

Susan Elrod, PhD



Susan Elrod is a nationally recognized scholar, educator, and administrator with over 20 years of higher education leadership experience. Her leadership career includes roles as a faculty and department leader, center director, associate dean, dean, provost and chancellor. Most recently, she served as the sixth Chancellor of Indiana University South Bend. Prior to that position, she served as Provost and Executive Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs at the University of Wisconsin–Whitewater, as Interim Provost at California State University, Chico, and as Dean of the College of Science and Mathematics at California State University, Fresno.

Throughout her career, she has used a shared leadership approach to achieve strategic transformation, student success, fiscal sustainability, fundraising goals, and community partnerships across institutions of varying size and context. She currently serves as principal of the Change Leadership Group, which offers practical, action-oriented guidance for campus leaders at every level, from faculty leaders and department chairs to deans, provosts, presidents, and governing boards, based upon the evidence-based resources of the *Change Leadership Toolkit* (CLT), of which she is the lead author. She has also partnered with leading higher education associations, accreditors, scientific societies, and other national organizations to offer change leadership professional development programs. Since its publication in 2023, the CLT has been downloaded by nearly 3,000 practitioners at nearly 900 institutions nationwide and across the world.

Elrod's scholarship includes more than 30 publications and books on topics ranging from genetics and undergraduate STEM education to systemic change and shared leadership. Besides the CLT publication, she is co-author of *Shared Leadership in Higher Education* (2021). Her work has also appeared in *Change: The Magazine of Higher Learning*, *The Review of Higher Education*, *Academic Leader*, and other leading publications. She serves on the editorial board of *Change* magazine and is a Fellow of the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS), a distinction recognizing her sustained contributions

to STEM higher education. She and her colleagues have secured more than \$10 million in federal grants and philanthropic funding from the National Science Foundation, the Department of Education, the Gates Foundation, the W.M. Keck Foundation and the Alfred P. Sloan Foundation, among others.

Earlier in her career, she was an American Council on Education (ACE) Fellow at Colorado College and served as Executive Director of Project Kaleidoscope (PKAL) at the Association of American Colleges & Universities (AAC&U), where she led multi-campus national initiatives in undergraduate STEM education reform funded by the U.S. Department of Education, the National Science Foundation, and private foundations. She is a co-founder of CRUSE, the Coalition for Reform in Undergraduate STEM Education, a consortium of national associations and societies. She served on the board of HERS and is now on the board of Campus Compact.

Elrod holds a PhD in Genetics from the University of California, Davis and a BS in Biological Sciences from California State University, Chico where she also served as President of the Associated Students, Inc. (ASI) and is a member of the Omicron Theta Epsilon Biological Sciences Honor Society. She completed a postdoctoral fellowship at Novozymes, Inc. in Davis, CA. She lives in Nevada and loves to hike and enjoy the beauty of the West.

March 9, 2026

Susan L. Elrod

Dear Regents and Chancellor of the Nevada System of Higher Education,

I am honored to apply for the presidency of Nevada State University. As a resident of Nevada, this opportunity feels both timely and deeply personal. NSU's mission of expanding access and opportunity for southern Nevada's diverse, largely first-generation student population while serving as a catalyst for regional workforce development is the mission I have devoted my career to advancing. As Chancellor of Indiana University South Bend, Provost at the University of Wisconsin-Whitewater, Interim Provost at California State University, Chico, and Dean of Science and Mathematics at Fresno State, I have led regional public anchor universities that share NSU's commitment to students who are often the first in their families to see higher education as within reach. Three of those institutions hold minority-serving designations so I understand the opportunities and challenges of universities that are built for and shaped by the communities they serve. What draws me to NSU is the combination of its strong upward trajectory, the complexity and promise of its next stage of growth, and the opportunity to lead an institution whose best years are clearly ahead of it. I believe my experience as a catalytic campus leader, a national voice on systemic change and shared leadership, and a scholar who has studied what it takes to transform institutions positions me well to serve as NSU's next president.

Student Success and Retention

Student success has been the throughline of my entire career, from implementing evidence-based teaching practices as a faculty member to building the institutional infrastructure that helps students persist and graduate. At IU South Bend, I listened directly to students in leadership meetings and in informal conversations over lunch in the cafeteria about the barriers they faced. What I heard led to the creation of a centralized advising center that replaced a fragmented system students found inaccessible and inefficient. I also supported the successful submission of a \$2 million federal Strengthening Institutions Program (SIP) grant focused on first-year retention, improved advising, and the creation of an Office of Professional Engagement to connect students with internships and career pathways. Earlier in my career, as Dean at Fresno State, I led a successful \$1.5 million NSF grant that engaged faculty in learning communities specifically designed to close GPA attainment gaps in first-year science and mathematics courses that are the gateway courses where so many promising students lose their footing.

I also understand the role that athletics plays in student success, campus culture, and institutional identity. At IU South Bend, our NAIA programs were among our most effective tools for recruitment, retention, and completion and one of the most powerful sources of campus pride and community connection. I prioritized funding for full-time coaches and scholarships to strengthen these programs and launched our inaugural Athletics Hall of Fame to celebrate the alumni and coaches who built that tradition. NSU's new athletics program and its pursuit of NAIA membership represent an exciting opportunity to build that same kind of institutional cohesion and student engagement from the ground up, and I would be a committed champion of that effort.

Community-Centric Leadership

One of my first actions as Chancellor of IU South Bend was to orchestrate the purchase of a historic site in the city, which was a formerly segregated public pool, to provide a permanent home for the university's Civil Rights Heritage Center. This decision was about more than real estate. It was a signal to the community about who we are as an institution and what we stand for, and it permanently solidified IU South Bend's commitment to civic and social justice in the region we serve. It also set the tone for the kind of community-centric leadership I believe a regional anchor university must embody.

Building deep, mutually beneficial partnerships became a defining priority of my chancellorship. Recognizing the regional healthcare talent crisis, I convened industry, economic development, and education

leaders in a consortium that launched the North Central Indiana Healthcare Talent Alliance, now fully operational and hosted by the local Chamber of Commerce. This effort elevated healthcare talent development as a new regional economic priority and earned me a seat on the regional economic development board. I also raised private funds to establish a Center for Innovation and Entrepreneurship, connecting students to the regional entrepreneurship ecosystem in partnership with the local Small Business Development Center hosted on our campus, Notre Dame, and IU system support. Under my leadership, our region hosted the 2024 University Economic Development Association (UEDA) national summit, raising IU South Bend's visibility at state and national levels and catalyzing IU-wide economic development initiatives. I also serve on the board of Campus Compact, the national organization dedicated to advancing the civic and academic missions of colleges and universities, and I provide change leadership programming to the University Industry Innovation Network (UIIN) and its international member campuses.

Closer to campus, I nurtured partnerships with local community foundations to expand support for Indiana's 21st Century Scholars early college promise program, grow K-12 programming including summer camps and an innovative Map the Gap initiative for high school graduates, and strengthen our center in Elkhart, 30 miles away, to better serve students where they live. NSU's North Las Vegas campus resonates deeply with me because I understand firsthand what it means for a university to extend its reach into communities that have historically had to come to higher education rather than having higher education come to them. I would bring that same commitment and the track record to back it up to NSU's role as one of southern Nevada's key anchor institutions.

Shared Governance, Transparency, and Inclusivity

One of the best aspects of leading in higher education is the collaborative environment that shared governance makes possible. I take shared governance seriously, not as a compliance or consultation obligation but as a genuine leadership philosophy. In all my leadership roles, I have made it a priority to attend governance meetings, provide regular reports and updates, and meet consistently with faculty senate leaders, staff councils, and student government to listen to concerns, celebrate accomplishments, and work together toward our common goals. I believe that change happens at the speed of trust, and that trust is built on the strength of relationships cultivated through transparent, inclusive engagement over time.

What distinguishes my leadership style is that I have honed my skills as a leader who not only practices shared leadership, but who has also studied it. I co-edited a book on shared leadership in higher education, *Shared Leadership in Higher Education: Framework and Models for Responding to a Changing World* (Holcombe, Kezar, Elrod, and Ramaley, 2021) and have written and spoken on how shared governance and shared leadership can work together as complementary systems that bring institutional vision to life. Shared governance defines who has authority over what; shared leadership is a dynamic process that empowers people across the institution, regardless of title, to contribute their expertise to solving real problems. I have used shared leadership intentionally as a campus leader, most recently at IU South Bend where we restructured the academic schools and colleges by engaging faculty, staff, and administrators as true partners in a process that could easily have generated significant resistance (Davis *et al.*, 2025). The result was a restructuring that people understood, believed in, and helped to implement. I know that shared governance is a keystone principle for Nevada State University and I would arrive as a president who has spent a career honoring that principle and putting it into practice. I would look forward to building the kind of relationships with NSU's faculty, staff, students, and community that make shared governance and shared leadership an authentic part of the institutional culture.

Fiscal Responsibility and Sustainability

Sound fiscal stewardship is a foundational responsibility of presidential leadership. At IU South Bend, I completed a \$32 million IU Bicentennial Campaign in my first year as Chancellor and subsequently grew our endowment from \$15.5 million to \$25 million. I raised \$5 million in private funds for a health sciences simulation center renovation and an additional \$2 million in philanthropic foundation funds for our Center for Innovation and Entrepreneurship. When the pandemic created significant budget pressure, I launched a financial sustainability initiative that established both efficiency measures and a focus on generating new revenue streams. Critically, I did not manage this process from behind closed doors. I established a Campus Budget

Advisory Council early in my tenure, led by the Vice Chancellor for Administration and Finance and representative of the campus community, whose input I took seriously as we made high level budget decisions. It also served as an ongoing vehicle for budget education and transparency across the institution. The result was a process that people trusted even when the decisions were difficult.

I also know that state funding formulas are an important fiscal reality for public universities. Indiana's formula, like Nevada's, tied state revenue directly to retention, progression, and graduation metrics, which made student success not only a mission imperative but a fiscal one, as well. I look forward to developing an understanding of NSHE's specific formula structures and working closely with system leadership to ensure NSU is well-positioned to optimize its performance within them while pursuing alternative revenue streams that will diversify and strengthen the institution's financial foundation.

While it is the people who make a campus special, its facilities and grounds provide the backdrop for learning, discovery, creativity, and community. The opportunities for Nevada State University to expand its physical footprint at both its Henderson location and in North Las Vegas are aligned with the forward-looking, mission-aligned capital development I have been engaged in throughout my career, from contributing to the plans for a privately funded research building at Fresno State, to finalizing a new academic building at Chico State, to converting a vacant structure into a state-of-the-art health sciences simulation center at IU South Bend. I would approach NSU's land development work with enthusiasm, understanding that every building constructed and every acre developed is not just an investment in infrastructure, it is a physical embodiment of the mission, vision and values of Nevada State University.

Academics and Enrollment

At institutions like NSU, academic programs must meet students where they are in their lives and careers while remaining grounded in faculty expertise and aligned with regional workforce needs. At IU South Bend, we used institutional mission, student demand, and labor market data in a faculty-led process to inform the development of a new academic master plan that better served our students, employers and community. New programs in Athletic Training, Data Analytics, Hospitality and Tourism, Sales/Sales Management, and Supply Chain Management emerged from that process, along with priorities for micro-credentials and accelerated dual degree pathways. I also supported the growth of new graduate programs in the health sciences at our Elkhart Center, an experience directly relevant to NSU's ambitions to extend its reach into new communities.

As a national leader, I am engaged in the Higher Learning Commission's Credential Lab Innovation Hub, which is helping campuses build programs that better meet students' workforce and career preparation needs, and was an advisor to the Business Higher Education Forum's 2025 cohort of Faculty Innovation Fellows, a program explicitly aimed at aligning academic programs with employer needs. I would bring relevant campus leadership and fresh national perspectives to bear as NSU expands its academic portfolio intentionally and strategically.

Supporting faculty is equally as important as planning for program growth. NSU's desire to improve tenure density, support scholarship appropriately in a high-teaching-load environment and develop a full-time hiring strategy resonates with my own experience. As a dean, provost and chancellor, I created programs to address faculty salary inversions and compressions and augment faculty professional development budgets and support for research. I worked collaboratively with academic leaders to ensure we had the faculty expertise needed to teach in the classroom and to serve as mentors that create connections and promote belonging, persistence and career success for our students. Ultimately, investing in faculty is investing in students and that same student-centered focus drives my leadership approach.

Success in navigating these challenging times also requires a strategic focus on enrollment management. At IU South Bend, I launched a new enrollment management team that brought student affairs and academic leaders together around shared goals of admissions, persistence, and graduation. The results were tangible: we achieved the first year-over-year enrollment increase since 2009 and were able to quickly rebound post-COVID. Our success came from a campus-wide commitment to retention, enhanced marketing and outreach, and deep attention to the specific populations we serve. We doubled down on K-12 partnerships, recruiting at our local Hispanic community center, hiring alumni as admissions counselors assigned to the schools they attended, and launching new outreach programs for first-generation and low-income students and their families. These are

precisely the kinds of targeted, relationship-based strategies that I believe will serve NSU well as it continues to grow its enrollment and fulfill its statewide mission.

Strategic and Visionary Leadership

In each of my leadership positions, I have led the inclusive development and successful implementation of strategic plans, and I have learned that the hardest part is never writing the plan, it is building the organizational capacity, culture, and commitment to reach the goals. One of my priorities as a leader is to facilitate the engagement of all stakeholders in creating a collective vision that people are genuinely excited about and want to put into practice. This is precisely where my expertise in systemic change leadership makes a meaningful difference. It is relatively straightforward to achieve incremental objectives, but far more difficult to reach goals that require changing organizational structures, policies, procedures, and cultures. This is exactly why my colleagues and I developed the Change Leadership Toolkit (Elrod *et al.*, 2023). It is a research-based, practical guide that helps campus leaders navigate these deeper barriers, and I have applied it both as a campus leader and as an advisor to dozens of campuses nationwide.

Nevada State's youth and momentum are real assets with a culture of innovation and an entrepreneurial spirit that will serve it well as it grows. But rapid growth brings its own complexity: the need to develop policies, processes, accountability systems, and leadership capacity that can sustain and guide that growth over the long term. This is exactly the kind of organizational challenge I am most equipped to help NSU navigate. Implementing the new three-year strategic plan, leading the North Las Vegas expansion, strengthening the NSU brand, and building a culture of leadership are important interconnected dimensions of Nevada State's future growth and success that I would look forward to leading.

Success in realizing a university's vision and goals takes leadership, and while the President is the primary leader on campus, I strongly believe that an important presidential responsibility is to cultivate a culture of leadership across the campus. As Chancellor, I did this in many ways, starting at the top of the organization. I hired and nurtured a strong executive team that functioned as true collaborators, not just direct reports. I created a Chancellor's Leadership Program to build faculty and staff leadership capacity, supported new student leadership programming, and made it a priority to be visible and engaged with the campus. I hosted Coffee with the Chancellor for employees and Pizza with the Chancellor for students each semester to provide updates and hear directly from the people who make the institution work. I also served on regional chamber and economic development boards and met regularly with community and elected leaders to advocate for the campus, build partnerships, and discuss IU's system priorities. As a longtime active participant in the American Association of State Colleges and Universities (AASCU), the primary national association for institutions like NSU, and other national associations, I would arrive with an established network of peer presidents and national partners ready to be put to work on behalf of Nevada State. Further, I would bring an inclusive, visible, and relationship-centered leadership style to the NSU presidency as we work together to advance the mission.

Nevada State University is at an extraordinary moment in its history as it is poised for its next stage of growth and searching for a president who can help it realize its full potential. I believe that my career has been built for exactly this moment. As a Nevadan, I am also personally invested in the success of this state and the students and communities NSU serves. I would be honored to bring my experience, scholarship, energy, and deep commitment to this collective work and the Nevada State University presidency. I look forward to the opportunity to meet with you and the NSU community to explore how we might together embrace the journey, blaze new trails, build bridges, and climb mountains to reach new heights.

With warm regards,



Susan L. Elrod, Ph.D.

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EDUCATION

- 1995 Ph.D., *Genetics*, University of California, Davis (Elizabeth O. Shuster, advisor)
Dissertation: *Genetic Analysis of CDC36 in Saccharomyces cerevisiae*
- 1986 B.S., *Biological Sciences*; Minor, *Chemistry*, California State University, Chico
Honors Research: *Ames Testing of Regional Farm Soils*
President, Associated Students Inc. (1985-6)
Board of Directors Member, Associated Students Inc. (1984-5)

ADMINISTRATIVE AND FACULTY POSITIONS OVERVIEW

Administrative Positions

- June 2019 – Dec 2024 **Chancellor**, Indiana University South Bend
- April 2016 – May 2019 **Provost and Executive Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs**, University of Wisconsin-Whitewater
- Oct 2014 – April 2016 **Interim Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs**, Chico State
- Jan 2013 – Oct 2014 **Dean**, College of Science and Mathematics, Fresno State
- Jan 2010 – Sept 2012 **Executive Director**, Project Kaleidoscope, Association of American Colleges & Universities, Washington, D.C.
- Aug 2007 – Jan 2010 **Director**, Center for Excellence in Science and Mathematics Education, Cal Poly, San Luis Obispo

Faculty and Research Positions

- 2025 - present **Professor Emerita**, Indiana University South Bend
- 2013 – 2025 **Professor**, Biological Sciences associated with administrative positions
- 2008 – 2013 **Professor**, Biological Sciences Dept, Cal Poly, San Luis Obispo
- 2003 – 2008 **Associate Professor**, Biological Sciences Dept, Cal Poly, San Luis
- 1997 – 2003 **Assistant Professor**, Biological Sciences Dept, Cal Poly, San Luis Obispo
- 1995 – 1997 **Postdoctoral Fellow**, Novozymes, Inc., Davis, CA
- 1988 – 1990 **Research Associate**, UC Davis Medical Center, Sacramento, CA
- 1987 – 1988 **Research Assistant**, Biogen IDEC, Inc., Mountain View, CA

LEADERSHIP POSITIONS

Change Leadership Group

Principal

Jan 2025 - present

Principal of the [Change Leadership Group](#), a consulting organization offering services to help campuses build leadership capacity to achieve systemic change results on projects ranging from solving budget deficits, retooling shared governance systems, implementing strategic plans, creating cutting edge innovative programs, improving student success, and building campus-community partnerships. I provide leadership retreats and strategic guidance to campus leaders and their teams to proactively address the systemic issues they are facing. I also provide webinars, workshops and programs on change leadership in conjunction with scientific societies and higher education associations (e.g., AAAS, AASCU, AAU, APLU, CCA, HERS, NCCI, UIIN in Europe), foundations (e.g., NSF, The Sloan Foundation), accreditation organizations (e.g., HLC, NWCCU, WASC Senior Commission) and others.

Indiana University South Bend
Chancellor

June 2019 – Dec 2024

Chancellor of Indiana University South Bend, the largest of five regional anchor university campuses of Indiana University serving 4,400 students: 40% first-generation, 37% minority, and emerging Hispanic-Serving Institution (HSI). IU South Bend offers undergraduate and master's degree programs and certificates in five schools and colleges on an 80-acre campus, at a Center in Elkhart and online. The university has an annual budget of \$62 million, residential housing for 400 students, and six sports in the Chicagoland Collegiate Athletic Conference (CCAC) of the NIAA.

- Completed IU South Bend's \$32 million Bicentennial campaign as part of the larger \$3 billion IU-wide campaign; annually raised between \$2-6 million, regularly exceeding targets; grew endowment from \$15.5 million to \$25 million.
- Shepherded the development of a 2021-2026 *Building a Brighter Future* strategic plan, entirely virtually and during the pandemic.
- Led \$8 million renovation project to create a Health Sciences Simulation Center with a \$5 million lead gift from the Vera Z. Dwyer Charitable Trust and funding from local economic development sources.
- Launched Center for Innovation & Entrepreneurship, including a building renovation and inaugural director position with \$2 million philanthropic gift from a local foundation.
- Created new enrollment management team and strategy resulting in the first year-over-year enrollment increase since 2009 and subsequent year-over-year gains.
- Launched financial sustainability initiative in response to pandemic-related recovery efforts, resulting in significant savings and meeting budget realignment goals.
- Led significant restructuring of academic schools and colleges to create savings, synergies, and new opportunities for program management and development using a shared leadership approach.
- Orchestrated the purchase of a heritage site building in the community to permanently house the IU South Bend Civil Rights Heritage Center and promote campus and community engagement in support of social and civic justice.
- Led conceptualization and launch of the Healthcare Talent Alliance, a consortium of local higher education, K-12, healthcare industry and economic development leaders to improve the regional healthcare talent pipeline, now housed at the South Bend Regional Chamber.
- Established Campus Budget and Space Advisory Councils to create more transparent budget and facilities planning and governance processes.
- Created a new fund to address faculty and staff salary inversions and compressions and fully fund staff reclassifications; created new fund to augment faculty and staff professional development budgets.
- Strengthened coaching and scholarship support for core athletic programs, launched inaugural athletics Hall of Fame.
- Revitalized campus Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion committee with charge to develop a campus DEI plan; launched Equity Advocates on search committees to reduce bias in hiring processes.
- Joined the *Excelencia* Action Network as a President for Latino Student Success (P4LSS).
- Renewed partnership with the Pokagon Band of the Potawatomi Native American tribe, the only federally recognized tribe in Indiana, with an expanded tuition benefit MOU, emerging recruitment and retention programming, and membership on Chancellor's Advisory Board.
- Supported new health sciences graduate programs at Elkhart Center location.
- Launched new programs to support family and parent education using an AmeriCorps VISTA obtained through Campus Compact, expanded dual credit and career pathway partnerships with K-12 schools.
- Expanded programming and staff support for 21st Century Scholars, Indiana's tuition benefit program for income eligible residents, resulting in increased enrollment, retention, graduation outcomes in partnership with the Community Foundation of St. Joseph County.

- Led the campus through the COVID-19 pandemic using a shared leadership approach with minimal impact on campus health.
- Increased regional visibility and enhanced partnerships through the implementation of a comprehensive regional engagement plan; supported the formation of a new campus Center for Community Engagement.
- Enhanced marketing and communications, internally and in our service region.
- Created the *Night of the Titans* alumni award and scholarship fundraising dinner event.
- Led Chancellor's Leadership Program for faculty and staff to build individual and campus capacity for leadership and change.
- Achieved Top Ten Military Friendly® School designation, ranking 6th in the nation amongst small public colleges; improved to 10th in U.S. News Social Mobility Rankings amongst public universities in the Midwest.
- Supported Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education (AASHE) STARS rating (Bronze), Tree Campus and Bee Campus designations.

University of Wisconsin, Whitewater

April 2016 – May 2019

Provost and Executive Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs

Chief Academic Officer of UW-Whitewater, a public comprehensive residential university, one of 13 campuses of the University of Wisconsin system with enrollment of 12,000 and participation in NCAA Division III athletics.

- Led completion of a new university strategic plan; led all aspects of implementation, including tracking key performance indicators and restructuring of some units to meet new goals.
- Created new office of Student Diversity, Engagement and Success that housed High Impact Practices (HIPs) as well as programs that better served underrepresented students access and engagement in HIPs.
- Implemented strategic enrollment planning process, including a new faculty-led academic planning process and an institutional growth mindset framework and belonging focus, including new programs such as the *Warhawk Emergency Fund* and *Fostering Success* program for former foster youth.
- Led program, policy, and operations efforts to incorporate a local two-year college as a new branch campus in a UW System restructuring initiative.
- Conceptualized 150th anniversary celebration activities, including themes for a \$15 million sesquicentennial campaign; shepherded development of case statements and programs that contributed to raising \$10 million raised during the silent phase of the campaign.
- Fostered the campus' participation in national projects, such as Re-imagining the First Year (RFY) sponsored by American Association of State Colleges and Universities (AASCU) and the National Association of System Heads (NASH) Taking Student Success to Scale (TS3) initiative focused on community-based learning and student employment initiatives, and in invited Lumina Foundation-funded projects (e.g., Quality Assurance (QA) Commons and work-based learning initiatives).
- Expanded programs to promote hiring of diverse faculty, staff, and administrators.
- Improved support for research, scholarship, and creative activity, including new investments in faculty development programs, equipment purchases, and mini grants.
- Led participation of UW-W in a pilot of ACUE's (Association of College & University Educators) cohort-based/hybrid faculty teaching development program as part of a UW System initiative.
- Broadened campus commitment to sustainability, including campus participation in the Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education (AASHE) STARS report, re-establishing the Campus Sustainability Council and Faculty Sustainability Fellowship.

California State University, Chico (Chico State)

Oct 2014 – March 2016

Interim Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs

Chief Academic Officer at Chico State, a public comprehensive residential Hispanic-Serving Institution (HSI), one of 23 campuses of the California State University system with enrollment of 16,000.

- Conceived and implemented the largest campus-based faculty equity program in the California State University system (\$1.4 million), working with union leadership and minimal grievances.
- Expanded efforts to increase diversity hiring practices in faculty, staff, and administrative search processes, increased diversity of senior management in Academic Affairs.
- Contributed to final planning phases for occupying new 90,000 square foot arts and humanities building with 100 faculty offices and new spaces for promoting active learning (opened Fall 2016).
- Served as President of the Research Foundation, a separate non-profit auxiliary associated with the university that managed \$50 million in external grants and contracts, philanthropic gifts, and community service organizations; oversight for management of university farm, field station and two nature preserves.
- Co-chaired the Campus Sustainability Committee; supported continued efforts to be a national leader in the campus sustainability movement, including signing of Second Nature's new carbon neutrality and resilience commitment.

California State University, Fresno (Fresno State)

Jan 2013 – Oct 2014

Dean, College of Science and Mathematics

Dean of the College at Fresno State, a public metropolitan Minority-Serving Institution (both HSI and AANAPISI), one of the 23 campuses of the California State University system with enrollment of 25,000.

- Led the College in collaborative strategic planning effort; strengthened the College's governance structure and policy infrastructure, including formation of a new college advisory board.
- Secured \$1.5 M National Science Foundation grant for course reform and faculty development leading to improved student learning and success in STEM; led faculty teams to obtain additional education-focused grants, including California State University system STEM initiative and AmeriCorps VISTA program.
- Improved levels of external grants and contract awards and created new programs for supporting faculty and student research from \$1.5 M to \$4.9 M.
- Created new Advising and Resource Center in partnership with Student Affairs.
- Established new Behavioral Sciences Institute with expanded support for research, education and services for children and adults on the Autism spectrum, including laying the groundwork for a partnership with Valley Children's Hospital to provide on-site services.
- Led final design planning for the Jordan Research Center, a new privately funded interdisciplinary research building.

Association of American Colleges & Universities (AAC&U)

Jan 2010 - Sept 2012

Executive Director, Project Kaleidoscope (PKAL), Washington, DC

Responsible for leadership and operations of national organization dedicated to advancing "what works" in undergraduate STEM (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics) higher education, including setting strategic goals, conceptualizing new initiatives, oversight of a portfolio of six national programs and projects, coordination with other AAC&U offices, and dissemination of program outcomes and trends in STEM higher education.

- Shaped new mission, vision, and goals for PKAL; designed and executed a plan to transition PKAL from an independent national organization into full partnership with AAC&U.
- Sharpened AAC&U's focus on issues of STEM higher education in the strategic plan, national programs, publications, and conferences.

- Conceived and launched three national initiatives with \$1.5 million in funding from public agencies and private foundations on sustainability issues in the undergraduate curriculum, STEM transfer student success and institutional effectiveness; completed Keck/PKAL Facilitating Interdisciplinary Learning project funded by the W.M. Keck Foundation.
- Led PKAL's Summer Leadership Institute for early and mid-career STEM faculty in Crestone, CO (Baca campus of Colorado College); doubled participation numbers; created a sustainable budget model; enhanced the curriculum and evaluation process.

California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo (Cal Poly)

Director, Center for Excellence in Science and Math Education (CESaME)

Aug 2007 – Jan 2010

University-level appointment responsible for interdisciplinary campus center focused on innovative program development for advancing PK-20 STEM (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics) education.

Served as Associate Dean, Strategic Initiatives from July 2009 – Jan 2010 during transition of the College of Education as a School of Education in the College of Science and Mathematics.

- Developed a shared vision and strategic plan for a new campus center for STEM education.
- Obtained over \$2 million in external funding for STEM education programs and managed relationships with funding foundations and corporate sponsors, including The Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and the Stephen Bechtel Fund.
- Built statewide STAR – *STEM Teacher and Researcher* – summer research program for aspiring and early career science teachers on behalf of the California State University (CSU) system (program now has nearly 600 alumni) with National Laboratory and other research site partners across California and the nation (now over 30).
- Supported development of Cal Poly's innovative *Learn by Doing Lab*.

American Council on Education (ACE) Fellow, Colorado College

Aug 2006 – Aug 2007

Presidential Mentor: Richard Celeste

Special Assistant to the Provost

Jun 2005 – Aug 2006

Associate Chair, Biological Sciences Department

Fall 2003 – Spring 2005

Assistant Director, Center for Teaching and Learning (CTL)

Jan 2002 – Dec 2003

PUBLICATIONS

Books and Monographs

Elrod, S.L., Kezar A., González, A., Holcombe, E., (2023) *The Change Leadership Toolkit*. Available at:

<https://pullias.usc.edu/project/the-change-leadership-toolkit-for-advancing-systemic-change/>

Holcombe, E., Kezar, A., Elrod, S.L., and Ramaley, J. (Eds) (2021) *Shared Leadership in Higher Education: Framework and Models for Responding to a Changing World*, Sterling, VA: Stylus.

Elrod, S.L. and Stansfield, W. (2010) *Schaum's Outline of Theory and Problems of Genetics*. 5th edition. New York: McGraw-Hill.

Higher Education Publications and Contributed Works

Long, C.P. & Elrod, S.L. (in preparation) *Building Solidarity Between Faculty and Administrators* (tentative title). Change: The Magazine of Higher Learning.

Elrod, S.L. (2026). *Stewarding Successful Systemic Change: What Board Members Need to Know* Trusteeship Magazine. 34 (3): TBD (in press).

Davis, H.S., Pearson, J., & Elrod, S.L. (2025) *Reimagining Academic Organizational Restructuring from the Middle Out*. Change: The Magazine of Higher Learning. 57(6): 4-13.

<https://doi.org/10.1080/00091383.2025.2568346>

- Kezar, A., and Elrod, S.L. (August 26, 2025) *Divided We Fall*. Inside Higher Education. Opinion. Available at: <https://www.insidehighered.com/opinion/views/2025/08/26/facultyadministrative-divides-weaken-higher-ed-opinion>
- Elrod, S.L. and Kezar, A. (March 25, 2025) *Keep Calm and Carry On*. Inside Higher Education. Opinion. Available at: <https://www.insidehighered.com/opinion/career-advice/advancing-administrator/2025/03/25/how-leaders-can-chart-path-through-chaos>
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- Elrod, S.L., L. Whitehead, M.T. Huber (2020) *The Scholarship of Mission: A New Concept for Promoting Scholarly Work Advancing Institutional Goals*, Change: The Magazine of Higher Learning, 52:1, 15-22.
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- Elrod, S.L. Interviewee. “Episode 1812: *Research on Institutional Change*” Math Ed Podcast. Posted August 24, 2018. https://www.podomatic.com/podcasts/mathed/episodes/2018-08-24T07_39_07-07_00.
- Elrod, S.L. and Whitehead, L. (March 7, 2018) *Turning on the Thrive Channel to Accelerate Change in Higher Education*. Accelerating Systemic Change Network Blog Posting. Available at: <https://ascnhighered.org/ASCN/posts/201117.html>
- Elrod, S.L. and Kezar, A. (2017) *Increasing Student Success in STEM: Summary of a Guide to Systemic Institutional Change*. Change: The Magazine of Higher Learning. **49**(4):26-34.
- Elrod, S.L. (2016) *Translating Science Education Research into Practice: A New Imperative*. The American Biology Teacher. **78**(6): 443.
- Elrod, S.L. and Kezar, A. (2016) *Increasing Student Success in STEM: A Guide to Systemic Institutional Change*. Washington, DC: AAC&U. Available at: <https://secure.aacu.org/store/detail.aspx?id=PKALSTSS>
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- Elrod, S.L. and Kezar, A. (2014) *Developing Leadership in STEM Fields: The PKAL Summer Leadership Institute*, *Journal of Leadership Studies* **8**(1): 33-39; also served as guest editor with Kezar for this symposium issue on STEM Faculty Leadership Development Programs.
- Elrod, S.L. (2014) *Quantitative Reasoning: The Next "Across the Curriculum" Movement*, *Peer Review* **16**(3); 4-8.
- Elrod, S.L. and Roth, M.J.S. (2012) *Leadership for Interdisciplinary Learning: A Practical Guide to Mobilizing, Implementing, and Sustaining Campus Efforts*. Washington, DC: Association of American Colleges and Universities.
- Kezar, A. and Elrod, S.L. (2012) *Facilitating Interdisciplinary Learning: Lessons from Project Kaleidoscope*. *Change: The Magazine of Higher Education* **44** (1): 16-25.
- Elrod, S.L. (2011) *What Works in Facilitating Interdisciplinary Learning in Science and Mathematics*. Washington, DC: Association of American Colleges and Universities.
- Elrod, S.L., Husic, D. and Kinzie, J. (2010) *Research and Discovery Across the Curriculum*, *Peer Review* **12** (2): 5-9.
- Elrod, S.L. (2010) *Project Kaleidoscope 2.0: Leadership for Twenty-First-Century STEM Education*, *Liberal Education* **96** (4): 24-28.
- Garvin-Doxas, K., Klymkowsky, M. and Elrod, S.L. (2007) *Building, Using and Maximizing the Impact of Concept Inventories in the Biological Sciences: Report on a National Science Foundation-sponsored Conference on the Construction of Concept Inventories in the Biological Sciences*, *CBE-Life Science Education* **6**: 277-282.
- Elrod, S.L. and Somerville, M.M. (2007) *Literature-Based Scientific Learning: A Collaborative Model*, *Journal of Academic Librarianship*. **33**(6): 684-691.

Scientific Research Publications (student co-authors are underlined)

- Elrod, S.L., Chen, S.M., Schwartz, K., and Shuster, E.O. (2009) *Optimizing sporulation conditions for different *Saccharomyces cerevisiae* strain backgrounds*. *Methods in Molecular Biology*. 557:21-6.
- Lord, N., Kaplan, C., Shank, P., Kitts, C. and Elrod, S.L. (2002) *Assessment of fungal diversity using terminal restriction fragment (TRF) analysis: Comparison of 18S and ITS ribosomal regions*. *FEMS Microbiology Ecology* **24**(3): 327-337
- Elrod, S.L., Jones, A., Berka, R., Cherry, J.R. (2000) *Cloning of the *Aspergillus oryzae* hemA gene and its use as a selectable marker*. *Current Genetics* **38**: 291-8
- Elrod, S.L. (1995) *Genetic Analysis of the *Saccharomyces cerevisiae* CDC36 gene*. [Doctoral Dissertation](#). University of California, Davis.
- Hatcher, S.L.S., Teplitz, R.L., Elrod, S.L. (1990) *Rapid Alkaline Transfer of Low Molecular Weight DNA From Nusieve Gtg Agarose Gels*. *Biotechniques* **9**(3):260-262
- Scudder, S.A., Elrod, S.L., Gumerlock, P., Kawasaki, E.S. (1990) *Detection of the Multidrug Resistance (MDR) Gene Using the Polymerase Chain Reaction (PCR): Correlation with in vitro Drug-Testing*. *Clinical Research*. **38**(1): A133.

Patents

- Elrod, S.L., *Polypeptides having Uroporphyrinogen Decarboxylase Activity and Nucleic Acids Encoding Same*. Novo Nordisk Biotech, Inc., assignee. U.S. Patent 6,200,795, March 13, 2001.
- Elrod, S.L., Cherry, J. and Jones, A. *A Method for Increasing Hemoprotein Production in Filamentous Fungi*. Novo Nordisk Biotech, Inc., assignee. U.S. Patents 6,261,827, August 8, 2000; 6,100,057, July 17, 2001.
- Jensen, E. B., Elrod, S.L., Cherry, J. *Methods for Overproducing Polypeptides in Respiratory-Deficient Cells*. Novo Nordisk Biotech, Inc., assignee. U.S. Patent 5,891,669, April 6, 1999.

Elrod, S.L. and Cherry, J. *Aspergillus oryzae* 5-Aminolevulinic Acid Synthases and Nucleic Acids Encoding Same. Novo Nordisk Biotech, Inc., assignee. U.S. Patents 5,871,991, February 16, 1999; 5,958,747, September 29, 1999.

GRANTS AND CONTRACTS

Science Education Grants and Contracts

With National Colleagues

Elrod, S. and Kezar, A. (September 2024 – current) *Refining the Change Leadership Toolkit (CLT)*, Gates Foundation.

Elrod, S. and Kezar, A. (December 2022 – August 2024) *Change Leadership Toolkit (CLT): Development of a Validated CLT Guidebook, Curriculum, and Additional Case Studies*, Alfred P. Sloan Foundation.

Kezar, A. and Elrod, S.L. (August 2021 – December 2022) *Refining Resources in Leadership Teams for Institutional Transformation*, Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation.

Elrod, S.L. and Bauerle, C. (August 2018 – June 2022, with NCE due to COVID) *Building Leadership Capacity for Systemic Change*. Workshop Proposal. National Science Foundation (DBI/DUE # 1841055 and 2017799).

Allen, D.E., Maskiewisc, A., Sirum, K., D'Avanzo, C., and Elrod, S.L. (2014 – 2017) *RCN-UBE Faculty Development Network for Undergraduate Biology (FDN-UB)*, National Science Foundation (DBI #1346570)

At Fresno State

Elrod, S.L., U. Muller, L. Burger, D. Zhang, M. Golden (2014 – 2017) *WIDER: Faculty Learning for Outcomes and Knowledge (FLOCK)* National Science Foundation (DUE #1347822)

Elrod, S.L. (continuing P.I.) *et al.* (2011 – 2014) *Developing Biomedical Research Infrastructure for California's Central Valley*. National Institutes of Health (NIH) Research Infrastructure in Minority Institutions (RIMI) #5P20MD002732-05 (revised).

At Project Kaleidoscope

Elrod, S.L., and A. Kezar (January 2012 - December 2014) *Now What? An Institutional STEM Effectiveness Framework for Bringing National Recommendations to Scale*, W.M. Keck Foundation

Elrod, S.L. (June 2011 - September 2012) *PKAL: Ramping Up for STEM Success*, The Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation.

Elrod, S.L. (January 2010 - December 2013) *PKAL: Mobilizing Disciplinary Societies - Education for a Sustainability Future*, Department of Education - Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education (FIPSE # P116B100142).

Elrod, S.L., and J.L. Narum (January 2008 - June 2012) *PKAL: Facilitating Interdisciplinary Learning*, W.M. Keck Foundation

Cunningham, B., J. Young, and S.L. Elrod (January 2008 - December 2011) *PKAL: STEM Leaders Developing Leaders*, National Science Foundation, #0734998.

At Cal Poly

Elrod, S.L. (September 2009 – December 2010) *A National Pilot for the STAR (Science Teacher and Researcher) Program*, National Science Foundation's Noyce Program, # 0952013.

Elrod, S.L., S. Hackwood, A.P. Diaz, D. Howard-Greene, and S. Ogren (January – December 2009) *California STEM Innovation Network Planning Grant*, Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation and The Stephen Bechtel Fund.

Elrod, S.L. (Mar 2009 – Mar 2010) *Science Teacher and Researcher (STAR) Program*, The Stephen Bechtel Fund.

Elrod, S.L., and J. Bissell (February 2008 - February 2009) *Science Teacher and Researcher (STAR) Program*, Stephen Bechtel Fund and Fluor Corporation Foundation.

Elrod, S.L. (January 2007 – December 2009) *Literature-Based Scientific Learning in Genetics*, National Science Foundation, # 0633351; *Conceptual Assessment in Biology Meeting II* Supplement.

Scientific Research Grants and Contracts

Kitts, C., R. Cano, and S.L. Elrod (2001 - 2004) *Development of microbial tools for analysis of bioremediation at the Guadalupe Dunes*, UNOCAL Corp.

Elrod, S.L. (2000 - 2002) *Analysis of Fungal Molecular Diversity during Phytoremediation in a Petroleum-Contaminated Dune System*, CSUPERB (California State University Programs for Education and Research in Biotechnology).

Elrod, S.L. (1997, 1998, 1999, & 2000) *Expression of bovine beta-casein in Aspergillus oryzae*. University Summer Services Grants and Faculty Development Grants (Cal Poly).

National Institutes of Health Molecular and Cellular Biology pre-doctoral training grant (1991 - 1992).

University of California, Davis Graduate Research Awards (1990 - 93).

BOARD & NATIONAL SERVICE, PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS AND AWARDS

Board Service

- Campus Compact Board of Directors (2024 – present)
- NAIA Chicagoland Collegiate Athletics Conference Council of Presidents (2019-2024)
- South Bend Elkhart Regional Partnership (SBERP) Economic Development Board, including Chair, Education and Workforce Committee (2023 – 2024); Member, Higher Education Advisory Council (2019 - 2024)
- *Change: The Magazine of Higher Learning*, Consulting Editorial Board (2021 – present)
- South Bend Regional Chamber of Commerce Board, Member (2019 – 2024)
- HERS Board of Directors; Nominations and Governance Chair, Executive Committee Member (2018 – 2024)

National Advisory Boards/Projects

- National Academies of Sciences, [Developing Indicators for STEM Education](#) consensus study committee member (2018).
- Business Higher Education Forum (BHEF) Senior Advisor, [Faculty Innovation Fellowship](#), funded by the ECMC Foundation.
- Higher Learning Commission (HLC) Design Team, [Credential Lab Innovation Center](#), funded by the ECMC Foundation; continuing service as advisor to the Design Camp.
- Association of American Colleges & Universities (AAC&U) Advisor, [Curriculum to Career Innovations Institute](#), funded by the Lumina Foundation.
- [Mathematics Teacher Education Partnership](#), Advisor, funded by the National Science Foundation.
- Co-founder, *Coalition for Reform of Undergraduate STEM Education (CRUSE)*, a coalition comprised of higher education national association leaders (2012)

Awards and Honors

- Honorary Degree, Washington High School, South Bend, Indiana, 2024
- Woman of the Year, YWCA of South Bend, 2022
- American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS) [Fellow](#), elected in 2019.
- Apple Polysher Teaching Award, Poly Reps, Cal Poly – San Luis Obispo, 1998

- National Woman's Political Caucus Outstanding Woman Student Leader, Chico, CA, 1985, 1986
- Honors Research Program, CSU Chico, 1984-85
- *Omicron Theta Epsilon* Biological Honors Society, California State University, Chico, 1984