



From national recognition and new scholarship to student research, faculty milestones, alumni success, and community impact, 2026 has already brought plenty to celebrate at the San Jose State University School of Information. Here is a look at accomplishments making an impact across the iSchool community.

Students Making Their Mark

ASIS&T Student Chapter Named Student Chapter of the Year

The SJSU School of Information's Association for Information Science and Technology (ASIS&T) Student Chapter received the prestigious Student Chapter of the Year Award, recognizing the chapter's innovative programming, outreach, and commitment to building community within the information science profession. The honor puts an international spotlight on the leadership and engagement of SJSU iSchool students.

Ten SJSU Students Named 2026-2027 ALA Spectrum Scholars

The American Library Association selected 10 SJSU students among just 60 Spectrum Scholars nationwide: Kristen Beck, Cristina Maria Canales, Marisela Chevez, Rocio Espinoza, Mitzi Garcia Hernandez, DaVonna Phoenix Hytower, Hyunjung "Crystal" Rie, Luna Saber-Bilder, Chloe Kathryn Williams, and Alisha Zaheer. SJSU represents one-sixth of the national cohort, with each scholar receiving tuition support, leadership-development funding, mentoring, and professional opportunities.

Student Research Takes the Stage at ALA Annual

SJSU iSchool students showcased research and community-impact projects at the 2026 American Library Association Annual Conference in Chicago, sharing their work with library and information professionals from across the country. Among the presenters was MLIS student Amber Janke, whose poster, Libraries as Civic Operating Systems, explored libraries as civic infrastructure connecting people, organizations, resources, and opportunities.

Nicki Giles Recognized for Research on Misinformation and Digital Literacy

MLIS student Nicki Giles received an Outstanding Student Presentation Award at the 2026 College of Information, Data and Society Online Student Research Conference. Her presentation, Information Behaviors of Anti-Vaccination Community: Misinformation, Digital Literacy, & Gaps in Services, examined how misinformation spreads online and how information professionals can develop community-centered strategies to strengthen digital literacy and support informed decision-making.

Judith Lin Publishes Student Research on Generative AI

MLIS student Judith Lin turned a project from Dr. Norman Mooradian's AI, Data, and Ethics course into a peer-reviewed publication in The Journal of Academic Librarianship. Her article, Factors Influencing Faculty Adoption of GenAI: Emerging Opportunities for Information Professionals, examines faculty adoption of generative AI and identifies opportunities for librarians and information professionals to support AI literacy, ethics, and responsible adoption.

Raquel Dubin Earns National ASIS&T Tuition Scholarship

MLIS student Raquel Dubin was selected from 187 applicants as one of only five recipients of a \$5,000 ASIS&T Tuition Scholarship. The award recognizes her commitment to the information profession and supports her graduate education as she pursues interests in technology, special librarianship, user-centered design, accessibility, and equitable access to information.

Claire Zurcher-Hamm Appointed to California Library Services Board

MLIS student Claire Zurcher-Hamm was appointed by California Governor Gavin Newsom to the California Library Services Board, where she represents special libraries. Zurcher-Hamm also serves as Director of the Tulare County Public Law Library, making the appointment a significant example of an iSchool student putting information leadership into practice at the statewide level.

Faculty Scholarship & Recognition

Norman Mooradian Advances the Conversation on Knowledge, Ethics, and AI

Dr. Norman Mooradian has had a particularly productive year of scholarship focused on knowledge, technology, and artificial intelligence. His article KM Knowledge Models and Epistemologies: Implications for AI Integration Strategies was published in Philosophy of Management; he co-authored the 2026 book Knowledge Ethics for the Knowledge Economy, published by Emerald Publishing; and in August, Finding Meaning in Virtual Places: Virtuality, Ontology, and Value was published in Philosophy & Technology.

Hengyi Fu Co-authors Research on Fairness in AI-Supported Library Reference

Dr. Hengyi Fu co-authored Fairness evaluation of large language models in academic library reference services, published July 30 in Springer Nature's Humanities and Social Sciences Communications. The study evaluated six leading large language models for differential treatment in academic library reference interactions, contributing to research on responsible, human-centered AI in information services.

Michele Villagran Brings SJSU Research to an International Audience

Dr. Michele Villagran presented From Awareness to Action: Applying Cultural Competence in Library and Information Science Research and Practice at the XXVIII International Congress of the International Association for Cross-Cultural Psychology in Leuven, Belgium. Villagran is also participating in the 2026 CQ Fellows Program, a year-long professional development experience focused on cultural intelligence.

Ulia Gosart Publishes Research on Native Educators in LIS

Dr. Ulia Gosart and Rachel Fu published Representation of Native Educators in Library and Information Science Programs, 1991-2022 in The Library Quarterly. Their research examines the representation of Native faculty in library and information science education and contributes to a deeper understanding of representation within the field.

Anthony Chow Represents Libraries at the United Nations

School of Information Director Dr. Anthony Chow participated in the American Library Association delegation to the United Nations High-Level Political Forum in New York. The delegation helped elevate the role libraries play in advancing information access, education, digital inclusion, community resilience, and sustainable development.

Faculty Milestones & Appointments

Darra Hofman Promoted with Tenure

Congratulations to Dr. Darra Hofman, who was promoted to Associate Professor with tenure. The milestone recognizes her sustained accomplishments in scholarship, teaching, and service and marks an important step in her academic career at the School of Information.

Tonia San Nicolas-Rocca Promoted to Full Professor

Congratulations also to Dr. Tonia San Nicolas-Rocca, who was promoted to Full Professor. The promotion to the university's highest regular faculty rank recognizes her sustained contributions to scholarship, teaching, leadership, and service.

Jeongwon Jo Joins the iSchool as a Tenure-Track Assistant Professor

Dr. Jeongwon Jo joined the School of Information in August as a tenure-track Assistant Professor, bringing expertise at the intersection of human-computer interaction, computer-supported cooperative work, and responsible AI. Her research examines how AI and algorithmic systems affect public-benefits navigation, community social services, and other high-stakes forms of care work.

Research, Funding & Community Impact

SJSU iSchool Team Receives Inaugural VERA Use Grant

The School of Information's Library Technology Integration Lab and New Media Learning were selected as the inaugural recipients of a VERA Use Grant. The project uses virtual reality to investigate how people seek, engage with, and learn from information in immersive environments and provides opportunities for SJSU undergraduate and graduate students to participate in the research. VERA is supported by National Science Foundation funding.

Gary Shaffer Receives \$25,000 for Public-Library Leadership Research

Faculty member Gary Shaffer received \$25,000 in research support through the Tower Foundation to advance his study of how public-library leaders navigate organized book challenges, board conflicts, funding threats, and other pressures in politically polarized environments. The funding supports continued data analysis, conference travel, and publication efforts.

Books for All Initiative Secures 100,000 Books for Nigeria

Recent iSchool alumna Osa Oyegun, working with SJSU faculty Dr. Anthony Chow and Dr. Ruphina Ozoh and an iSchool student team led by Christina Barnett, advanced the Books for All initiative with an initial donation of 100,000 books for Nigeria. The initiative plans 12 library and community-literacy sites, with the Stillman Family Foundation supporting the shipping costs for the 40-ton container of children's books.

Alumni in Action

Mychal Threats Celebrates a Bestseller - and Library Joy

SJSU School of Information alum Mychal Threats reached another major milestone with the publication of his debut picture book, *I'm So Happy You're Here: A Celebration of Library Joy*, published by Random House Books for Young Readers. The book became a national bestseller. Threats also serves as Honorary Chair of National Library Week 2026, selected by the American Library Association, adding to a growing national platform that includes his work with PBS and Reading Rainbow.

Spartan Information Professionals in Action

Taken together, these accomplishments tell a bigger story about the SJSU School of Information: students earning national scholarships, presenting and publishing research, faculty advancing scholarship and earning career milestones, alumni influencing the profession, and members of the iSchool community representing SJSU on national and international stages.

That's information in action.