

HERITAGE SOCIETY LUNCHEON WELCOME REMARKS  
PRESIDENT MARY A. PAPA ZIAN  
OCTOBER 31, 2017

Thank you.

Hello, everyone! Happy Halloween! Anyone in a costume today?

Well— it is a *treat* to see all of you again.

Last year’s Heritage Society recognition luncheon—which came within few months of my arrival—was my first opportunity to meet many of you.

I said then, and want to reiterate today, that it warms my heart to be with such dedicated, stalwart supporters of San José State.

Without you, many students’ dreams of a quality, life-changing education would go unfulfilled.

All of our donors are deeply appreciated, but you are uniquely thoughtful—and uncommonly generous. I think a Spartan round of applause for all that you do is in order. Yes?

A year ago, I shared some reflections from my early months as your president. Today, I’m your “warm up act”!

And I am delighted to take on that role. Today, you'll hear an update from Marie Tuite, who since we last met has been permanently appointed as our director of athletics.

She also will introduce you to our new head football coach, Brent Brennan. I don't want to steal her thunder, but trust me—Brent is a star in the making.

I think it is important that you know what Marie and her team are doing to set forth a clear path forward for Spartan athletics.

More than that, I want you to see how committed they are—and how committed we *all* are—to equipping student-athletes for successful lives.

We want to win on the field. Some of our fall teams are having great seasons. But we aren't—nor do we aspire to be—a “sports factory.”

We are, however, committed to helping provide every student-athlete—and all students, for that matter—with the opportunity to be a champion in life. *That* is what your generosity helps make possible.

Speaking of which: I have exciting news to share.

Spartan alumnus Terry Potts and his wife, Andrea Brown, have made a multi-year financial commitment to San José State for student athlete scholarships and the planned Football Operations Complex. This includes a planned gift component that will ensure a lasting impact.

This support deserves to be publicly acknowledged—it is why you all are here today! So, to Terry and Andrea, on behalf of our students and university community, I offer our heartfelt thanks.

Now, before turning things over to Marie, let me very briefly update you on progress at our university since we last were together almost a year ago.

It is, I am happy to say, a “good news” story.

Last year, we had just welcomed 68 new full-time faculty members to our ranks.

This year, we plan to hire another 55 full-time faculty, bringing the total number of new tenured and tenure-track faculty members hired since 2014 to more than **240**.

That is an indicator—a *strong* indicator—of rising academic quality.

Last year, we had multiple facility projects in the works.

Today, the last structural beam has been laid atop a new aquatic and recreation center that should open in early 2019.

We have opened a beautiful, state-of-the-art golf practice facility and will dedicate in early December a beautiful new tennis complex. Plans for our Science and Innovation complex are progressing.

Last year, we had begun thinking about a long-range campus strategic plan.

Today, the planning is well underway. By this time next year, I should have a plan to share with you.

Last year, I promised that we would intensify our regional engagement efforts, and that San José State would no longer be ignored when major regional decisions were being made.

Today, we are participating in or convening conversations about a host of major regional policy issues affecting us all.

The future of BART in downtown San Jose.

Rising demand for affordable housing.

Unrelenting traffic congestion that threatens to undermine economic development and job creation. And more.

A major, urban public university *should* be at the epicenter of conversations like these. And today, we are.

We continue rising in national stature. Earlier this fall, the Sierra Club ranked San José State among the nation's 50 most sustainable universities. (We now are a "Cool School!")

And we recently were ranked *fourth* nationally out of more than 1,300 colleges and universities for aiding the upward economic and social mobility of students.

In short, we are doing our job. And we have much more to do.

But my immediate job is to introduce our featured presenter. When we announced Marie Tuite's appointment in May as Director of Athletics, the headline on her press release called her a "seasoned administrator and committed Spartan."

And she is both. But Marie Tuite is much, much more.

She is an accomplished educator—an adjunct professor in the University of Washington's Athletic Leadership master's program.

She was a pretty fair basketball and field hockey player—competitive enough to have been inducted into the Central Michigan University Hall of Fame.

And Marie is a trailblazer; she is one of a very small number of women entrusted to lead an NCAA Division I Football Subdivision athletic program.

It is my pleasure to introduce San José State University's Director of Athletics, Marie Tuite.