



Dear campus community,

It is with a heavy heart that I share the news that Dr. Bill W. Stacy, the founding president of Cal State San Marcos, passed away on Jan. 4 at the age of 85.

At the time of its founding, CSUSM was the first U.S. public state university to be established in more than 20 years. Dr. Stacy had an indelible impact on our campus and our region as he guided CSUSM through its early years.

In fall 1989, Dr. Stacy was given one year to hire our founding faculty and lay the groundwork for our campus, academic mission and programs. He did all of that, and so much more. When CSUSM opened in August 1990, it did so with a dozen faculty members, nine majors and fewer than 450 students. By the time Dr. Stacy left in 1997, he had grown the university to nearly 4,500 students, 19 bachelor's degrees, 15 teacher credentials and eight master's degrees.

I had the great privilege of knowing and working with Dr. Stacy during his tenure as the chancellor of the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga, which he led after leaving CSUSM in 1997.

In fact, one of my first phone calls when I was named CSUSM's fourth president was to Dr. Stacy. We talked about how CSUSM is a special place, and he shared with me his vivid memory from 1989, when he visited the site of where this campus would one day be, knowing that it would soon become a home to academic inquiry and impact, student access and achievement.

Over the last three-plus decades, our university has discovered and honed its voice, its place and its mission. And it all started under the leadership and guidance of Dr. Stacy.

Dr. Stacy is survived by his wife of 34 years, Dr. Sue Stacy, and three children, five grandchildren, and three great-grandchildren. The family was gracious enough to share a [complete obituary](#). Services will be held at 11 a.m. CST (9 a.m. PST) on Saturday, Jan. 13, in Cape Girardeau, Missouri, with a [livestream available on Facebook](#).

Dr. Stacy's inspiring leadership as the first president of CSUSM paved the way for the university we are today – a model of student success, academic excellence and exemplary community engagement. I'm grateful for his vital contributions to our university and extend my deepest condolences to the Stacy family on behalf of

everyone at CSUSM.

Sincerely,

Ellen Neufeldt  
President

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