

A vendor sells pottery items at the California Native American Day celebration at the state Capitol on Sept. 22, 2023. PHOTO BY MIGUEL GUTIERREZ JR. FOR CALMATTERS

schools—Sacramento, San Francisco and Chico—have stepped up efforts to make artifacts and ancestral remains available to tribes.)

In response to the state audit of the UC system, university officials released new policies governing repatriation efforts in December 2021. The six UC campuses with collections of more than 100 items are now required to have a full-time repatriation coordinator. UC also required campuses to submit budget proposals to fund full return of their collections to tribes and add more tribal members to committees that review repatriation requests.

As of June 2023, 12 of 21 Cal State campuses with collections subject to repatriation laws had yet to meet a 1995 federal deadline to complete an inventory of their collections, much less return remains or artifacts. Since the audit, Cal State has opened nominations for a new system-wide repatriation committee that aims for majority representation from Native American tribes, giving preference to California Indian tribal members.

Assembly Bill 389, introduced by Ramos and signed into law in October, requires Cal State campuses to fund the full expense of returning their collections, including full-time coordinators. The law also shifts the system's relationship with Native remains and artifacts by prohibiting their use for teaching or research, a win for tribes who have accused

ed its first repatriation of two remains and two cultural items to the Central Valley Yokuts tribe in March 2020, according to the audit.

"As I have said many times before, there is nothing wrong or controversial about this photo or the tweet," Weiss wrote in a statement to CalMatters. "The photo shows my true love and respect for anthropology and the skeletal remains that make it possible."


### How UCLA returned nearly all remains and artifacts

When the state auditor reviewed the UC's progress, UCLA stood out. Between 1996 and 2022, UCLA returned nearly its entire collection of Native remains and artifacts through 127 repatriations to tribes in California, Arizona, Hawaii and Utah. Most items in the university's collections were unearthed during university and government construction projects, according to the director of UCLA's Fowler Museum, Sylvia Forni.

"We don't do anything special at UCLA that isn't supposed to be done legally at other UCs and Cal States," said Michael Chavez, who started as UCLA's archaeological collections manager and repatriation coordinator this year.

Chavez, a Native member of the Tongva of the Los Angeles Basin, applauded a 2020 revision to the state's repatriation law making it easier for non-federally recognized tribes to reclaim their ancestors and artifacts. He said his work largely involves listening to local tribes, federally recognized or not.

"We don't decide for the tribe," Chavez said.



We acknowledge and are mindful that Chico State stands on lands that were originally occupied by the first people of this area, the **Mechoopda**, and we recognize their distinctive spiritual relationship with this land, the flora, the fauna, and the waters that run through campus.

We are humbled that our campus resides upon sacred lands that since time immemorial have sustained the Mechoopda people and continue to do so today.

**California State University Chico**  
Tribal Relations  
OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

Chico State's indigenous land acknowledgement, endorsed by the local Mechoopda Indian Tribal Council.

universities in California of delaying repatriation so professors can continue their research. The law amounts to a major overhaul of the system's repatriation process, ensuring funding shortfalls and research priorities no longer stall efforts.

At San Jose State, Weiss will resign effective May 29, 2024, as part of a settlement after she sued the university for barring her access to the campus' skeletal collection following her post. The campus holds around 500 Native remains and 5,000 cultural items and complet-

"We work in collaboration with the tribe and strongly defer to their opinion and position."

Chavez credits the university's 2020 audit results to the impact of his predecessor, former coordinator Dr. Wendy Teeter.

"[She] didn't allow any obstacles to get in her way in the pursuit of repatriation," Chavez said.

Despite limited funding and her multiple roles as a lecturer in American Indian Studies, a member of the UC's Native American Advisory Committee and curator at the Fowler Museum, Teeter established a culture of welcoming Native communities during her 25

NEWSLINES CONTINUED ON PAGE 10


## New Year's Resolution: Have more fun...

Get out & **experience** live performances, **visit** art galleries, **go** to concerts & theater, **take** a class, **learn** about grants, **enjoy** the natural beauty all around us & **live a little!**

Stay in the know in **Butte County** by signing up for our **FREE** bi-weekly email




...and let the good times roll!



# Ovation

2023-2024 SEASON



# Mozart Requiem

**February 17, 2024**  
Laxon Auditorium, Chico | 7:30 p.m.

**February 18, 2024**  
Cascade Theatre, Redding | 2:00 p.m.

This dramatic work by Mozart will be paired with George Walker's *Lyric for Strings* and well as the timeless music of Bach.

This concert reflects the human condition of life and death, birth and rebirth, and ultimately, the hope of resurrection.

Tickets available at [NorthStateSymphony.org](https://NorthStateSymphony.org)