Welcome from the Director

It has been my distinct pleasure to be the Director of the Office of Governmental Affairs the past two years. In creating this board report, I realized that OGA has expanded its ability and reach greatly over the past two years in ways we never expected. Our office became well-known at the Capitol and the word “student” has become a buzzword for advocacy and legislation, which means it’s more important now than ever for students to be engaged in the advocacy process across the spectrum. Our Board of Directors has been heavily engaged at the campus level in fighting for students on committees and in communication with the administration. Our CSSA representative has worked at a system-wide level to make sure Sac State’s voice is heard in the larger discussions at the Chancellor’s Office. And OGA has worked tirelessly to ensure that students are represented at the state and federal level, with the help of CSSA as well.

OGA has allowed me to grow as an individual and become entrenched in advocacy work, which has now inspired me to get more involved in the legislature and government after I leave ASI in June. I will be forever an advocate for students and the organization that has taught me some tough lessons but made me the person I am today.

Below is a compilation of the work we’ve done over the past 2012-2013 academic year.
Governmental Affairs
OGA has been deeply rooted in government activity at the local, state and federal level. We’ve brought public officials to the campus to promote our activities and show off our amazing university, as well as get the message about higher education out to a broader range of people. Our volunteers and staff members have repeatedly spoken at higher education hearing and subcommittees at the Capitol. We’ve kept an active watch on the bills on which the Board took a stance, regularly maintaining the ASI website as well with the correct information. As you can see from my report, I will highlight all of the ways that we have been engaged at every level, but it’s from the work of the staff in this office and the support that we’ve received from the board this past year which we can connect to our success.

Good luck to Vance Jarrard and Welcome to Anthony Gibson!
This past year in OGA, we said goodbye Vance Jarrard who went to go work in the California State Legislature upon graduation and welcomed Anthony Gibson in the turning of the next CSSA Representative. Vance has continued to be a proponent of student issues and Anthony has been a great asset in terms of knowledge about technology, online education and his high energy. (http://IAmAnthonyGibson.com).

Congratulations to Stephanie Gish!
Stephanie was the recipient of the “I Am ASI” award this past year which makes for the third OGA member to have won the award out of the four years it has been in existence after myself and Vance Jarrard. We are extremely proud of her and all her hard work that led up to the board’s decision. She was also recognized by the board for all of her hard work in bringing about the success of the polling booth on campus.

Collaboration with the Campus
OGA has continually collaborated with Phil Garcia, Vice President of Public Affairs and Advocacy in which we had joint lobby visit days earlier this semester, as seen in the picture below. I lobbied with President Alexander Gonzalez, Phil Garcia, Robert Dugan and Monica Cortez on behalf of the university. Phil Garcia and I are in constant communication about lobby visits and how the two offices can better work together. For the university, a large focus in on getting funding for a Science II, a new science building on campus to theoretically replace Sequoia Hall and transition our university into a better place for STEM majors. OGA has also worked on Constitution Week for Fall 2012 in hosting several events for the week such as a meeting for Lobby Corps, City Ambassadors and several voter registration days in the quad. We hope to do the same for Fall 2013. Meg and Anthony have been attending the meetings for the next week, and Stephanie will be helping to coordinate the events. In the beginning of the year, I also worked diligently with Public Affairs to disperse information on their “Help Sam, Help California” Project: https://www.facebook.com/HelpSam. It clearly represents the everyday student and the issues that are affecting higher education in this budget crisis as well as why it’s important to simply value our work in higher education. We’ve also met with Meredith Vivian, the Governmental Relations Officer for CSSA to increase communication between the two organizations. As Chief of Staff for CSSA, I’ve been actively involved with advocacy work as read later on in this report.
Lobby Corps

Message from Meg Panlaqui, Chair of Lobby Corps: Meg Panlaqui was responsible for a lot of the successes this past year with Lobby Corps. She worked with Lobby Corps to meet on a biweekly basis and weekly if need be in order to have the group fully vet out issues and discuss legislation which aided the board greatly. One of the first issues they tackled was the pros and cons of Proposition 30, after which the board chose to officially support. Meg has been attending Higher Education Hearings speaking on behalf of Sacramento State. She also designed a template of bill analysis, which has helped us to keep track of bills and information. If you want more information on a particular bill, she can provide you an analysis on them with comments from CSSA and Lobby Corps. Lobby Corps reviewed all of the bills that CSSA has proposed in depth and assigned bill numbers to each of the members so each student can help OGA keep track of the bills and participate in the vital discussions at the Capitol when we lobby. They combined forces with City Ambassadors for the Political Palooza as well.

City Ambassadors

Message from Stephanie Gish, Chair of City Ambassadors: City Ambassadors held meetings this year during the fall semester on Thursdays at 3pm and in the spring semester on Tuesdays at 5pm. City Ambassadors was diligent about tabling in the quad in the mornings 10:00am-1:00pm for voter registration, at which they also promoted ASI as a whole and got info out to students. This is in an effort to tie our program to the campus more and informing students of what is happening off campus that may affect them. This past year, we continued our goal of attending at least two community events, as well as at least two city council meetings. As the main focus of City Ambassadors is to connect the local community to Sac State we wish to continue to build a relationship with the City Council, especially the State of the City, where our
A student delegation attended in Sac State gear and gained a new perspective about how we fit in with the city. This past semester, we created the Political Palooza event to inform students about the results of the election and help them to understand how it affects them. We also helped with the orchestration and development of the exit survey at the polling booth.

Chief of Staff with CSSA
During the past year, I served at the Chief of Staff to the California State Student Association President. I was responsible for overseeing all seven of the special officers with their projects and working with them in coordination with the staff of CSSA in developing the agenda and the success of the organization. As one of the duties of my position, I was tasked by the President to be his representative in the northern part of the state and at the capitol. As such I spoke on behalf of the organization at many press conferences, lobby visits and committee hearings.

OGA Director Sarah Couch traveled with CSSA to Washington, DC to advocate on behalf of CSU students in December 2012. I traveled with the Executive Team for CSSA and lobbied on behalf of Pell Grants, MOE and sequestration. This is a brief overview on the Legislative Principles that the CSU Federal Relations Office will be working on in the next year, of which we as students directly talked about during our visits.

1. *Ensure Access through Aid to Students*: The CSU remains one of the nation’s best bargains. Significant state and institutional grant aid helps our neediest students. Federal financial aid programs remain critical to CSU students from low-income families, including over 170,000 who rely upon need-based Pell Grants. Over 30,000 Pell recipients receive CSU bachelor’s degrees each year.

2. *Prepare Students for College*: The CSU is on the cutting edge of partnering with P-12 to assess and improve student readiness and to measure the performance of CSU-trained teachers. The federal government is a vital partner.

3. *Foster Success for California’s Diverse Population*: The CSU provides more than half of all undergraduate degrees granted to California’s Latino, African American and Native American students, and is a leader in transitioning veterans to the civilian workforce. Federal capacity building programs and targeted grants help bridge the completion gap.

4. *Train Students for Today’s Workforce*: 99,000 annual graduates drive California’s economy in the information technology, life sciences, agriculture, business, education, public administration, entertainment and multimedia industries.

5. *Solve Problems through Applied Research*: In laboratories, at field sites and through programs at the CSU, students, faculty and collaborating scientists advance California’s capacity to address key issues of significance to our state and nation.
6. **Promote State and Private Support for Public Universities:** The state of California has cut public higher education funding by over 30% in the past two years, part of an alarming national trend. Federal incentives can help boost state and private support for and partnerships with public universities.

**State of the State**

“With respect to higher education, cost pressures are relentless and many students cannot get the classes they need. A half million fewer students this year enrolled in the community colleges than in 2008. Graduation in four years is the exception and transition from one segment to the other is difficult. The University of California, the Cal State system and the community colleges are all working on this. The key here is thoughtful change, working with the faculty and the college presidents. But tuition increases are not the answer. I will not let students become the default financiers of our colleges and universities.” - Governor Jerry Brown

With this budget cycle, students saw an increase in the amount of funding to the CSU as well as a tuition fee roll back as a result of the passage of Proposition 30, which is believed to have passed because of the hard work of CSSA and students across the segments. In a quote from Scott Lay, “In the end, the exit poll found that 28% of California's electorate were 18-29 year olds. And, with their 63% yes vote on Prop 30, they single-handedly put Jerry Brown’s tax measure over the top. This also led to a 1.9 million 20-point margin for Obama in California that ensured that he won the national popular vote.” Fees for the CSU will remain at the same level for the next four years if the CSU acts according to the performance measures placed within the budget. Otherwise, funding could be redacted.

**Voter Registration & Polling Booth**

One of the main purposes of OGA is to register students to vote. City Ambassadors and Stephanie Gish worked to host voter registration days several times a month in the quad. They hope to do this more next semester. We followed up with this by having a polling booth as well. This past year was the first time that Sacramento State has had a polling booth on campus due to the hard work of Stephanie Gish. She worked with the Residence Halls, who we were so thankful were willing to help us with this project, made all of the phone calls and personally met with the Registrar’s Office. OGA supported efforts at the Sac State Polling Booth on November 6th in an effort to create awareness about the booth, answer questions, and poll students about their experiences voting. Around 600 Sac State students voted in the Polling Booth either with an absentee ballot, a provisional ballot, or a regular ballot. ASI’s from across the state worked to bring polling booths to campus and Sac State was one of the few campuses who may it happen without much trouble. OGA also had a booth outside the
polling booth, by the prescribed number of feet in order to survey students about their experiences and gather data for ASI and the campus.

**BOT Proposed Fees**

As our Board of Directors passed a resolution stating their opposition to the proposed fee increases for the BOT meeting in November, we've developed some promotional materials as such with the image attached that can help. An electronic version was posted on our OGA Facebook page and we had a large number of paper copies that we placed in offices all over campus and passing out in classrooms. I attended the SQE meeting on campus in regard to the fees. I spoke on behalf of CSSA as CSSA's Chief of Staff. OGA sent out the resolution to the designated recipients after it was approved by the board, per our new responsibilities around resolutions. CSSA has a version of our flyer as well to help get out the word about the fee increases, which is a big compliment to our marketing department for their great, universal work.

**Legislation**

Approved at the April 3rd board meeting, ASI took a stance on 22 bills related to higher education. They are added to the ASI website so that students can keep easily track of them. The following is not an exhaustive list of all the bills that OGA is monitoring. Check out CSSA’s website for the list of potential bills for the upcoming legislative cycle: [www.csustudents.org](http://www.csustudents.org). Discussion around but not limited to: AB 13, AB 46, AB 73, AB 233, AB 303, AB 330, AB 386, AB 387, AB 534, AB 1085, AB 1162, AB 1241, AB 1285, AB 1364, AJR 11, SB 44, SB 65, SB 141, SB 240, SB 241, SB 267, SB 284, SB 285, SB 325, SB 547, SCA 5. We’ve testified at numerous committee hearings in order to make ASI and CSSA’s position known and advocate for students, as well as sent letters, resolutions and gone into their offices to ensure students are represented.

**Events**

*Just an example of some of the events OGA is expected to attend and participate for advocacy work in the past couple of months:*

- February 14, Press Conference on Cal Grants
- February 28, Assemblymember Roger Dickinson’s Student Advisory Committee
- March 6, SB 241 Stakeholder Meeting at the Capitol
- March 7, Meeting with Assemblymember Dr. Richard Pan’s Office
- March 12, Attendance at CSU Legislative Advocacy Day
- March 13, Listening in to Senate Education Committee [http://sedn.senate.ca.gov/agenda](http://sedn.senate.ca.gov/agenda)
- March 13, OGA Representatives attend Cal Grants Hearing at the Capitol
- March 20, Senate Education, Listened online to the discussion around accountability within higher education and the ways that it can be quantifiably measured
- March 28, Participated in the March in March Wrap-Up phone call about where the event should move in the future and how the systems should better collaborate with each other (Notes available)
Sarah Couch  
Director of Office of Governmental Affairs

- April 3, Senate Education Committee, was present in case SB 325 came off of consent. Attended with two current student trustees as representatives of the CSU. Bill passed out of committee unanimously.
- April 9, Joint Cal Grant Press Conference between the three educational systems (UC, CSU, CCC), spoke on behalf of the entire CSU with four other legislators and two student representatives.
- April 9, Informational Meeting with Senator Steinberg’s office about online education and SB 250.
- April 17, Senate Education Committee, spoke on behalf of SB 285 (Cal Grants) and gave information about SB 267 (Polling Places).

Marketing
During the past two years, OGA has tried to revamp its image in regard to accessibility and aesthetics. I’ve extensively added information and new pages to the OGA website, which has been further re-designed with the new ASI website. OGA has redesigned general interest cards, A-Frame posters, calendars and promotional photos in order to update our image and create new ways to reach out to students. We have new flyers for City Ambassadors and Lobby Corps which we’ll use to increase our numbers in both committees and get out the word about what we’re doing. I’ve tried to make the website as interactive and up-to-date as possible to help the Board out when recruiting students to get involved in advocacy affairs. We now have an electronic version of the OGA Newsletter, of which we are very proud and which has been worked on by Stephanie Gish. If you’d like us to add anything about other ASI events, just send Stephanie an email at asi-oga1@saclink.csus.edu. We’ve slowly incorporated our marketing efforts into video and blogging with Anthony’s incorporation into the office. He is very good with different forms of marketing.

OGA & Board Transparency
For the past two years, I’ve attended the ASI Board Meetings on a weekly basis in order to better connect OGA and the board together. Before I started in OGA, just the CSSA rep attended the meetings and the CSSA rep wasn’t a member of OGA but in the Office of the President, when there were other staff that worked directly for the president. ASI restructured and it made sense to eliminate those other positions and bring the CSSA rep under OGA since it’s advocacy work on a state level which is what we cover. I think our communication between the two programs have changed dramatically in the process. We’ve taken our own time to host OGA retreats to look within to ensure that our students were getting the leadership opportunities and skills they needed to succeed as well as to look heavily at our strategic plan and evaluate our progress. This year, we made it a point to have an open door policy when we weren’t in a staff meeting or on a conference call, which we indicated with a sign on our door. We welcome people to come in and ask questions. Each staff members’ general schedule has been posted on the front door of OGA and we’ve made numerous signs to indicate our statuses so that board members would know what is going on with us. We have detailed information on the OGA website on our staff members as well.


California Higher Education Student Summit
Sacramento State was proud to host the CHESS reception this year. With the change in format of CHESS, the reception was now on a Saturday as opposed to a Friday. For this, we had easily double the amount of attendees to the reception than we normally did. Despite this large increase and the shortage of appetizers, we still had good reviews about the event. Stephanie primarily organized the event and everyone in OGA assisted her. The location of the WELL served us well and made many students interested about our facilities, urging several tours.

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of the WELL in the process. OGA also coordinated the twenty students at-large that were paid for through ASI, as well as the board members. I received overwhelmingly positive reviews from the students once they got comfortable with the conference. The information can be intense at first, but there were enough fun activities throughout the day like the spirit competition at lunch that students definitely enjoyed the opportunity to bond with students from around the CSU. Many expressed interest in wanting to attend next year as well and participate in future lobby visits. I sent a message to all of the participants after the visit, encouraging them to get more involved and participate with OGA in the future. For the Monday of CHESS, Sacramento State had lobby visits with Senator Kevin De Leon’s office, Assemblymember Ken Cooley’s office, and Assemblymember Dr. Richard Pan’s office, focusing on SB 325 and the Governor’s Budget. We had two teams of students focusing on the visits, which we haven’t been able to have before due to the amount of students participating. Overall, I was excited with the success of CHESS this past year and hope that OGA duplicates such efforts in the future.

Capitol Connection
OGA is currently working with the staff of Assemblymember Roger Dickinson’s Office to host the ASI Capitol Connection (the dates are below) to increase the interaction between the legislator and students. Olgalilia Ramirez (ASI Alum) has been there to talk to students about the Assemblymember’s legislation, free tax assistance workshops, student internships, the legislative and budget process, assistance on issues pertaining to state agencies, etc. OGA is especially excited for this opportunity and glad to have the support of the Assemblymember on campus. We are currently in the process of planning office hours again for the fall semester as well.

Student Activism & Education Protocol Team (SAEPT)
I am officially a member of the SAEPT and am ready if the need arises, but the committee has not convened this past year that I was aware of. Please check out the policies listed on the OGA web page as they are listed in detail: http://www.asi.csus.edu/state-and-federal-advocacy.html.

CSSA
For information about CSSA, please read Anthony Gibson’s end of the year board report submitted this session which has an extensive amount of information about what it going on with the organization.