

RENAISSANCE FORUMS

FORUMS are a special category of highly acclaimed and high-profile speakers addressing topics of current special interest to a wide variety of our Renaissance members. These esteemed speakers are also seasoned experts in their fields. They bring a diversity, depth and breadth of topics to inform us **about critical issues facing us on an ongoing basis.**

Forums typically occur on Friday afternoons from 3:00-4:00P (Pacific) when no other Renaissance seminars or presentations are being held. Speakers encourage the audience to ask probing questions about their topics.

Sep. 10

DR. KATHARINE HAYHOE | A Conversation With Climate Scientist Dr. Katharine Hayhoe

→ NOTE: This Forum will be open to the Public and be held from 3:00-4:15 pm. Invite your Family and Friends!



Professor Hayhoe is one of the most renowned climate scientists of our time and a riveting speaker! In addition to being a world-class scientist, she is a devout Christian who strongly encourages members of all faiths to participate in stewarding our planet. She currently serves as the Political Science Endowed Professor in Public Policy and Public Law in the Department of Political Science, and Director of the Climate Center at Texas Tech University. Among Dr. Hayhoe's numerous awards and accolades, she was named one of TIME Magazine's 100 most influential people in 2014 as well a United Nations Champion of the Earth in 2019. She is also the founder and CEO of ATMOS Research, which bridges the gap between scientists and stakeholders to provide relevant, state-of-the-art information on how climate change is affecting our lives. She is also about to publish a new book – ***Saving Us – A Climate Scientist's Case for Hope and Healing in a Divided World***. This is not another doomsday narrative about a planet on fire. She argues that when it comes to changing hearts and minds, facts are only one part of the equation. We need to find shared values in order to connect our unique identities to collective action.

Sep. 17

PROFESSOR LISA IKEMOTO | Selling Genes, Buying Race



In the late 20th century, genetics became the explanation for who and why we are. The power of the gene became the basis of several industries, including biotechnology, fertility, and genetic testing. **Dr. Lisa Ikemoto** is the Martin Luther King, Jr. Professor at the UC Davis School of Law and a Faculty Associate of the U.C. Davis Center for Science and Innovation Studies. A very powerful speaker, Dr. Ikemoto teaches bioethics, public health care law, reproductive rights and marital property. Her research focuses on the ways that race and gender mediate access to and impact biomedical technology and health care. Her projects include tracking the formation of markets for human cells, tissues, and DNA. Her recent work addresses reproductive tourism and the ways in which human gamete use links the fertility and biotechnology industries. Referencing her book -- ***Selling Genes, Buying Race*** -- she will discuss how genomics has created a resurgence in the ideology of biological race and the simultaneous commercialization of racial identity.

Sep. 24

CHEEWA JAMES & DR. ROSE SOZA WAR SOLDIER | The Modoc War: The Tribe That Wouldn't Die



Cheewa James is a Native American from the Klamath Indian Reservation in Oregon and the great-granddaughter of Schkeitko (She-key-et-ko), a Modoc War leader. She was a ranger-historian in the Lava Beds National Monument, site of the Modoc War, and consultant in the Oregon Public Broadcasting production ***The Modoc War***. This 1872-73 war was America's most expensive Indian battle and 2022 will be the 150th anniversary of the event when 50-60 Modoc warriors stood off over 1,000 U.S. soldiers. At war's end, they were sent as prisoners of war to the Oklahoma Indian Territory. Cheewa has written four books (all with Native themes), including: ***Catch the Whisper of the Wind*** and ***MODOC: The Tribe That Wouldn't Die***. She is also a former television anchorwoman, winning seven United Press International Awards and the national Golden Mike Award. She has been a Sacramento KVIE-PBS talk show hostess and producer and was featured in a PBS special, ***American Indian Circles of Wisdom***. Cheewa will be interviewed by **Dr. Rose Soza War Soldier**, a member of the Soboba Band of Luiseño Indians, and an Assistant Professor at Sac State in the Ethnic Studies Department specializing in 20th Century American Indian activism.



Oct. 1

DR. MARY LEE VANCE | The Disabled Civil Rights Movement



Mary Lee Vance earned her Ph.D. from Michigan State University, despite having had a composite score of only 19 on her ACT exam. She is the Director of CSUS Services for Students with Disabilities and has held multiple administrative roles at several two and four-year colleges. She identifies as a Disabled Female Korean Adoptee and is the lead editor of: "**Beyond the Americans with Disabilities Act: Proactively Planning for Accessible Post-Secondary Educational Offerings**". Her fourth book on the American Disabilities Act is in progress. Dr. Vance will address the intersection of race, disability, civil rights and the reason why disability is a normal, positive and natural form of human diversity.

Oct. 8

PAT FONG KUSHIDA | AAPI Strong: Stop the Hate!



Hate crimes against Asian American Pacific Island (AAPI) people have increased dramatically in recent times. **AAPI Strong** is a national initiative that seeks to address these hate-related incidents, as 38% are directed at AAPI small businesses. It is based on three tenets: data collection, technical assistance/training and advocacy/policy work for AAPI small businesses. **Pat Fong Kushida** graduated from Sac State in 1985 and is currently the President/CEO of the Sacramento Asian-Pacific Chamber of Commerce (SACC) since 1998, and President/CEO of the California Asian Pacific Chamber of Commerce. This combined entity represents the largest ethnic chamber in California today, serving over 600,000 Asian Pacific owned California businesses. Ms. Kushida's strength is forming collaborations with many community-based organizations on issues related to regional economic development to advance their community's interests.

Oct. 15

JUDGE JAMES MIZE | The Justice System: 2021 and Beyond



Are Zoom trials here for good? Can I appear in Zoom court in my pajamas? Can I continue operating on my patient while at a traffic hearing? Do we even need courthouses anymore? Can a technological court still be “just?” Can I be a juror from my home? Do I need to face my violent spouse in court or can I just Zoom in by phone? What innovations do we keep and what do we reject? **Judge James Mize** will answer all these important questions, and more! Jim is a Superior Court Judge in Sacramento, having served as the court’s Supervising Judge of the family court and Presiding Judge of the entire court system. He is a

former president of local and statewide judicial organizations and has been selected as “Judge of the Year” by these associations. He earned a B.A. and M.S.W. from U.C. Berkeley and his J.D. from USF. He has authored over 100 articles, columns and books and has taught over 100 courses and seminars to attorneys and judges in areas of Family Law, Domestic Violence, Legal Ethics, Judicial Impartiality, etc. Afraid to retire, he still works full time at the ancient age of 75!

Oct. 22

SACRAMENTO’S FANTASTIC OLYMPIC GOLD MEDALIST SWIMMERS:

- **MIKE BURTON**
- **JEFF FLOAT**
- **SUMMER (SANDERS) SCHLOPY**
- **MARK SPITZ**
- **DEBBIE (MEYER) WEBER**
- **MODERATOR: BETH RUYAK**

NOTE: This Forum will be 90 minutes long and open to the Public. Invite your Family and Friends!

This Forum will feature 5 Olympic Gold Medalist swimmers currently or originally from the Sacramento region. It will be a “round table” discussion of the experiences of being a world record holder and the epitome of success in the sports world, what it took to have such focus, what each gold medalist had to give up for their careers, and how they handled transitioning from the intensity of training and competition to post-Olympic “civilian life” ... Our very capable Beth Ruyak, formerly from Capitol Public Radio, will moderate the discussion.



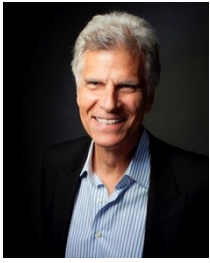
Mike Burton is a three-time Olympic gold medalist, with two Golds in Mexico City in 1968: 400 freestyle and 1500 freestyle. In 1972, Mike became the first swimmer in history to defend the Olympic 1500-meter freestyle title by breaking the world record with his third Olympic gold medal in 2000. Mike was also USA's 1972 Swimming Team Captain and USA Flag Bearer during Closing Ceremonies in Munich. His accomplishments include seven world swimming records, 19 United States records, 13 national championships and five NCAA titles while attending UCLA. He was installed in the International Swimming Hall of Fame in 1977. As a Charter member of the UCLA Athletic Hall of Fame in 1984, Mike was also chosen by USA Swimming to the "Team of the Century". In 2015 Swimming World Magazine featured Mike's 1500 swim in Munich as one of the greatest individual event upsets in Olympic swimming history.



During his infancy, viral meningitis claimed up to 90% of **Jeff Float's** hearing. Despite this handicap, Jeff did indeed "Float" ... really fast! While competing at the World Games for the Deaf, he finished first in all ten offered events, remaining an unprecedented feat 44 years later! While Jeff qualified for the 1980 USA Olympic Team, the US boycotted the games that year, but he also made the '84 cut and was reinstated as their peer-elected Team Captain. That year he and his teammates clinched the 4X200-meter free-relay by 4/100ths of a second, smashing the world record by 5 seconds for the Gold! He now inspires youth as Aquatics Director and Head Swim Coach with Spare Time Inc. and Personal Trainer at his original Arden Hills Swim Club in Sacramento.



An Olympic Champion swimmer, **Summer (Sanders) Schlopy** is also an NBA television host, a Nickelodeon game show host and an ambassador of international charitable organizations. She began her swimming career at the age of 4. She earned a scholarship to Stanford University where, in her two-year collegiate swimming career, she won every NCAA title in which she was entered, back-to-back NCAA swimmer of the year and the National Championship with her teammates in 1992. Also, in 1992, she represented Team USA at the Barcelona Olympic Games bringing home more medals than anyone else in the pool: 2 Golds, 1 Silver and 1 Bronze. Now she enjoys a 28-yr career as a TV host and reporter for every major network and is best known for her 10-year position as co-host of "NBA's Inside Stuff". Summer is also the author of "*Champions Are Raised, Not Born: How My Parents Made Me a Success*". She is married to fellow Olympian, Erik Schlopy, and they have two kids, Skye and Spider, and reside in Park City, UT.



Mark Spitz is one of the most celebrated athletes of all time with 35 World records and 7 Olympic Gold Medals in swimming. In 2000, Mark was voted one of the six best Olympians of the Century by Sports Illustrated Magazine. He secured numerous endorsements and has become a well-known motivational speaker. He also established a swimwear company in partnership with Adidas called Arena. Recently, the International Olympic Committee selected Mark as one of five *Athletes of the Century*. Mark currently works with the Laureus World Sports Academy on projects worldwide in concert with the Laureus Sport for Good Foundation which uses sports as a powerful and cost-effective tool to help children and young people overcome violence, discrimination and disadvantage in their lives.



Debbie (Meyer) Weber was a 2-time Gold medalist in the '67 Pan American Games, 3-time Gold medalist in the '68 Olympics, broke 19 American records and 20 World records in swimming. She is also a member of the US Olympic Hall of Fame, International Swimming Hall of Fame, US High School Hall of Fame, Women's Sports Foundation Hall of Fame and Sacramento Sports Hall of Fame. She has coached high school, NCAA DI&DII, Recreational and USA Swim teams. She has also worked in promotional roles for Speedo International, Coca Cola, Sports Illustrated, Life Savers and Iron Kids and served as a commentator for CBS Sports Spectacular and ESPN. Debbie owned, operated and taught at the very successful Debbie Meyer Swim School in Sacramento for 25 years and is married to Bill Weber, with 3 children and 3 grandchildren.



We are grateful to have, once again, as a special treat, our very own 4+ Emmy Award winning **Beth Ruyak** -- reporter, writer, news anchor, producer and former Host of Capital Public Radio's *Insight* -- who will moderate and interview these amazing athletes. Beth began her career in journalism nearly four decades ago as a news reporter in Minnesota. She landed the first of six Olympic assignments with the NBC Sports team in Barcelona. After 30 years in television, she jumped into public radio and as of 2020 is now focusing on documentary work with her newest endeavor, Ruyak Media.

Oct. 29

DR. RITA CAMERON WEDDING | Implicit Bias Contributes to the Persistence of Systemic Racism



The crises we are experiencing in America are not random events. The murder of George Floyd, the rise in anti-Asian violence, the violent attack on our nation's Capital, and the introduction of the most racist voter restriction laws since the Jim Crow Era are all evidence of systemic racism. Despite the persistent racial disparities across all public systems, many people do not believe systemic racism exists. **Dr. Cameron Wedding**, now Faculty Emeritus, was Chair of the

Women's Studies Department at Sac State for 23 years. She will discuss how our implicit biases can simultaneously obscure and contribute to systemic racism. In 2012 Dr. Wedding was the recipient of the John C. Livingston Distinguished Faculty Lecture Award, the highest faculty honor awarded by Sacramento State University.

Nov. 5

TOM DREESEN | A Conversation with Comedian Tom Dreesen



Tom Dreesen is a well-respected and very funny comedian, monologist and entertainer who started his career in the streets and saloons of Harvey, IL shining shoes, to ultimately performing on the world stage. He appeared over 500 times on national television, including 60 appearances on The Tonight Show and 50 appearances on The Late Show with David Letterman. In addition to forming the first and only black and white comedy team with Tim Reid, he honed his talents to become the opening act for many well-known entertainers such as Sammy

Davis Jr, Smokey Robinson, Natalie Cole, Tony Orlando and Elton John, and for 14 years opened for Frank Sinatra. In addition to his comedy chops, he's also a motivational speaker, humanitarian and has published several books, the most recent is called "**Still Standing**", a behind the scenes look into his groundbreaking entertainment career. He will be joined by Renaissance music class leader **Mike Agron** who will walk us through Tom's career to have a close look at the anatomy of his humor.



Nov. 12

Rob Stutzman and Steven Maviglio | Will CA Governor Gavin Newsom Be Recalled or Not?



California is facing the second gubernatorial recall attempt in its history this November as voters go to the polls to decide whether to keep Governor Newsom in office or replace him. As former Deputy Chief of Staff for Communications to Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger, **Rob Stutzman** is a Republican political strategist who specializes in campaigns, communications, crisis management and award-winning political advertising. On the other hand, **Steven Maviglio** is a Democratic political strategist repeatedly named in *Capitol Weekly* as one of the state's most influential campaign strategists. He specializes in public affairs

strategies for progressive political campaigns and clients. He was Deputy Chief of Staff for three history-making Assembly Speakers, and before joining the Legislature, Steven was press secretary for Governor Gray Davis. These two political veterans of the state's first-ever gubernatorial recall, the 2003 campaign that led to Governor Gray Davis being removed from office and replaced by Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger, will provide insights on this year's recall attempt. They will discuss the history of the recall process, the origins of this year's effort, polling, messaging, finances and what it all means for California and the nation.



Nov. 19

DR. GOZDE GONCU BERK | The Future of Electronic Wearables: E-Textiles and “Smart” Clothing



Assistant Professor **Gozde Goncu Berk** from the UC Davis Department of Design is breaking barriers by developing extraordinary designs in wearable “reactive” clothing (for people with disabilities or improving pain management from chronic diseases) that “sense” changes in people’s emotions such as anxiety and/or physiological conditions. Her focus is on “How can we improve the quality of our lives through innovative functional clothing designs?” She received her

Ph.D. from the University of Minnesota and has an MA degree in Textiles and Clothing Design and Bachelor’s degree in Industrial Design. Dr. Goncu Berk will provide an overview of how digital fabrication techniques, electronic textile design and smart clothing differ from wearable accessories and how these can augment the health and wellbeing of underrepresented populations, children and/or those with diseases through functional clothing.

Dec. 3

LESTER SNOW | Restoring the Klamath River: The World's Largest Dam-Removal Project



The Klamath River stretches 257 miles from the Cascades of Southern Oregon through the Klamath Mountains, to the Pacific Ocean in California. The Klamath was once the third largest salmon producing river on the west coast and the River and salmon were the center of tribal life and culture for thousands of years. Damming of the river, starting in 1918, dramatically changed it's flow, endangered salmon, and disrupted lives of the indigenous people of the Klamath Basin. **Lester Snow** has a long career working on complex natural resource management. He has

served as Secretary of the California Natural Resources Agency, Director of the California Department of Water Resources, Regional Director of the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation, Executive Director of the CALFED Bay-Delta Program, and General Manager of the San Diego County Water Authority. Lester will educate us on this massive restoration project, its implications for the future of salmon and will bring a tribal cultural perspective to the impact on in this region.

Dec. 10

KEN CROSS | The Renaissance Society: Past, Present, and the Vision for the Future

This past year has been a time of rapid change, adaptation, and transformation for the Renaissance Society. With the mandated “social distancing” pandemic protocols, an opportunity was revealed for the Renaissance Society to reinvent this 35-year old organization. Discover what the future holds and share your thoughts and ideas for the Renaissance Society's continuous improvement. Ken Cross graduated from the U.S. Military Academy at West Point, NY in 1974 with a BS degree in civil engineering. He served as an airborne ranger, and U.S. Army armor officer for 10 years. Ken later became a financial planner, sales manager, and corporate sales trainer serving career military service members. For the 20 years before



Then: As West Point Grad

retirement, he was the Spiritual Life Center Church Development Officer followed by 12 years as CEO of Habitat for Humanity of Greater Sacramento. Ken joined Renaissance in 2016 and has been our Renaissance Society President since July 1st, 2020.



**And Now:
As Renaissance
Society President**