directing, and filmmaking. Alex lives in Beverly Hills, California, and is also a consultant and actor who is known for his work on *The Good Doctor*, *The Bridge*, and *Love at First Kiss*.

# FRIDAY SCHEDULE — SEPTEMBER 20, 2019

<b>Check-In &amp; Coffee</b>	<b>7:30–8:00 AM</b> Colusa Hall 100
<b>Welcome</b> Dr. Angela Trethewey   <i>Dean, College of Communication and Education</i>	<b>8:00–8:15 AM</b> Colusa Hall 100
<b>If You Build It, They Will (Actually!) Come</b> Dr. Josephine Blagrove	<b>8:15–9:00 AM</b> Colusa Hall 100
<b>Concurrent Presentations: Session 1</b>	<b>9:15–10:45 AM</b>
<b>Evidence-based Practices to Support Inclusion for Students with ASD *</b> Dr. Maggie Daugherty   Liz Fuller	BMU 210
<b>Physical Activity and Autism: Research Updates and Building Skills in Home and Community Settings</b> Dr. Josephine Blagrove   Dr. Carli Ross	BMU 203
<b>Potential Pregnancy Prevention Pathways for Autism Spectrum Disorder</b> Dr. Rebecca Schmidt	Colusa Hall 100A
<b>Social Narratives</b> Jacqueline Campos	Colusa Hall 110
<b>Task Analysis and Video Modeling</b> Joe Comiskey	Colusa Hall 100B
<b>Concurrent Presentations: Session 2</b>	<b>11:00 AM–12:30 PM</b>
<b>Evidence-based Practices to Support Inclusion for Students with ASD *</b> Dr. Maggie Daugherty   Liz Fuller	BMU 210
<b>Functional Communication Training</b> Jacqueline Campos	Colusa Hall 110
<b>Learn the Signs. Act Early: Developmental Milestones and Red Flags</b> Mark Pfaff, Jr.	Colusa Hall 100B
<b>Research Updates from the UC Davis MIND Institute: Brain Imaging Studies of Autism</b> Dr. Christine Wu Nordahl	Colusa Hall 100A
<b>Lunch</b> (On Your Own)	<b>12:30–1:45 PM</b>
<b>Concurrent Presentations: Session 3</b>	<b>1:45–3:15 PM</b>
<b>Employment for Autistic Adults in a Neurodiverse Workplace: A Website of Resources *</b> Betina Wildhaber	BMU 210
<b>Finding Voice for Students with ASD: Practicing Self-determination in a Virtual Reality Social Skills Simulator *</b> Dr. Aaron Koch	BMU 203
<b>Motivating Operations: Going Beyond the ABCs of Behavior</b> Tara Yarberry   Adriana Torres, M.S.	Colusa Hall 110
<b>The Future of Autistic Employment *</b> John Marble	Colusa Hall 100B
<b>Plenary Session: Alex Plank</b>	<b>3:30–4:30 PM</b> Colusa Hall 100
<b>Reception</b>	<b>4:30–5:30 PM</b> Colusa Hall 100

# SATURDAY SCHEDULE — SEPTEMBER 21, 2019

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**Check-In & Coffee** **8–8:30 AM**  
Colusa Hall 100

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**Keynote Address: Jack Robison** **8:30–10 AM**  
Colusa Hall 100

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**Concurrent Presentations: Session 1** **10:15–11:45 AM**

**Financial Planning for Families with Special Needs Children** BMU 203  
Kylee Garrettson | Mike Clark

**Preparing Students with Autism for Post-secondary Transition** BMU 210  
Terry Quinto | Charlene Corder

**A Session with Alex Plank** Colusa Hall 100  
Alex Plank

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**Lunch & A Movie** (or Lunch on Your Own) Movie in Colusa Hall 100 **11:45 AM–1:15 PM**

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**Concurrent Presentations: Session 2** **1:15 PM–2:45 PM**

**Coping with Disaster: Avoiding Burnout Through Self-care** Colusa Hall 100  
Dr. Amy Alward

**Employment for Autistic Adults in a Neurodiverse Workplace: A Website of Resources \*** BMU 210  
Betina Wildhaber

**The Future of Autistic Employment \*** BMU 203  
John Marble

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**Concurrent Presentations: Session 3** **3:00–4:30 PM**

**Finding Voice for Students with ASD: Practicing Self-determination in a Virtual Reality Social Skills Simulator \*** BMU 210  
Dr. Aaron Koch

**Morse Communication to Lessen Stress in Youth and Adults with ASD** Colusa Hall 110  
Duane E. Wyatt

**North State Trajectory: A Comprehensive Strength-based Program to Transition Youth on the Autism Spectrum** Colusa Hall 100  
Russell Rudin, Ph.D.

**A Session with Jack Robison** BMU 203  
Jack Robison

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## Lunch & A Movie

Grab a quick lunch to go and meet us back in Colusa 100 for a screening of **Asperger's Are Us!**

**Asperger's Are Us** is the first comedy troupe composed of people diagnosed with Asperger's Syndrome. They have performed over 150 original absurdist sketch shows in 10 countries since 2010. In the film, the comedy troupe of four friends prepare for a final show before its members go their separate ways.

The 2016 movie runs 80 minutes so we will start promptly at noon to try and fit in the entire film. For suggestions of where to get a quick meal, visit the registration desk in the Colusa Hall.

# KEYNOTE SPEAKER — JACK ROBISON



## Jack Robison

Speaker & Software Developer

**Jack Robison** always knew he was different but he wasn't

diagnosed with autism until he'd been raided by the ATF over a small misunderstanding about his special interest in explosives. A few years later that story became the basis for the book *Raising Cubby*, but Jack's interests shifted from organic chemistry to software engineering. In 2011 reporter Amy Harmon made his romantic life front page news in *The New York Times* with her story and ebook *Navigating Love and Autism*.

Today Jack is thriving as a software developer, cryptocurrency wizard, and cofounder of the censorship-resistant distributed media platform LBRY. He speaks on autism, neurodiversity, and the intersection of neurological diversity, creativity, and technology. He lives in western Massachusetts with his girlfriend Shannon and Pigeon the Dog.

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## **Coping with Disaster: Avoiding Burnout Through Self-care** Saturday, 1:15–2:45 PM | Colusa 100

Dr. Amy Alward | *Owner, Touch of Intention Bodywork*

Autism burnout is something most on the spectrum confront regularly over their lifetimes. Burnout is characterized by a reduction in capacity to cope with daily life or work requirements due to overload; autistic burnout results in loss of functioning life skills. Amy will share her personal case story of success and failure of managing burnout and meltdown with impeccable self-care and healthy coping mechanisms.

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## **Employment for Autistic Adults in a Neurodiverse Workplace: A Website of Resources** Friday, 1:45–3:15 PM | BMU 210 Saturday, 1:15–2:45 PM | BMU 210

Betina Wildhaber | *MA, School of Social Science, CSU, Chico*

Unemployment among autistic adults is estimated between 70% and 90%. There are lack of services to assist autistic adults with obtaining and maintaining meaningful employment. Neurodiverse work environments address barriers autistics face with employment. The website [www.NeurodiversityNetwork.net](http://www.NeurodiversityNetwork.net) serves as a tool to guide both autistic job seekers and potential employers about neurodiverse environments. It identifies several prominent neurodiverse companies that may be attractive employment options for neurodivergent job-seekers and that are models for other non-neurodiverse companies wanting to make a change. The website provides ideas on how companies can create a more inclusive work environment for autistics and neurodiverse peers. Ultimately, it is an effort to bring awareness to the need of the autistic population, and how certain adjustments can not only benefit autistics, but also neurotypical co-workers and company profits.

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## **Evidence-based Practices to Support Inclusion for Students with ASD** Friday, 9:15–10:45 AM | BMU 210 Friday, 11:00 AM–12:30 PM | BMU 210

Dr. Maggie Daugherty | *Coordinator of Special Education, Gridley Unified School District*  
Liz Fuller | *BCBA, Butte County Office of Education SELPA*

This session will explore the potential barriers to inclusion and what evidence-based practices teachers and other professionals can utilize to best support students with ASD to increase success in inclusive settings. This session will focus on both academic and behavioral supports.

### Research Project

#### **Autistic Adults as Educators: Exploring Parent Perceptions of Autistic Adult Presenters**

This study will explore how parents who have a child with ASD/who are autistic perceive the experience of being exposed to autistic adult presenters in a symposium setting.

You can participate in the study by sharing your experience in the following ways:

- Pre/post survey
- Face-to-face interview
- Phone interview

Scan the QR code to learn more and participate in the study,  
or email Josie Blagrove, [ablagrove@csuchico.edu](mailto:ablagrove@csuchico.edu).



# PRESENTATIONS [Fi—Le]

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## **Financial Planning for Families with Special Needs Children** Saturday, 10:15–11:45 AM | BMU 203

Kylee Garrettson | *New York Life Insurance Company*  
Mike Clark | *New York Life Insurance Company*

This financial session will cover the importance of basic planning pertaining to families dealing with special needs children. We will discuss four broad topics of planning that will help families understand the importance of taking control of planning for many different issues that may arise, while taking into consideration tax implications and overall economic forecast. There are many facets to consider around protecting the financial integrity of a family dealing with a special needs child. We will cover simple strategies to help families understand the importance of protecting income (both current and future replacement), investment and asset allocation for retirement, conservatorship, and estate planning.

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## **Finding Voice for Students with ASD: Practicing Self-determination in a Virtual Reality Social Skills Simulator**

Friday, 1:45–3:15 PM | BMU 203  
Saturday, 3:00–4:30 PM | BMU 210

Dr. Aaron Koch | *Assistant Professor, CSU, Chico*

Transition-aged youth with autism are met with overwhelming challenges as they navigate the path from graduation to adulthood. These students are at greater risk for anxiety, depression, and mood disorders (HHS, 2017) and only a minority ever achieve full employment or post-secondary education (Shattuck et al., 2012). A best practice to counter these pitfalls is student training in self-determination. Self-determination has been shown to increase graduation rates and employment outcomes (Wehmeyer et al., 2013). Although these interventions usually come in the form of support groups or role-play, virtual technologies have streamlined our ability to practice social skills while catering to the unique preferences and strengths of students with autism. Human-controlled virtual reality simulators offer enormous potential for skills acquisition of self-determination, including student-led IEP practice to practice goal-setting and tracking. Results from an ongoing research study will be presented.

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## **Functional Communication Training**

Friday, 11:00 AM–12:30 PM | Colusa 110

Jacqueline Campos | *SELPA Director, Glenn County Office of Education*

Functional communication training can be used to replace interfering behaviors with more appropriate and effective communicative behavior.

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## **Learn the Signs. Act Early: Developmental Milestones and Red Flags**

Friday, 11:00 AM–12:30 PM | Colusa 100B

Mark Pfaff, Jr. | *Tehama County Office of Education*

From birth to five years of age, your child should reach milestones in how he plays, learns, speaks, acts, and moves. This session will provide an introduction to the CDC's "Learn the Signs. Act Early." initiative. Track your child's development and act early if you have a concern. Many free resources and innovative tools are available.



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## **Morse Communication to Lessen Stress in Youth and Adults with ASD**

Saturday, 3:00–4:30 PM | Colusa 110

Duane E. Wyatt | *Morse Code Enthusiast & Educator*

I have Autism Spectrum Disorder and major depression. I became a veterinarian (because of my difficulties and stress involved with human interaction) and use high speed Morse code (above 30 WPM) to “stim” and as my preferred method of communication. It is a fun, challenging, safe, wholesome, self esteem-elevating way to find and keep friends in my non-threatening home environment. I will provide an informed overview of the history and current uses of Morse Code, and demonstrate using unique Morse instruments. There will also be opportunity for you to get a taste of the great fun and challenges inherent in Morse Communication by practicing sending Morse.

\*\* In addition to this session, the Morse Code exhibit and demonstrations will be available all day Saturday in Colusa 110.

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## **Motivating Operations: Going Beyond the ABCs of Behavior**

Friday, 1:45–3:15 PM | Colusa 110

Tara Yarberry | *Board Certified Behavior Analyst, Butte County Office of Education SELPA*  
Adriana Torres, M.S. | *Family Coach, Family First Solutions*

Dive deeper into your understanding of the science of behavior analysis with this look at the motivational factors that influence behavior change. Go beyond the three term contingency (Antecedent, Behavior, Consequence) in your understanding of Applied Behavior Analysis and look at factors that impact these ABCs to support meaningful behavior change. Setting events, establishing and abolishing operations, and individual preferences are key aspects of all behavior change efforts. We will discuss evidence-based practices such as Antecedent Based Intervention, Self-Monitoring, (Differential) Reinforcement, Functional Behavior Assessment, Naturalistic Intervention, Pivotal Response Training, and Visual Supports, and look specifically at how motivating operations play an important role in ensuring treatment integrity and fidelity of implementation. Training will be provided on use of preference assessments and reinforcement inventories, with take-home materials provided for all attendees.

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## **North State Trajectory: A Comprehensive Strength-based Program to Transition Youth on the Autism Spectrum**

Saturday, 3:00–4:30 PM | Colusa 100

Russell Rudin, Ph.D. | *Program Director, North State Trajectory*

North State Trajectory (NST) is a set of synergistic programs designed to prepare high school children and graduates (up to 21 years) on the autism spectrum for a meaningful STEM career. NST comes into the school during normal class time and provides technical activities that are customized to the needs and desires of each group. Students can also work on longer-term projects outside of the classroom. In designing activities, NST meets with local high-tech businesses to assess their required skill sets. Activities are then aligned with these commercial needs to provide maximum opportunity for employment. Local economic development and entrepreneurial organizations are made aware of NST, so that they might be able to find, for example, a computer programmer. The program has also teamed with local maker spaces to provide affordable access for use in student projects or for prototyping product ideas. NST currently serves Butte, Shasta, and Tehama Counties.

# PRESENTATIONS [Ph–Pr]

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## Physical Activity and Autism: Research Updates and Building Skills in Home and Community Settings

Friday, 9:15–10:45 AM | BMU 203

Dr. Josephine Blagrove | *Faculty, CSU, Chico*  
Dr. Carli Ross | *Faculty & Staff, CSU, Chico*

Children with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) are known to have deficits and delays in gross motor skills and performance. However, improvements in these areas can lead to a variety of benefits, such as increases in physical activity time, opportunity for social interactions, and confidence in playground and physical education settings. Gross motor skills can be practiced with minimal equipment and in a variety of environments outside of the school or clinical setting, including at home with parents and family members. This presentation will provide an overview of the latest research in physical activity and ASD, share a new model for autistic adult participation in physical activity, and provide creative and simple strategies for engaging in motor skills and physical activities at home.

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## Potential Pregnancy Prevention Pathways for Autism Spectrum Disorder

Friday, 9:15–10:45 AM | Colusa 100A

Dr. Rebecca Schmidt | *Associate Professor, Department of Public Health Sciences and the MIND Institute, University of California, Davis, School of Medicine*

The brain and nervous system are highly susceptible to nutritional and environmental impacts, especially during key developmental windows beginning near the time of conception. Our highly replicated work identified folic acid as a potential protective factor for autism, and our more recent pioneering findings demonstrating evidence for attenuation of associations between gestational environmental contaminant exposures and autism by maternal folic acid supplementation. These findings are congruent with both human and animal studies demonstrating maternal folic acid's ability to alter effects of environmental toxicants on the developing offspring. Similar associations were found between maternal periconceptional folic acid intake and decreased recurrence risk of autism in high-risk siblings of children with autism. Potential mechanistic pathways by which early nutritional and environmental exposures could influence autism risk and neurodevelopment more generally, could include epigenetic impacts near conception when much of the DNA methylome is erased and re-established. Shared underlying mechanisms behind these associations could inform pathways for prevention and ultimately help reduce the public health burden of autism and other neurodevelopmental disorders.

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## Preparing Students with Autism for Post-secondary Transition

Saturday, 10:15–11:45 AM | BMU 210

Terry Quinto | *Accessibility Advisor, CSU, Chico Accessibility Resource Center*  
Charlene Corder | *Accessibility Advisor, CSU, Chico Accessibility Resource Center*

Transitioning out of high school can be stressful for students on the spectrum, and for their parents and caregivers. Learn how to determine if college is the best choice for your child; how to prepare your child for their post-secondary journey; what services and accommodations are available to help support your child in college; and how your role as parent will change when your child enrolls in college.

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## Research Updates from the UC Davis MIND Institute: Brain Imaging Studies of Autism

Friday, 11:00 AM–12:30 PM | Colusa 100A

Dr. Christine Wu Nordahl | *Associate Professor, UC Davis MIND Institute*

Dr. Nordahl will present recent findings from the UC Davis MIND Institute Autism Phenome Project (APP). Initiated in 2006, the APP is a longitudinal, multidisciplinary study of children with autism. Over 400 families are participating in the study. Children are enrolled at 2-3 years of age and are followed longitudinally through middle childhood. The overarching goal is to gather sufficient biological, medical, and behavioral data to allow definition of clinically meaningful subtypes of autism. Defining subtypes of autism will hopefully better inform discoveries into underlying etiology, prognosis, and treatment options for children with autism.

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## Social Narratives

Friday, 9:15–10:45 AM | Colusa 110

Jacqueline Campos | *SELPA Director, Glenn County Office of Education*

Learners with ASD often struggle with social interactions. These learners respond less frequently to social initiations and often engage in shorter interactions with adults and peers. To assist learners with navigating these challenging situations, social narratives use text and images to highlight important aspects of social situations.

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## Task Analysis and Video Modeling

Friday, 9:15–10:45 AM | Colusa 100B

Joe Comiskey | *Psychologist/Program Specialist, CAPTAIN/Trinity County Office of Education*

This interactive session will introduce and consider the application of two evidenced-based practices: task analysis and video modeling. Participants will learn the steps involved with analyzing a task, practice the steps, and apply them to a situation. The concept of task analysis will then be combined with the practice of video modeling, in which participants will learn about the needed content and the necessary steps involved with creating a teaching video.

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## The Future of Autistic Employment

Friday, 1:45–3:15 PM | Colusa 100B

John Marble | *Founder, Pivot Neurodiversity*

Saturday, 1:15–2:45 PM | BMU 203

Only 13% of autistic adults in the United States have had employment in an integrated community setting at any point over the past year. This is a statistic which has not changed in more than a decade despite hundreds of millions of dollars spent. Why? New research, insight, and approaches are now providing a frame which allows us to break through this statistic and improve employment outcomes. This session will share the vision, common approaches, and practical examples of success from factories, farms, tech centers like Silicon Valley, and from other countries as we shape a more productive path to increase autistic employment.

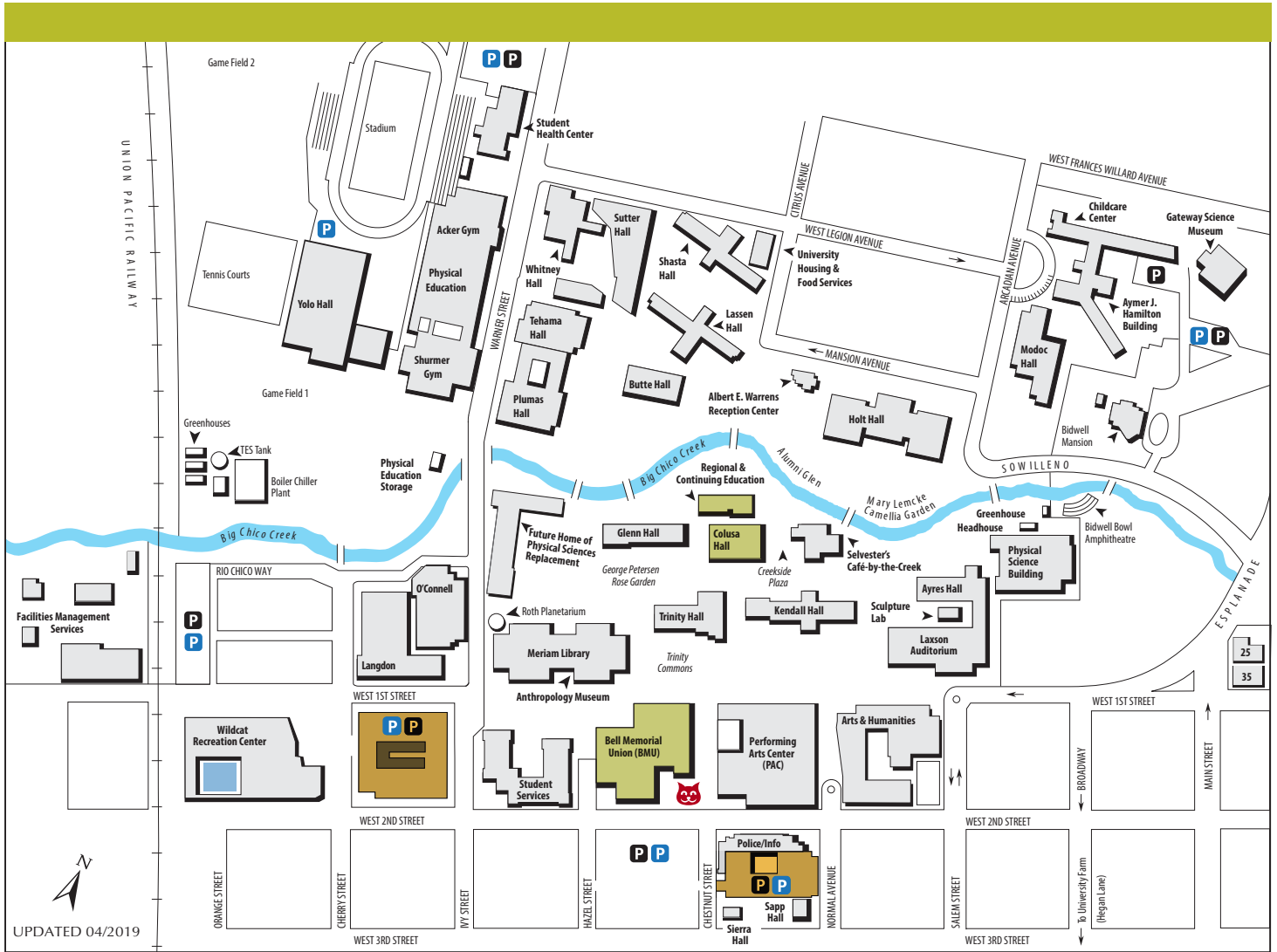








# CSU, CHICO CAMPUS



## Campus Parking Options:

**Friday:** Parking is available in either of the campus' multi-story garages in any open space marked G or FS with an hourly permit. Rates are \$1 per hour. Please carefully read instructions posted in the garages for instructions so that you will not be ticketed.

The blue **P** symbols denote accessible parking areas. Both a CSUC parking permit and a DMV plate/placard are required to park in the **P** accessible parking areas.

**Saturday:** Free parking is allowed in any campus garage or lot.

## City Parking:

Free and metered street parking is available south of campus. Most metered spaces are 50 cents per hour on Fridays, and are free on Saturdays.

## Thirsty?

There are water fountains / bottle fillers in many campus locations. Bring your own bottle with you to stay hydrated.

## Photo Opp!



Take your picture with Rue, our bronze Wildcat mascot statue in front of the BMU.

## Need Help or Information?

- Visit the conference registration desk in Colusa Hall
- Call the Continuing Education office at 898-6105
- Call University Police at 898-5555
- In an emergency, call 911

**Regional & Continuing Education**

CHICO STATE ENTERPRISES