



California State University
SAN MARCOS

OFFICE OF
THE PRESIDENT



Dear CSUSM Students, Faculty and Staff,

As you know, during my first month at CSUSM last year, I received a complaint calling into question the use of funds by one of our employees. I immediately requested an independent investigation by the CSU Chancellor's Office around this complaint, and the university began a comprehensive review of university travel expenditures.

What we discovered is that the vast majority of our faculty and staff are working hard each day to make the right choices and honor our role as trusted public servants. However, the [independent investigation by the Chancellor's Office](#) revealed that a member of our community took advantage of their position and influence to fraudulently use university resources to their personal benefit. Upon reading the report, I was in disbelief that someone would violate the sacred trust placed upon leaders of this university to such a degree.

In our own review of all [CSUSM travel expenditures](#), we identified trends where some travelers frequently purchased upgraded airfare or selected hotels where the lodging costs exceeded the maximum rates. This pattern and culture of upgraded travel doesn't live up to

who we are or what we are about.

Actions speak louder than words, so we are going to show through our deeds that we want to earn the trust of our students, our families, our faculty and staff, and our community. We have taken appropriate personnel actions, and outlined below are the steps we have taken to improve our fiscal stewardship moving forward. More details are available on our newly launched [fiscal stewardship website](#).

I pledge to work alongside all of you as we lead from our shared values. We can't let this moment hold us back. We WILL grow and improve, and will do right by our students and our community.

CSUSM is a place of optimism, of opportunity and of innovation. This is what I've found here – it's what defines us.

Thank you for all that you do to make this such a special place. I wouldn't want to be anywhere else. Together, we will work through this and come out stronger – I know in my heart, that's who we are.

Sincerely,
Ellen Neufeldt, Ed.D.
President

Fiscal Stewardship Actions

- **Move oversight of travel department including auxiliaries to Assistant Vice President for Compliance and Operation with dotted line to the president** – effective immediately.
- **Create a full-time internal auditor position** – recruitment in process, position expected to be filled this spring.
- **Add staff and technology resources to the travel department** – "Concur" new travel software, will be implemented for start of fall semester.
- **Update travel guides and forms** – In progress.
- **Implement improved employee education and training** – All managers received training as of January 2020. All staff who have responsibilities related to preparing travel will receive updated training by the end of March 2020