

# First in the Cal. State System: New Faculty Inclusion Fellow Position Inaugurates a New Era of Disability Inclusion

*Disability Inclusion Awareness and Action at California State University San Bernardino*

SAN BERNARDINO, CALIF., USA, September 27, 2023 /EINPresswire.com/ -- California State University San Bernardino established the first Disability Inclusion fellow in the California State University system, called the Faculty Inclusion Fellow for Disability, Difference and Accommodation. The California State University System is the largest and most diverse university in the United States, with over 457,000 students.

The Faculty Inclusion Fellow for Disability Difference and Accommodation provides faculty-to-faculty mentoring and peer coaching to raise faculty awareness around disability inclusion, and the effective accommodation of students with disabilities at California State University San Bernardino.

One element that makes this position so unique is the facilitation of a seamless collaboration between Faculty Affairs and Student Affairs, assisting in the involvement of many critical units across the university in this new effort.

Dr. Jess Block Nerren, Ed.D. was named as the first Faculty Inclusion Fellow. Nerren is editor and contributing author to a 2022 scholarly book on disability inclusion *Rethinking Perception and Centering the Voices of Unique Individuals: Reframing Autism Inclusion in Praxis*, and is the former Interim Faculty Director of the university's accommodations office, called Services to Students with Disabilities. She is the parent to a college-going son with autism who is also a pediatric cancer survivor.

Said Interim Associate Vice President of Faculty Development and Chief Academic Technologies Officer Dr. Bradford Owen Ph.D, MFA, "Dr. Nerren is the ideal Faculty Inclusion Fellow for Disability, Difference and Accommodation because of her professional expertise, compassion for both students and faculty, and her lived experience as a family advocate. I know she will bring valuable resources to her faculty colleagues in ways that will benefit our university as a whole."

Associate Vice President of Student Success and Educational Equity Dr. Molly Springer Ed.D. said, "The creation of this role is a giant leap towards greater equity on our campus. I am proud to partner with Faculty Affairs in this collaborative effort to establish innovative new roles in the

effort of serving our unique students.”

Director of Services to Students with Disabilities Lori Palmerton said, “I’ve worked with Dr. Nerren and seen the value of a Faculty Inclusion Fellow for Disability, Difference and Accommodation in resourcing faculty in the effort of providing accommodations for our students. I think that as we fully harness this resource, Dr. Nerren may serve as proof of concept that a Faculty Inclusion Fellow can be an incredible resource for accommodation and disability inclusion across institutions and among many different stakeholders.”

Of her new role, Nerren said, “I’m thankful to the visionary leadership who created this new role and I am proud to be part of an institution that makes disability inclusion a priority in such a meaningful way.”

About Dr. Jess Block Nerren: Dr. Jess Block Nerren is a researcher of Disability Inclusion, Public Relations and Teacher Education as a full time faculty member at CSUSB in the Department of Communication Studies. Currently, Dr. Nerren is on special assignment as the Faculty Inclusion Fellow for Disability, Difference and Accommodation at CSUSB. Previously, she served as Interim Faculty Director of the Services to Students with Disabilities office, where she oversaw accommodations for over 2,000 students attending the university. She is the editor and contributing author of the scholarly book Rethinking Perception and Centering the Voices of Unique Individuals: Reframing Autism Inclusion in Praxis.

<https://www.csusb.edu/profile/jessica.nerren>

About Services to Students with Disabilities: Services to Students with Disabilities empowers students with disabilities by fostering skills of self-advocacy, resourcefulness and independence. The office works collaboratively with the campus community to remove barriers and promote an enriched learning environment where students with disabilities can utilize their skills and pursue their academic and personal development goals. <https://www.csusb.edu/ssd>

Jess Block Nerren  
Felten Media Services  
+1 909-706-8525  
[email us here](#)

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