2024-2025 ANNUAL REPORT

OTTER
STUDENT UNION

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Otter Student Union (OSU) serves as the heartbeat of campus and is a vibrant space where our diverse community connects, collaborates, and celebrates. From our large scale events in the OSU Ballroom to the engaging speakers and programs offered by the Otter Cross Cultural Center, we are proud of the moments this year has brought.

We have put together this annual report to share our journey through the milestones and memories that have made this past year truly unforgettable, affirming our commitment to fostering communities, valuing voices, and cultivating a sense of belonging reflective of CSUMB's founding vision. We believe our programs and services are instrumental in supporting transformative learning experiences and empowering students to make meaningful, responsible contributions to their communities and the world.

Included in this report you will find:

1. A summary of the OSU Board of Directors activities
2. A review and analysis of all OSU/OC3 programs, events, and partnerships
3. An analysis of the annual budgets for both the OSU and OC3
4. A summary and review of the following:
    a. Marketing and Communications efforts and initiatives
    b. A/V Technical Services projects and support activities
    c. OSU Operations and facility usage
    d. Administrative Services support activities

The Otter Student Union continues to be a central part of the student experience through hosting a wide variety of events designed to help

Jeff Rensel
Director, Otter Student Union

PERSONNEL SUMMARY & ORG CHART

This section is written to fulfill compliance with OSU policy 242518 in section 2 of the OSU policy manual, which states “The Board shall receive at least an annual report on the status of OSU employment efforts in the implementation of this policy.” This particular policy deals with Fair Employment.

In our efforts to ensure fair employment practices consistent with the California State University Board of Trustees policies and guidelines set by the Chancellor, OSU works closely with the University Corporation during our hiring processes. Currently, OSU technically has no employees. All of our employees are University Corporation employees on loan to OSU. OSU is charged for salaries/benefits/etc but does not carry the legal responsibility for those employees.

With that said, University Corporation is dedicated to fair employment practices as well. Their equal employment opportunity statement may be found on the CSUMB website if you search for “University Corporation,” “Policies Home,” then “Personnel.” University Corporation also requires members of search committees to undergo training to learn how to apply equal employment opportunity practices in their work.

STUDENT EMPLOYMENT SUMMARY

The OSU and OC3 Student Employee programs grew significantly in 2024-2025 as we entered into our fourth year with the Otter Student Union building being open. Student assistant programs continued to thrive in following areas:

- Operations
- Marketing and Communications
- A/V Technical Services
- Administrative Office
- Otter Cross Cultural Center

2024-2025
OTTER STUDENT UNION AND OTTER CROSS CULTURAL CENTER ORGANIZATION CHART

CSUMB PRESIDENT
Vanya Quiñones, PhD

CSUMB VICE PRESIDENT ENROLLMENT MANAGEMENT AND STUDENT AFFAIRS
Ben Corpus

OTTER STUDENT UNION BOARD OF DIRECTORS

OTTER STUDENT UNION AND OTTER CROSS CULTURAL CENTER

DIRECTOR OTTER STUDENT UNION
Jeff Rensel

DIRECTOR OTTER CROSS CULTURAL CENTER
Rudy Medina, PhD

ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR OPERATIONS
Diana Ballesteros

OFFICE COORDINATOR
Vânia Silveira

STUDENT ASSISTANTS

OC3 PROGRAM COORDINATOR
Victoria Gómez

STUDENT COORDINATORS

OC3 PROGRAM COORDINATOR
Peter Xiong

STUDENT COORDINATORS

MARKETING & DESIGN SPECIALIST
Karina Rios Alvarez

STUDENT ASSISTANTS

OPERATIONS SPECIALIST
Marlena Truong

STUDENT ASSISTANTS

A/V TECHNICAL SERVICES COORDINATOR
Carlos Ronco

STUDENT ASSISTANTS

OTTER STUDENT UNION BOARD OF DIRECTORS 2024-2025

CHAIR, Lesley Solano
VICE CHAIR, Jianshan Chen Khalsa
TREASURER, Philip Gianino
SECRETARY, Sarah Walter

Thomas Nigro
Kassandra Fimbres
Jasmyn Meyer
Milo Drake
Carisse Ballard
Babita Gupta, PhD
Jenny McAdams
Jeff Rensel
Ben Corpus

MISSION

The Otter Student Union is the heartbeat of campus and a bridge to surrounding communities, providing spaces, opportunities, and advocacy that cultivates belonging reflective of CSUMB's founding vision.

VISION

The Otter Student Union creates thriving student-centered spaces that support empowerment, authenticity, and Otter pride to cultivate socially conscious agents of change with sustainable connections between student, faculty, staff, alumni, and surrounding communities.

VALUES

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

SUMMARY

The OSU Board of Directors serves to improve the student experience at CSUMB and within the Otter Student Union. By facilitating communication, aligning resources, relaying the student voice, and offering programs, the board works to create a welcoming environment for the CSUMB community. The OSU Board of Directors conducts regular review and approval of OSU policies, approves the annual budget, and works to ensure the OSU is best serving the student population and its needs.

The OSU Board of Directors consists of a collection of CSUMB students, faculty, staff, and surrounding community with the purpose to manage the business and affairs of the OSU and operate solely for the benefit of California State University, Monterey Bay.

We are thankful for the dedication and commitment of the 2024-2025 Board of Directors including our executive officers:

- Lesley Solano, Chair
- Jianshan Chen Khalsa, Vice Chair
- Philip Gianino, Treasurer
- Sarah Walter, Secretary
- Thomas Nigro, Student Director
- Blanca Herrera, Student Director
- Jasmyn Meyer, Student Director
- Milo Drake, Student Director
- Ashley Hancock, Student Director
- Izabella Zavala, Student Director
- Babita Gupta, Faculty Representative
- Carisse Ballard, Alumni Representative
- Jenny McAdams, Community Representative
- Jeff Rensel, Director (designated)
- Ben Corpus, VP EMSA (designated)

OSU 2024-2025 Board of Directors

This year the OSU Board supported various things during the 2024-2025 academic year including the following:

- Hosted OSU Board Retreat in August to onboard new board members and kick-off the school year.
- Completed a successful annual audit of the OSU Auxiliary organization.
- Invited a variety of guest speakers and campus leaders to board meetings to engage in discussion including President, Vanya Quiñones, Otter Kitchens, Campus Sustainability, and Otter Athletics.
- Expanded study spaces for students in the OSU during Finals Week including four rooms available for studying until 12am midnight.
- Facilitated in the planning of the Otter Statue Unveiling outside the OSU in the OSU Main Quad Plaza.
- Passed a Board Resolution for improved governance and alignment of the OSU with CSUMB.
- Promoted and engaged with the CSUMB community for the annual OSU Customer Satisfaction Survey, increasing participation.
- Launched a new partnership and program with Wonderfil to bring the Wonderfil Refill & Renew Sustainability Pilot Event to the OSU during Earth Month.
- Launched a new partnership and "Nuestros Sueños Are Not Illegal" art exhibit in the OSU in collaboration with the Visual and Public Art program within the College of Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences.
- Created and engaged with the campus community with the OSU Community Otter Alebrije Mural entitled "Alebrije del Mar: Where Culture Swims and Spirit Soars."

"Alebrije del Mar: Where Culture Swims and Spirit Soars"

Board members participating in a team building exercise during the Board Retreat.

Board members cheering on runners at the second annual Monte's 5K.

In the spring semester the 2025-2026 Board of Directors was selected. The board is looking forward to an incredible year together and excited about the impact they will have on campus.

2025-2026 OSU Board of Directors:

- Philip Gianino, Chair
- Milo Drake, Vice Chair
- Adan Olague, Treasurer
- Savanah Browder, Secretary
- Blanca Herrera, Student Director
- Jasmyn Meyer, Student Director
- Arshpreet Kaur (AK), Student Director
- David Santizo, Student Director
- Flavio Cuevas. Student Director
- Babita Gupta, Faculty Representative
- Carisse Ballard, Alumni Representative
- Jenny McAdams, Community Representative
- Jeff Rensel, Director (appointed)
- Ben Corpus, VP EMSA (appointed)

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This academic year marked a historic milestone for the Otter Cross Cultural Center. In 2010, the OC3 was founded to create a more inclusive campus where students felt a sense of belonging. The 2024/2025 Academic Year our mission expanded. All five affinity centers are now officially housed under our umbrella: the APIDA Center, El Centro, The Helen Rucker Center for Black Excellence, the Rainbow Raft Pride Center, and Undocu-Success now operate collectively within OC3, creating a more unified and collaborative foundation for identity-based support and advocacy on our campus. Bringing these centers together has allowed us to amplify our shared mission of equity and belonging, foster greater cross-cultural solidarity, and streamline resources and programming to better serve our diverse student communities.

The Affinity Center professional and student staff exemplified the transformative power of forging strong partnerships across the university and with the broader community. These partnerships have allowed us to strengthen existing programs, create and grow inclusive and affirming spaces, and ensure students feel welcomed and seen.

Through strong partnerships, OC3 was able to sustain the substantial attendance growth we had last year. Students attending events and programs indicate that students are feeling a sense of belonging by connecting with others with similar identities. Below is a breakdown of event/program participation over the last two years:

- Fall 2023 approx. 800 participants
- Fall 2024 approx. 1,974 participants
- Fall 2025 approx. 1,899 participants
- Spring 2023 approx. 1,156 participants
- Spring 2024 approx. 1,236 participants
- Spring 2025 approx. 3,813 participants (includes Affinity Ceremonies)
- OC3 participation grew by 1,254 in 2023/2024 (numbers do not include Affinity Ceremonies)

The continued progression and sustaining of attendance at events also demonstrates the reach of the center and the role it plays in maintaining a vibrant campus culture.
Given the current political climate and attacks on programming that the Otter Cross Cultural Center has traditionally hosted, this year's theme was "rooted."

This theme speaks to the need to stay grounded in values of justice and equity, while continuing to grow through partnerships, healing, engagement, affirming identities, and community-building.

In this report you will find:

1. Overview of Programs and Partnerships
2. Analysis of Select Events
3. Analysis of Budget
4. Recommendations for AY24-25

Rudy Medina
Director, Otter Cross Cultural Center

OVERVIEW OF PROGRAMS AND PARTNERSHIPS

This year, OC3 continued to grow and continued to build partnerships to expand the reach of the Affinity Centers. OC3 was able to build on the success from last year and use that momentum to increase its partnerships and increase engagement in long standing events like the Affinity Ceremonies, All Black Gala, International Womxn's Day, Werk Witch, Dia de los Muertos, the Block Party, and create new traditions like the hosting Otter Thursday. Partnerships included departments in both Academic and Student Affairs. Some of the partnerships included: Ethnic and Gender Studies, Humanities and Communications, Service Learning, First Year Seminar, Undergraduate Research Opportunities Center, College Corps, Personal Growth and Counseling Center, Student Disability and Accessibility Center, Project Rebound, Office of Community and Belonging, Service Learning, College Corps, Transfer Center, Associated Students, Student Engagement and Leadership Development, Library, El Centro, Helen Rucker Center for Black Excellence, Rainbow Raft Pride Center, UndocuSuccess, APIDA Center, Basic Needs, Otter Dreamers, Native American Students United, EOP, CAMP, Asian Pacific Islander Employee Affinity Group, and others.

In total, OC3 led 76 programs with a total of 5,712 participants. Below we highlight selected signature programs and events for the 2024/2025 year:

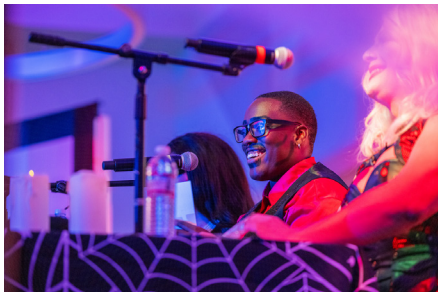
OC3 BLOCK PARTY

The OC3 Block Party kicked off our 14th year of existence. The OC3 Block Party is designed to welcome and celebrate the start of the academic year by bringing University students, staff, faculty, and community partner organizations together. One of the goals is to cultivate opportunities for students looking to engage in cultural- and identity-based organizations and resources, as well as find community amongst other students and community organizations. The event also included local artists and performances that welcome and celebrate the diversity of our campus and community. We saw over 150 participants during our event.

WERK WITCH DRAG SHOW & GET READY WITH ME: DRAG QUEEN EDITION

Werk Witch continued the tradition of selling out in under 24 hours. 300 tickets went live and the show was sold out on MyRaft in under 24 hours of going live. This year OC3 collaborated with the Rainbow Raft Pride Center to host the event. Werk Witch is one of our most highly anticipated signature programs. It has garnered attendance from participants beyond the CSUMB community. The annual drag show competition highlights LGBTQ+ hxstory and the importance of drag culture, which has been critical in demonstrating the support and awareness of LGBTQ+ identities. Werk Witch is an intersectional drag show that encourages drag queens, kings, and non-binary performers to let their brilliance and diva shine bright like a diamond. We had three professional drag queens participate in the event. All Drag Queens performed and also served as judges. Ayumi Please was the MC and the DJ for the event.

Leading up to Werk Witch, we hosted "Get Ready with Me: Drag Queen Edition." At this event, participants were able to learn how to apply drag makeup, learn about drag hxstory. Lastly, we also hosted a "How to Vogue" workshop that was facilitated by Keenan, a dancer who taught the BIPOC and activist origins of voguing within the drag community and the basics of the dance genre. The new event was a success. Keenan was a great teacher that really met the students where they were at.



DIWALI

For the third year, this event has proven that Desi students want space to celebrate Diwali. Over 70 students celebrated Diwali, a religious and cultural festival in Hinduism, Buddhism, Sikhism and Jainism. Diwali celebrates the festival of lights, while highlighting the diversity of South Asia. Students dressed in a variety of traditional South Asian clothing. Attendees began the celebration by mingling at tables, dancing, participating in various activities, and by eating traditional food.

DÍA DE LOS MUERTOS

OC3 co-hosted the 27th Annual Day of the Dead Celebration which is one of CSUMB's longest lasting Traditions. The celebration is led by the Visual and Public Art Program. The event was made possible through support, contributions, and collaborations with the Consilio: el Centro, VPA, and OC3 with the support of the Otter Student Union, Undocu-otters and Allies, and CSUMB Special Event funding. This year's event included Aztec Dancers, drummers, a processional, and a community gathering at the VPA Complex (Building 70, VPA project space).

The Day of the Dead Event included a series of hands-on workshops that OC3 and el Centro helped in hosting. OC3 hosted a

ALL BLACK GALA

The All Black Gala is a formal event that celebrates Black hxstory and the immense diversity of Black culture, brilliance, and lived experiences. The aim of this event is to foster a sense of belonging and to cultivate community amongst various campus populations in order to address campus retention, progression, and graduation. By bringing together students, staff, faculty, alumni, and community members, this event offers opportunities to build networks, learn from one another, and participate in critical and contemporary discussions that impact society.

This year, Lori Patton Davis, Ph.D. was our keynote. Dr. Patton Davis is the Heyman Endowed Chair and Faculty Director of the UCLA Educational Leadership Program. Dr. Patton Davis is one of the most highly respected, accomplished, and influential scholars in the field of higher education. Her work challenges higher education to acknowledge, examine, and deconstruct the systems of oppression that are embedded within our institutions. Her work is grounded in critical race theory, Black feminist thought and intersectionality. Dr. Patton Davis' scholarship focuses on student development theory and practice; intersections of race, gender, and sexual orientation among college students; African American educational experiences with a focus on Black women; and cultural centers. "Education Week" named her among the top 200 educators in the country and "Diverse: Issues in Higher Education" honored her as one of the top 35 women influencing higher education.

IGNITE! SOCIAL JUSTICE LEADERSHIP RETREAT

Ignite! Social Justice and Leadership retreat is a three-day retreat that allows students to focus on aspects of storytelling, art, wellness, and discussion in order to reflect on systems of oppression and understand their roles in engaging in activism. This retreat brought people together for a weekend full of engaging activities, workshops, and experiences that will aid in students' journeys. Professional staff facilitators from OC3 and OSU collaborated on the curriculum development.

LGBTQIA2S+ SUMMIT

In collaboration with the Rainbow Raft Pride Center, we hosted the first annual LGBTQIA2S+ Summit. The summit brought together students, staff, and community members for a day of empowerment, education, and connection to discuss pertinent issues within the LGBTQ+ community. This student-led event featured keynote speakers and interactive workshops around topics such as queer identity, activism, intersectionality, and mental health. The summit created a welcoming and affirming space for students to celebrate their identities, share their experiences, and build solidarity across communities.

The events included: Queer Brunch, Radical Belonging: Lesbians of Color Leading Resistance, Decolonizing Love, Book Chats: Somewhere We Are Human, and Prieto a reading with Yosimar Reyes.

INTERNATIONAL WOMXN'S DAY SUMMIT

The International Womxn's Day Summit was a day full of programs for participants to connect, explore, and engage in topics that centered on women and femme identities. The events provide participants the opportunity to learn more about their individual identities. Rooted in the philosophies of intersectional feminism, the summit recognized that all womxn and femme-identifying individuals experience oppression, including in varying forms based on race, age, class, gender, sexuality, dis/ability, etc. With that in mind, the summit aimed at creating a space where people felt supported, included, and represented. Lastly, the events were intentionally inclusive of transgender, nonbinary, intersex, gender non-conforming, and male-identified individuals. This was also done in collaboration with Associated Students, El Centro, Undocu-Success, Rainbow Raft Pride Center, HRC, the Otter Student Union, Men of Color Alliance, and Office of Community and Belonging.

The events included:

Accelerating Action: Student Panel & Brunch

The summit began with a student panel and brunch where students talked about how they navigate higher education.

Círculo with Campesina Womb Justice

Maria Ramos, organizer of Campesina Womb Justice, talked about reproductive justice and healing for indigenous and migrant campesinas. The event included a circulo where all were welcomed to participate and discuss healing and justice in reproductive health.

A Day without Lesbians is a Day without Sunshine

An intimate discussion reflecting on the works of BIPOC lesbian authors and activists. Conversations focused on their writings, personal experiences, and the importance of honoring the queer community that has paved the way.

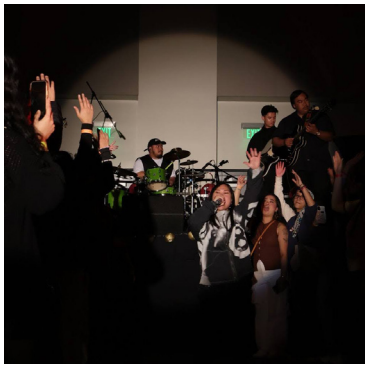
Reset. Rewind, Restore: Yoga & Radical Rest

Nicole Steward discussed how to navigate burnout. This workshop combined gentle yoga, restorative practices, and provided guided relaxation. The session embraced deep rest and focused on nourishing the body.

All Gxrl's Party

The summit was capped off with the All Gxrl's Party, featuring an open mic with poetry, singing, and other performances. A dance party followed with mocktails, a photo booth, and music by DJ Baby Drizzle.

APIDA NIGHT FESTIVAL



The APIDA Night Festival honored the cultural and beautiful traditions of the Asian, Pacific Islander and Desi American (APIDA) community. Inspired by the iconic 626 Night Market, this event was a dynamic fusion of flavors, art, and music that brought people together to honor the deep cultural heritage of APIDA communities.

The event offered breathtaking performances featuring Pak Joko, Akif, APIA, local food vendors and a student art marketplace brimming with handcrafted goods and interactive workshops. Each vendor and activity highlighted the intersections of tradition and contemporary.

STAFF AND FACULTY QT LGBTQ+ COMMUNITY TEACH-IN

The purpose of CSUMB Staff and Faculty QT LGBTQ+ Teach-In is to help build an inclusive and equitable campus community where all members of diverse sexual orientations, gender identities, and gender expressions are welcomed, valued, and affirmed. The teach-in is offered each year to CSUMB faculty, staff, and community partners and provides resources and specialized training focused on supporting LGBTQ+ populations. Each year, the curriculum is developed, revamped, and implemented by our facilitators in order to be relevant with best practices and strategies. Staff and Faculty QT LGBTQ+ Teach-In offers an educational curriculum that centers on intersectional, reflective, and arts-based learning, while providing applicable tools to intervene and support communities in processing identities and crises

SOCIAL JUSTICE SCHOLARS

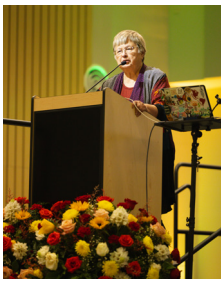
The OC3 Social Justice Scholars Program (formerly the Internship Program) focuses on creating campus engagement opportunities that are conscious of race/ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender identity, and ability/disability. The purpose of the program is to explore, address, and learn about issues that impact our communities well being through a critical and social justice lens. The Social Justice Scholars Program is designed to provide our participants with opportunities to develop student-led programs based on their interests. Each student will receive a budget to organize an event they are passionate about.

This year, we selected 5 Social Justice Scholars. In the Fall of 2024, our scholars organized an event that Centered underrepresented voices. In the Spring of 2025, our Social Justice Scholars hosted their student-led events which included: Danza For All, Non Cis Nonsense, Environmental Justice Movie Night, Non-Cis Nonsense Craft Day: Gender Mood Board, and Non-Cis Nonsense: The Future is Non-Cis ft. Speakers from the EpiCenter.

AFFINITY CEREMONIES FOR GRADUATING STUDENTS

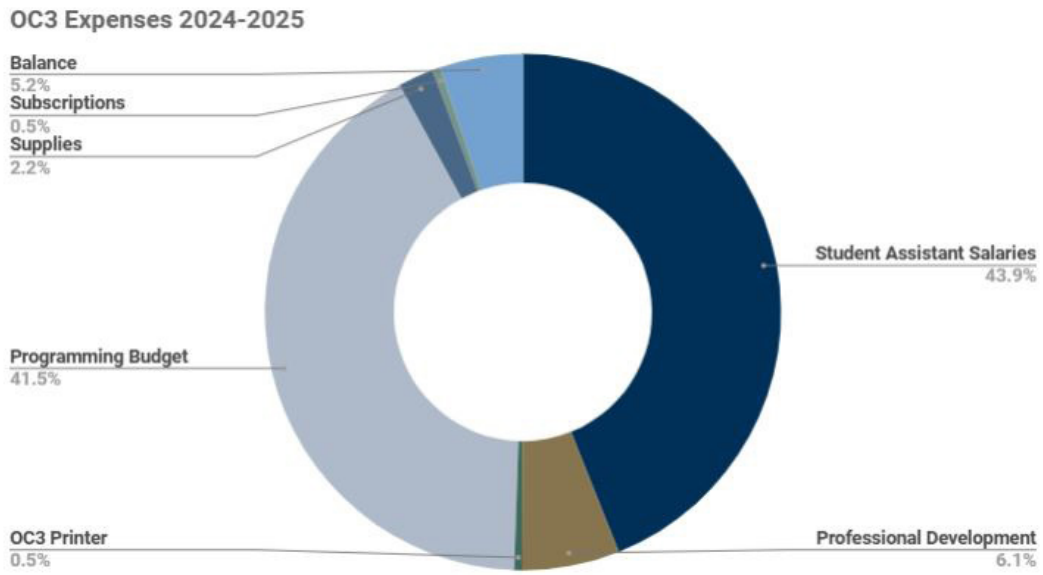
The Affinity Ceremonies for Graduating Students is in its eigth year under the direction of the Otter Cross Cultural Center. We hosted nine CSUMB Affinity Ceremonies for graduating students: Asian Pacific Islander and Desi American (APIDA); Black/African Heritage; Latiné; Family Friendly Grad; Native American; Students with Disabilities; Rainbow (LGBTQ+); Undocu-Otter; and Veterans. The Affinity Ceremonies honor the accomplishments and experiences of CSUMB graduates who come from historically underrepresented communities.

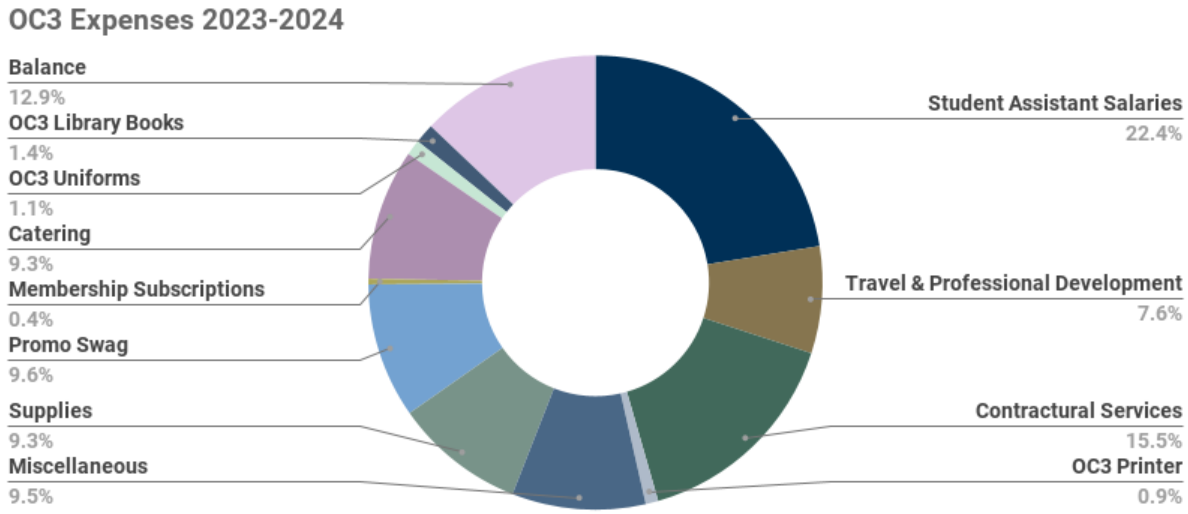
These ceremonies offered keynote speakers, performances, and cultural celebrations separate from CSUMB's Commencement. Participation was free for graduates and their guests. Graduates were able to register for all Affinity Ceremonies they identify with. Last year (2023-2024), our Affinity Ceremonies grew substantially from the previous year. This year, that growth continued as students were already familiar with the ceremonies. All ceremonies were in person, but we also live streamed ceremonies that were hosted in the OSU.

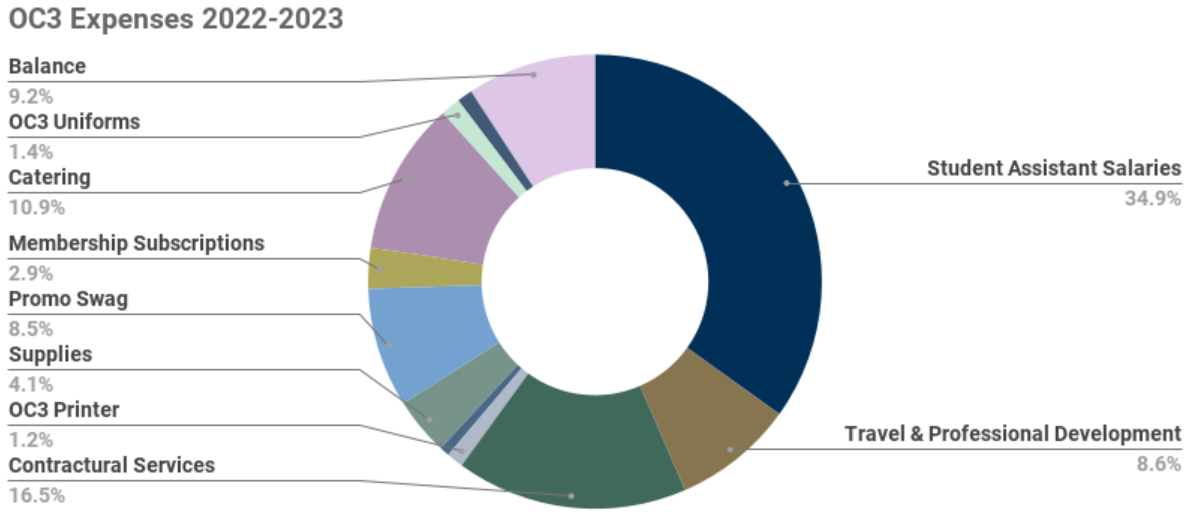


ANALYSIS OF OC3 BUDGET

This year, OC3's operating budget was $165,000. Below is our breakdown of our budget and spending for the academic year 2023-2024. A comparison of our 2022-2023 and 2023-2024 budgets are provided.







RECOMMENDATIONS FOR 2024-2025

Looking ahead to the 2025–2026 Academic Year, OC3 will prioritize deepening the impact of its existing programs while continuing to foster an inclusive and supportive environment for all students. With the continued goal of creating community and belonging for students, OC3 aims to be more intentional with programming by focusing on quality over quantity. This includes further scaling back the volume of events—particularly in high-density months like October, November, February, March and April—to reduce staff burnout and ensure sustainable practices. Emphasis will be placed on enhancing the partnerships of the Affinity Centers to cultivate meaningful student engagement, strengthen ongoing partnerships, and support identity-based communities. By refining our approach, we aim to create more intentional, collaborative, and impactful experiences for the campus community.

Below are some notes to consider for the upcoming school year:

- Promote understanding, dialogue, and connection across diverse communities through intentional programming and collaborative efforts.
- Honor OC3 hxstory and advance awareness.
- Update and implement effective assessment methods to better measure impact, inform future planning, and ensure alignment with OC3's mission and values.
- Serve as a bridge between CSUMB and the broader community by cultivating existing partnerships and establishing new, mutually beneficial collaborations.
- Foster inclusive partnerships, collaborations, and affinity spaces
- Support and Advocate for Marginalized Students
- Provide culturally relevant events, resources, and services aimed at promoting the retention, success, and well-being of the most marginalized students.
- Maintain a welcoming physical space where students can gather, connect, and find belonging.

We are excited to continue to build. The OC3 has always thrived and existed due to the advocacy of its students. We look forward to continuing to build with our students in an attempt to create a more inclusive campus. We hope to continue to honor the OC3 hxstory and look forward to growing and continuing to serve our students and community.

SUMMARY

The Otter Student Union made the 2024-2025 school year a memorable one, taking campus programming to the next level. As the heartbeat of campus, the OSU continued to be the place to be, offering a wide variety of dynamic and engaging events that brought our Otter RAFT together. The OSU focused on expanding its collaborative partnerships with various campus departments, which helped to broaden the reach and impact of our initiatives. By building on beloved campus traditions, these programs continue to provide students with new opportunities to learn, grow, and connect, making our campus more vibrant than ever before.

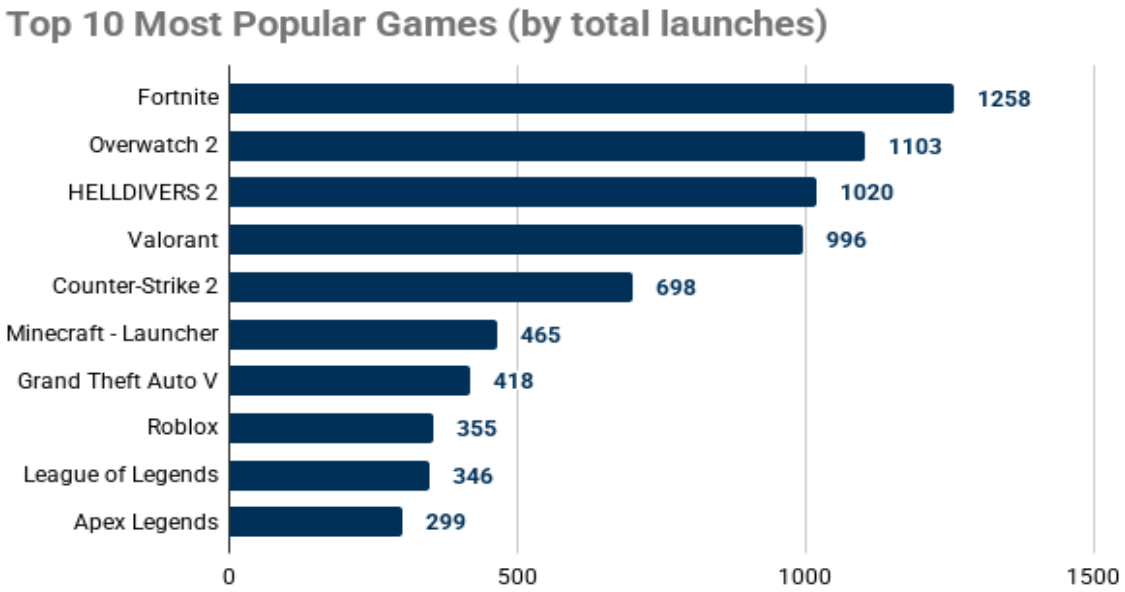
The Otter Student Union hosted, co-hosted, or collaborated on the following events and programs:

- Otter Days (Fall)
- Otter Thursdays (weekly)
- HSI Week (Fall)
- Movie Nights (Fall/Spring)
    - Deadpool & Wolverine - Hosted by Student Life Valentine's Day - Hosted by SELD/Swifties/OSU
    - Matilda - Hosted by Basic Needs & OSU (Family-Friendly)
    - Pitch Perfect - Hosted by AS & OSU
    - Moana 2 - Hosted by Basic Needs & OSU (Family-Friendly)
    - Clueless - Hosted by SHRL & OSU
- RAFT Weekend - Werk Witch, Monte's 5K, Concert Under the Stars and Brunch with the President (Fall)
- Veterans Day Celebration (Fall)
- Winter Formal Ball (Spring)
- Otterlands (Spring)
- Otter Statue Unveiling
- The Strangers Project
- New Student Orientation at the OSU (Summer)
- Wellness Programming - including Blue in the OSU, Otter Hugs Wall, Otter Coloring Corner

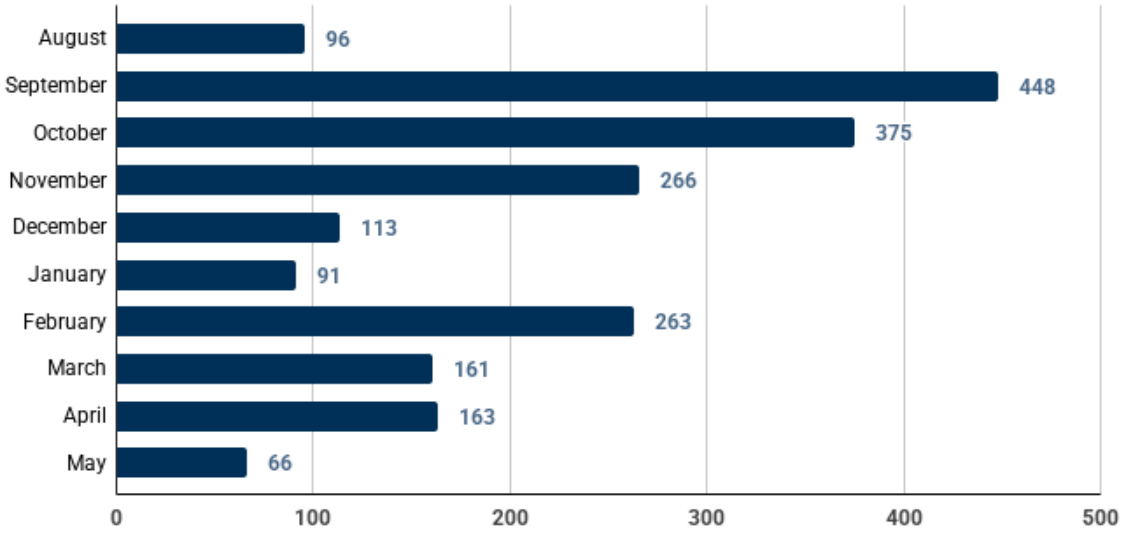
OTTER ESPORTS LOUNGE

Established as both a cutting edge gaming lounge and learning space in April 2024, the Otter Esports Lounge continues to offer a unique space for students to connect and compete with each other. The Otter Esports Lounge completed its first full year of operation in 2024-2025 with great success. Operating on the 3rd floor of the OSU and featuring 10 Alienware gaming PCs, the lounge provides an exceptional engaging experience for student gamers and students new to gaming. The lounge operations are supported by Student Engagement and Leadership Development through staff management and dedicated funding and through the Otter Student Union for general operational support and maintenance.

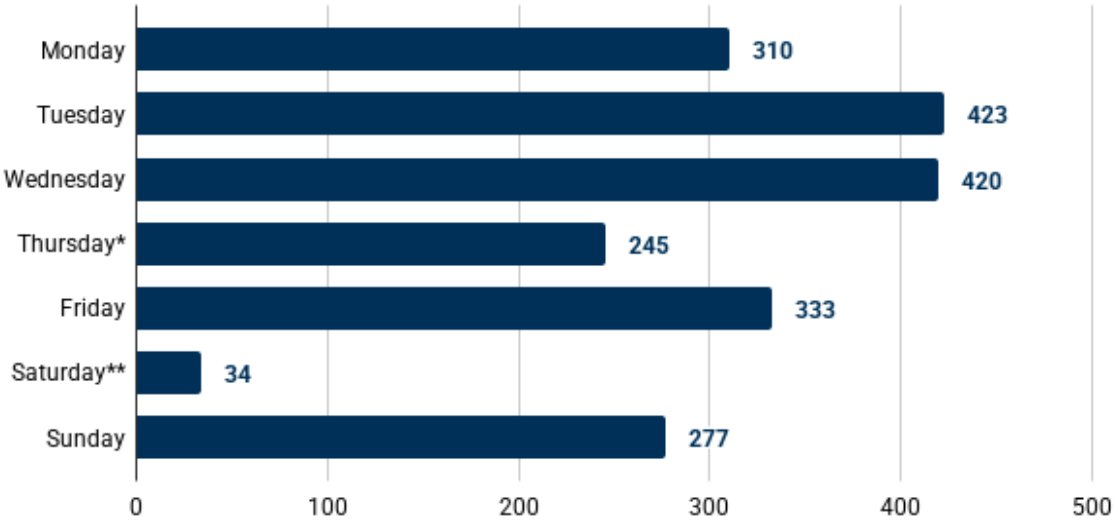
Additional strategic funding was provided to the Otter Esports Lounge in 2024 providing a broadened programming calendar including designated game play dates, department demo days, Esports athlete research study through the Department of Kinesiology, and multiple console based gaming tournaments. In March 2025, we hosted an All-Campus Esports Tournament for the game "Valorant". Included below are some statistics for the year:



Otter Esports Lounge Monthly Check-ins



Otter Esports Lounge Check-ins by Day of Week



SUMMARY

The 2024–2025 year was one of strong execution and growth for the OSU MarComm Team. With a restructured student staff of two photo/video production assistants, one graphic design assistant, and two social media assistants, the team continued to elevate the OSU's presence across campus and online.

This year, the team managed 159 digital display requests, 44 internal design projects, and captured content at 93 events, ensuring OSU programming and initiatives were highlighted with quality, consistency, and creativity. A major achievement was surpassing 5,000 Instagram followers, thanks to coordinated campaigns, the use of trending sounds and Reels, and even a pizza party incentive. Expanding the social media team to two students proved invaluable, giving us the capacity to plan, create, and execute content more effectively.

Signature programming such as Blue in the OSU became a standout hit, reinforcing the OSU's identity as the hub of campus life. The team also launched new signature content, including the Mini Monte telenovela series, "La Vida Secreta de Mini Monte," with each MarComm student creating their own episode. Released daily during finals week, the series became a fun, creative tradition that showcased the team's storytelling skills and gave students lighthearted content during a stressful time.

Another key highlight was the design and installation of the Otter Welcome Center graphics—a series of wall and surface visuals created by former student designer Tris Ruiz. These bold graphics now serve as a visual anchor for campus tours, instilling Otter pride and ensuring visitors feel connected to CSUMB the moment they arrive.

Throughout the year, the MarComm Team also worked to shift perspective by intentionally emphasizing "your Otter Student Union" in campaigns and materials, reinforcing the OSU as a place that belongs to every student. To further drive engagement, the team introduced a new weekly highlight series that spotlighted all OSU events at a glance, addressing the common misconception that "nothing happens on campus" and making it easier for students and staff to see what's happening each week.

Our student assistants played a vital role in these successes, gaining real-world experience in their fields. Highlights included a student attending the ACUI Region 1 Conference, and our graphic design assistant producing designs requested beyond the OSU, generating additional revenue.

This year, our social media presence continued to be a major strength. Instagram remains our top-performing platform, where we surpassed 5,000 followers and saw strong engagement with Reels, campaigns, and collaborations. TikTok activity paused in spring due to national uncertainty around the platform, but we plan to relaunch in 2025–2026 to re-engage our audience there. Facebook continues to serve as a valuable touchpoint for parents, community members, and older students, helping us broaden our reach. Across all platforms, video content and Mini Monte remain top performers, keeping the OSU brand fun, visible, and relevant to students.

The MarComm Team remains committed to creating impactful, engaging, and student-centered content, and looks forward to building on this momentum in 2025–2026.

OTTER WELCOME CENTER

This year, the OSU MarComm Team helped bring the new Otter Welcome Center to life with a series of custom wall and surface graphics designed by former student graphic designer, Tris Ruiz.

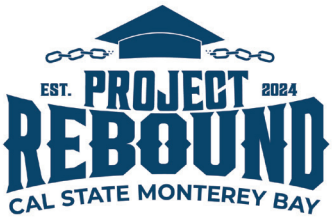
The project transformed the space with:

- Info Desk wrap graphics that create an immediate visual anchor.
- Two corridor walls featuring Otter pride and campus identity.
- Door and half-wall graphics that extend the theme throughout the center.
- A conference room wall mural that reinforces CSUMB's welcoming spirit.

These visuals not only instill school pride but also provide a strong, branded focal point for campus tours and visitor experiences, ensuring that prospective students and families feel a sense of connection and belonging from the moment they arrive.

GRAPHIC DESIGN SAMPLE PROJECTS
COMPLETED BY PROFESSIONAL STAFF

GRAPHIC DESIGN SAMPLE PROJECTS
COMPLETED BY STUDENT STAFF

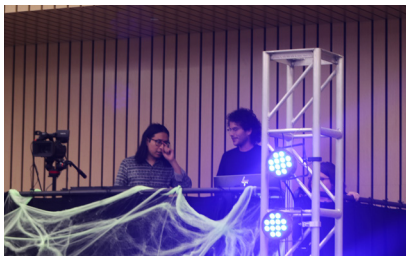


SUMMARY

The OSU Audio Visual Technical Services team continued to provide audio-visual equipment and staffing to help support events in the Otter Student Union and on CSUMB's campus. Our trained professional and student staff members worked to set up and operate large-scale productions for events such as concerts and meetings, providing services in audio, video, lighting, live streaming, and video recording. The OSU A/V Technical Services was led by our new A/V Technical Services Coordinator, and 8 A/V Tech student assistants. The AV team supported 57 events in the fall and 64 events in the spring.

Otter Student Union Audio Visual Technical Services provided the following:

- All Otter Thursday music and a special Otter Thursday for the new Otter Statue Unveiling.
- All OSU movie nights and movie matinees.
- New events such as the E-Sports Tournament
- 8 Affinity Celebrations with consultation for the Latine ceremony at Rabobank Stadium.
- High production VIP events including All Black Gala, Otterlands, and APIDA Night Festival.
- Facilitated the purchase of a new 16ft x 9ft LED wall, which was first deployed for Admitted Otter Day and Admitted Transfer Day.



SUMMARY

The Otter Student Union Operations continues to help provide a high level of service to students and staff. The OSU continues to serve as the primary gathering center and event space for student organizations. The Operations team provides direct support and management of the day-to-day operations, activities, maintenance, and custodial needs of the facility and grounds. The team helps steward the student experience by providing exceptional customer service, facility improvements and enhancements, and seamless operations. Detailed below are key operational highlights and facility updates accomplished throughout the year by our operations team and our student run facility team:

ACUI Region I Conference

The OSU Operations Specialist, Marlena Truong, and four OSU student assistants attended the ACUI Region I Conference at Point Loma Nazarene University in San Diego, CA, in November 2024. ACUI, the Association of College Unions International, is our professional college union organization. This yearly regional conference is a great professional development opportunity for our staff to meet other college union professionals and attend workshops that will develop their professional knowledge and skills.

ACUI Building Manager Course

One of our OSU Building Managers, Amaris Santiago, took an 8-week online course through our professional college union organization, the Association of College Unions International (ACUI). Amaris enhanced her professional skills by being aware of her leadership style and working on her collaboration skills by taking the course with other building managers. This was a professional development opportunity for our OSU student employee that she has implemented within her position at the OSU.

Student Employee Evaluations

A newly implemented evaluation process has proven to be effective for our operations team. The OSU Operations Specialist, Marlena Truong, oversaw 30 student employees, and she provided them with two evaluations throughout the past academic year. These evaluations provide the student employee with the opportunity to self-assess their performance over the past semester and have a meeting with their supervisor to discuss their performance. The evaluation focuses on their critical thinking skills, communication skills, leadership, professionalism, and customer service. Additionally, it has a self-reflection section and the opportunity to provide feedback to their supervisor and the organization.

OSU Yearly Satisfaction Survey

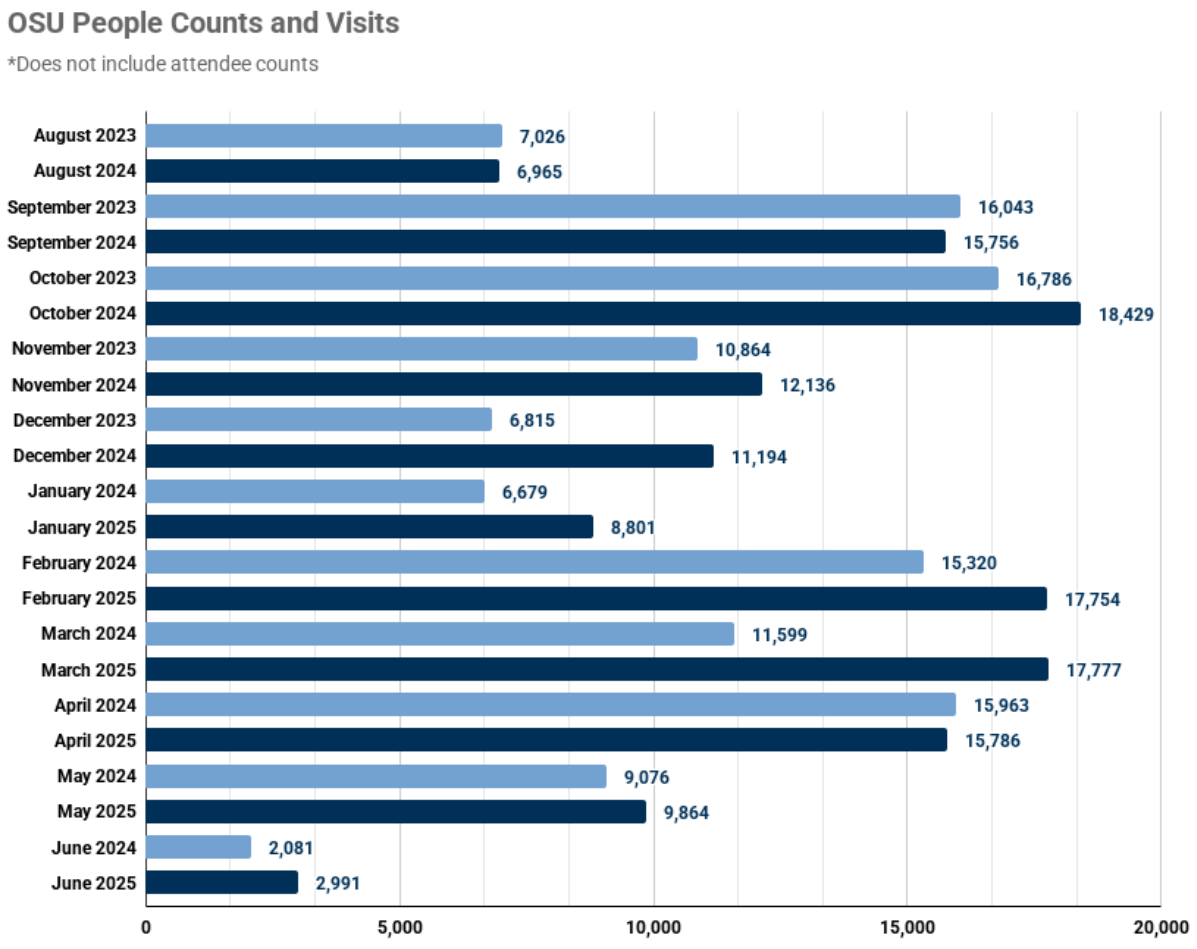
In collaboration with OSU employees, the OSU Board, and the OSU Marketing & Communications team, we promoted our yearly OSU Satisfaction Survey and increased our responses by 400% from the previous year. This survey allows OSU patrons to provide feedback on the OSU building and services.

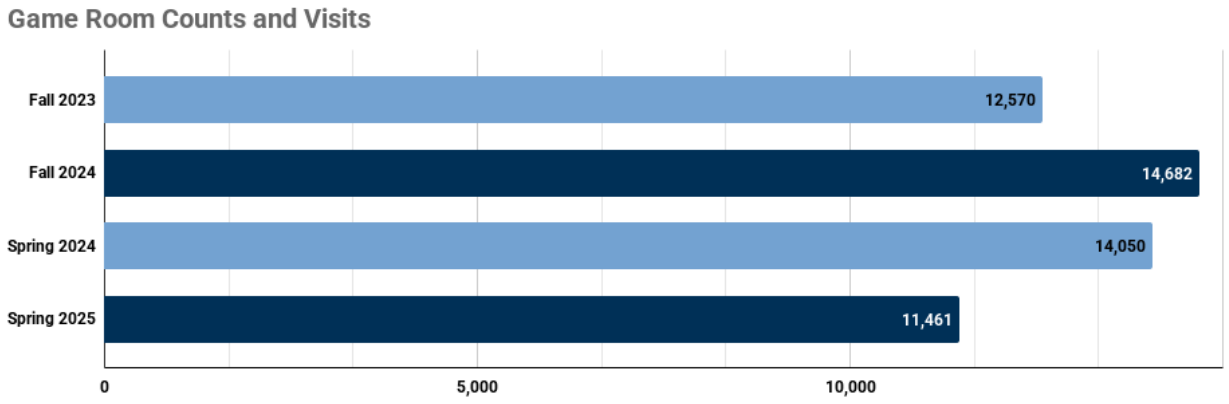
OSU End of Year Celebration

The OSU hosted its annual End of Year Celebration in May to celebrate a successful year and recognize our student graduates. This year's theme was "OSU Game Night", hosted by Diana Ballesteros. The night was filled with food, fun, and friendly competition. All OSU and OC3 professional staff, student assistants, and the OSU Board of Directors were invited to participate..

FACILITY USAGE

The Otter Student Union (OSU) is a highly utilized facility, and the Operations team's primary goal is to effectively provide welcoming and functional space for the entire campus community. To gauge this usage, the team conducts daily foot traffic counts inside the building. This information is helpful as we determine how the building is utilized and can be valuable information to determine how to improve and enhance services. Here are the counts collected during the 2024-2025 academic year:





The Game Room saw a 16.8% increase from Fall 2023 and no increase from Spring 2024.

The OSU welcomed numerous in-person and hybrid events in our indoor and outdoor spaces during the 2024-2025 school year, below is a summary of the events:

TOTAL NUMBER OF EVENTS

Number of Department Meetings/Events

- Fall 2024 events: 228, 21% increase from last year
- Spring 2025 events: 286, no increase from last year

Number of Student Organization Meetings/Events

- Fall 2024 events: 337, 16.2 % increase from last year
- Spring 2025 events: 277, no increase from last year

Number of Off-Campus Reservations: 4

Number of Department Outdoor Reservations

- Fall 2024 events: 33
- Spring 2025 events: 52

Number of Student Organization Outdoor Reservations

- Fall 2024 outdoor events: 18
- Spring 2025 outdoor events: 21

Number of Off-Campus Outdoor Reservations: 1

REVENUE

Meeting Room Rentals: $97,028.18, 9.96% increase from last year for meeting rooms only
Outdoor Vendors: $11,367

Total revenue from service delivery: $97,028.18

SUMMARY

Administrative Services and the OSU Administrative Office continued to provide support for human resources and fiscal resource support. The OSU Office Coordinator continued to develop and sustain collaborative relationships within Student Affairs and University Corporation and continued in the role of processing staff hiring, travel authorizations, invoice processing, and assisted with all procurement requests for the OSU and OC3.

The OSU Administration office continued to provide front line customer service to the CSUMB community. Our student administrative office student assistants, in partnership with the Monterey Bay Aquarium, gave out 1964 Monterey Bay Aquarium passes to students. We intend to continue this partnership with the Monterey Bay Aquarium in the 2025-2026 academic year.

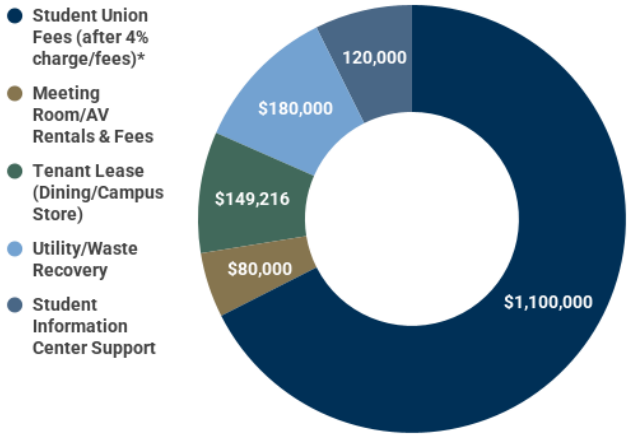
The Administrative Office staff brought warmth and spirit to the office through decorating the desk and exterior windows of the office space for various seasons and holidays throughout the year. Their ongoing dedication and creativity helped create a welcoming and festive atmosphere.

SUMMARY

The Otter Student Union continues to prioritize transparency, consistency, and accountability in our budgeting, spending, and overall financial management of our auxiliary organization. We are proud to report that the OSU received a “clean” audit for fiscal year 2024-2025 reported by the accounting firm Glenn Burdette.

OSU Budgeted Revenue 2024-2025

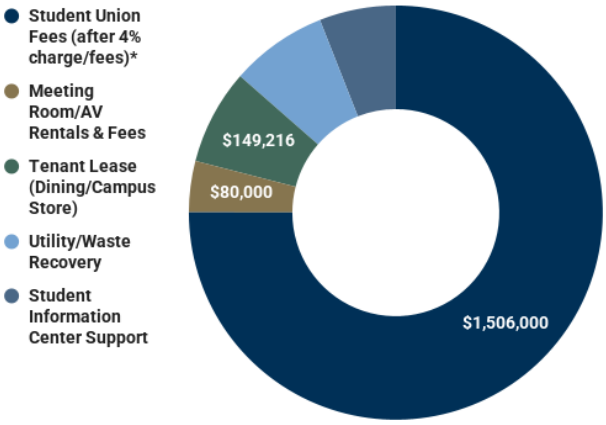
Total Revenue: $1,629,216



*Student Union fees after administering the OSU facility bond payment

OSU Projected Actuals Revenue 2024-2025

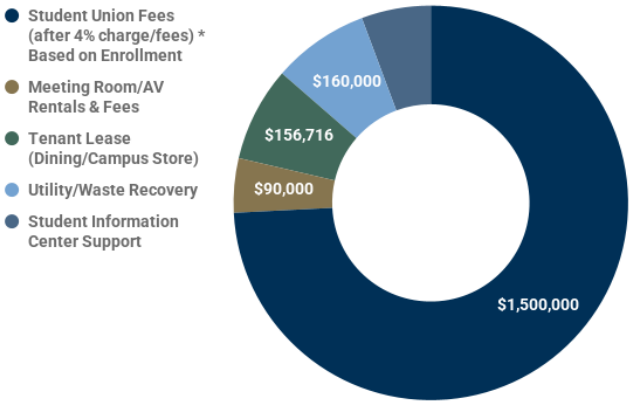
Total Revenue: $2,007,216



*Student Union fees after administering the OSU facility bond payment

OSU Proposed Budget Revenue 2025-2026

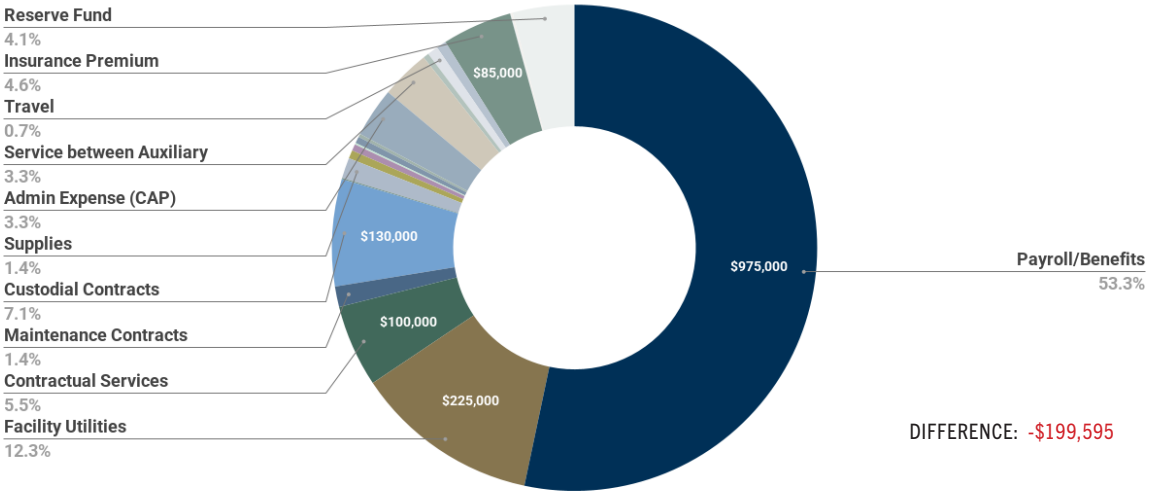
Total Revenue: $2,021,716



*Student Union fees after administering the OSU facility bond payment

OSU Budgeted Expenses 2024-2025

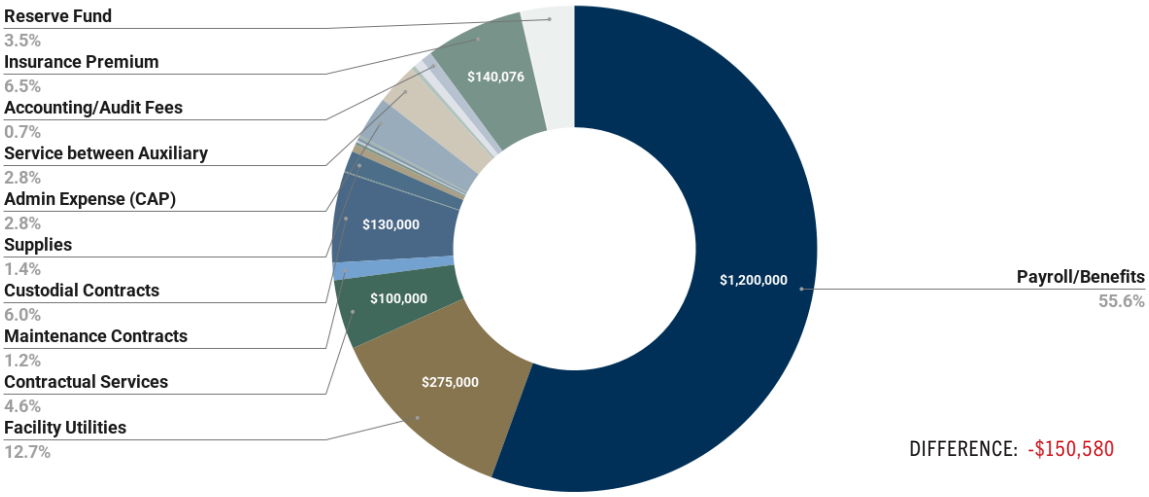
Total Expenses: $1,828,811



DIFFERENCE: -$199,595

OSU Projected Actual Expenses 2024-2025

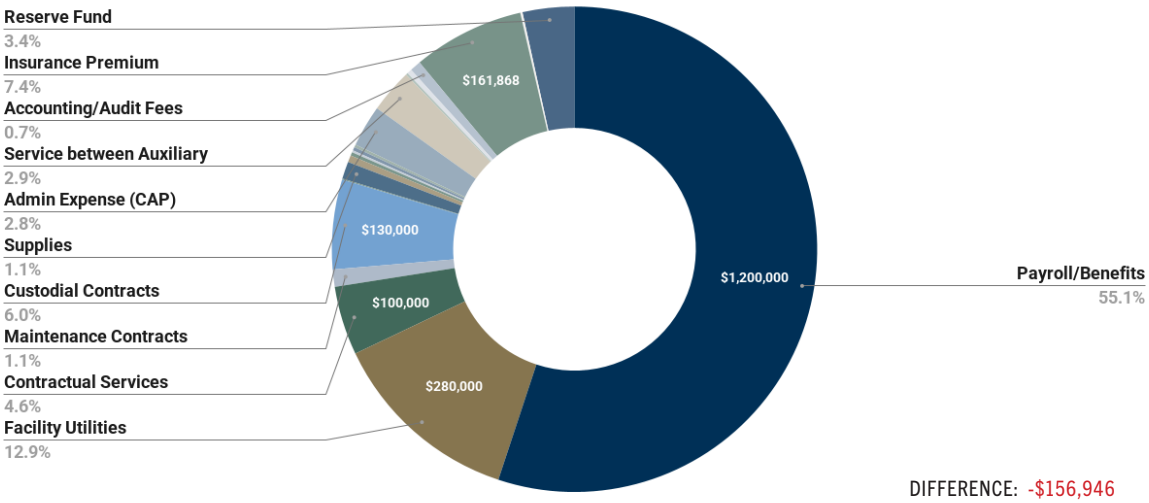
Total Expenses: $2,157,796



DIFFERENCE: -$150,580

OSU Proposed Budget Expenses 2025-2026

Total Expenses: $2,178,662



DIFFERENCE: -$156,946

Consistent with the OSU at CSU Monterey Bay Bylaws, Article 4, §4.1(c) and Article 5, §5.4, the OSU Board Budget proposed the following budget for the fiscal year 2025-2026 as follows:

> The Otter Student Union (OSU) Budget draft for 2025-2026 consists of an Operating Budget composed of three columns: the 2024-2025 Budget, projected 2024-2025 Actuals, and proposed 2025-2026 Budget. These comparisons have been provided to facilitate your review and approval. The OSU operates as an auxiliary in good standing within the CSU system and operates solely for the benefit of California State University, Monterey Bay.

The OSU Board of Directors is charged with reviewing and approving the annual budget in accordance with university procedures at the Annual Board meeting which was held June 2, 2025.

Points of emphasis for the 2025-2026 proposed budget include:

- The proposed budget assumes a net revenue from student union fees with scheduled OSU construction bond payment and associated fees assessed/administered.
- The proposed budget assumes that all full-time employee positions are filled.
- The target minimum Operating Reserve Fund is equal to one month of operating expenses. (Otter Student Union Policy Manual, Section no. 02, document no. 292618, Reserves Policy)
- The OSU currently has an account balance of $1,627,259 (as of 05/30/25). These funds are intended to cover cash flow, operational needs, long-term facility planning, capital projects and deferred maintenance.
- The OSU currently has a Donation Fund account balance of $1,103.
- Any projected budget deficit will be addressed by utilizing available retained earnings or designated rollover funds.

OSU PROPOSED OPERATING BUDGET 2025-2026

	Budget 24-25	Projected Actuals 24-25	Proposed Budget 25-26
Revenue			
Student Union Fees (after 4% charge/fees)	$1,100,000	$1,506,000	$1,500,000*
Meeting Room/AV Rentals & Fees	$80,000	$80,000	$90,000
Tenant Lease (Dining/Campus Store)	$149,216	$149,216	$156,716
Utility/Waste Cost Recovery	$180,000	$152,000	$160,000
Student Information Center Support	$120,000	$120,000	$115,000
Total Revenue	$1,629,216	$2,007,216	$2,021,716
			*based on enrollment
Expenses			
Services			
Payroll/Benefits	$975,000	$1,200,000	$1,200,000
Operations			
Facility Utilities	$225,000	$275,000	$280,000
Contractual Services	$100,000	$100,000	$100,000
Maintenance Contracts	$25,000	$25,000	$25,000
Custodial Contracts	$130,000	$130,000	$130,000
Administrative			
Printing	$1,500	$1,600	$1,500
Supplies	$25,000	$30,000	$25,000
Non-Capital Equipment	$10,000	$10,600	$10,000
Uniforms/Branding	$8,000	$4,000	$5,000
Advertising/Promotion	$2,000	$2,700	$3,000
Hospitality	$8,000	$4,000	$5,000
Memberships/Subscriptions	$4,000	$3,500	$4,000
Admin Expense (CAP)	$60,342	$60,342	$60,342
Service between Auxiliary	$59,669	$59,669	$63,652
Professional Development	$7,000	$6,200	$3,000
Travel	$13,000	$12,777	$7,000
Accounting/Audit Fees	$12,000	$15,950	$16,000
Insurance Premium	$85,000	$140,076	$161,868
Employee Recruitment	$1,000	$1,082	$1,000
Interfund Pension Loan Repay	$2,300	$2,300	$2,300
Reserve Fund	$75,000	$75,000	$75,000
Total Expenses	**$1,828,811**	**$2,157,796**	**$2,178,662**
Difference	**-$199,595**	**-$150,580**	**-$156,946**

FINAL THOUGHTS

As the new academic year approaches, the Otter Student Union staff are working to strategically outline goals and initiatives that align with the new Cal State Monterey Bay Strategic Plan.

We are committed to engaging with the CSUMB community to identify additional avenues to engage with students and strategic solutions for continued financial stability. We plan to continue to offer diverse and meaningful events, programs, and services to CSUMB students. We will continue to strengthen campus partnerships and are committed to the highest standards of service to our community. The Otter Student Union is, and will continue to be, the heartbeat of campus!

Go Otters!

OTTER
STUDENT UNION

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