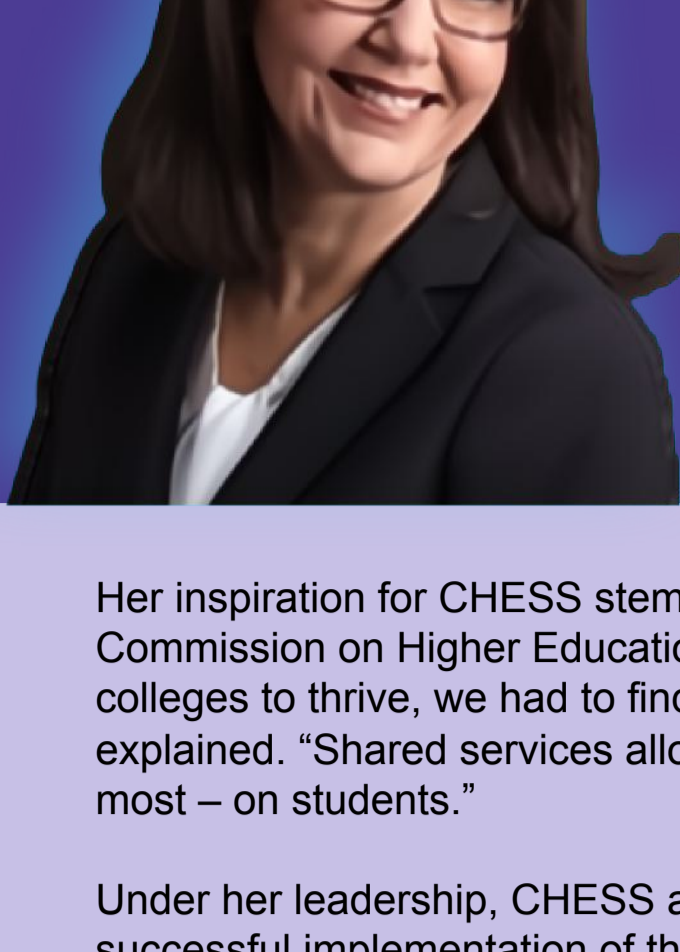


CHESS Connection



June 2025, Issue 2

Celebrating the Retirement of Kathy Ulibarri: Visionary Founder of CHESS



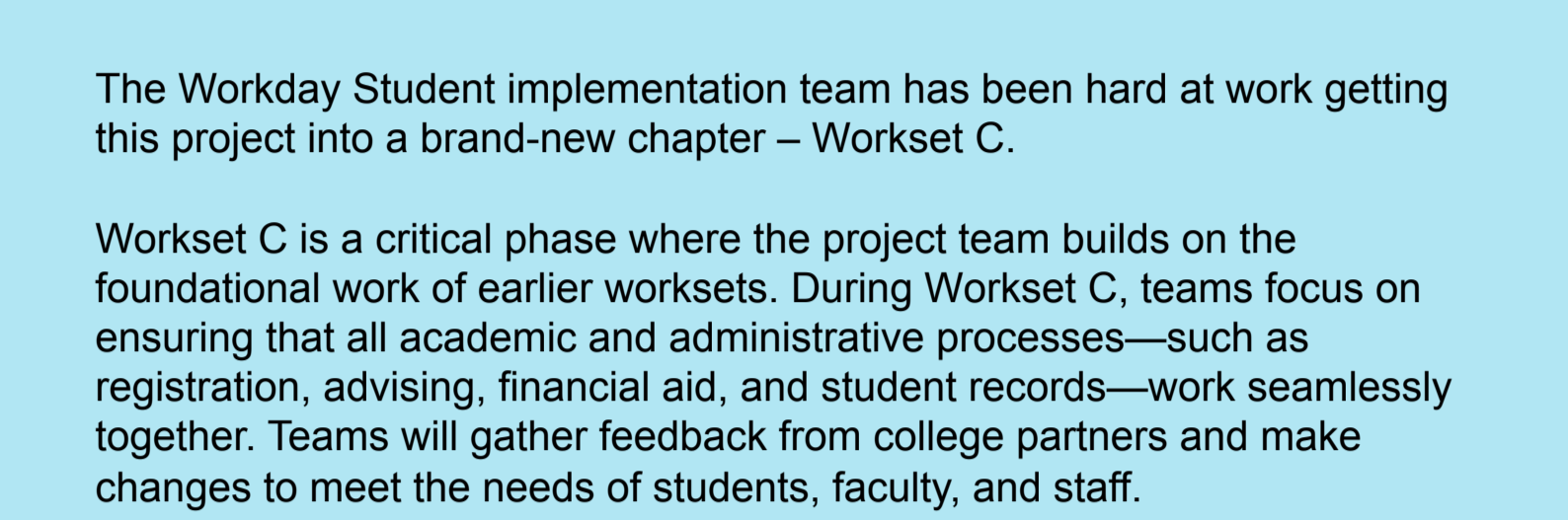
After a distinguished 40-year career in higher education, Kathy Ulibarri is retiring, leaving behind a legacy rooted in collaboration, innovation, and service. As the founder and CEO of CHESS, Kathy Ulibarri not only envisioned the organization but also built and piloted it from the ground up. Over the past seven years, CHESS has established itself as a model for how colleges can benefit from and progress through shared services and collective leadership.

Her inspiration for CHESS stemmed from her time at the New Mexico Commission on Higher Education. "It was clear to me that for New Mexico's colleges to thrive, we had to find ways to support each other," she explained. "Shared services allow us to focus resources where they matter most – on students."

Under her leadership, CHESS achieved major milestones, including the successful implementation of the Workday platform across member colleges. "We reduced audit findings by 52 percent in the first year alone," she highlighted as a key milestone. Looking ahead, she's excited about the rollout of Workday Student and the potential to expand CHESS beyond state borders.

As she moves into retirement, Kathy looks forward to traveling the Mediterranean, spending time with her grandchildren, and consulting. "And maybe," she laughed, "I'll even learn to relax a little."

Workday Student (SIS): One Step Closer with Workset C



The Workday Student implementation team has been hard at work getting this project into a brand-new chapter – Workset C.

Workset C is a critical phase where the project team builds on the foundational work of earlier worksets. During Workset C, teams focus on ensuring that all academic and administrative processes—such as registration, advising, financial aid, and student records—work seamlessly together. Teams will gather feedback from college partners and make changes to meet the needs of students, faculty, and staff.

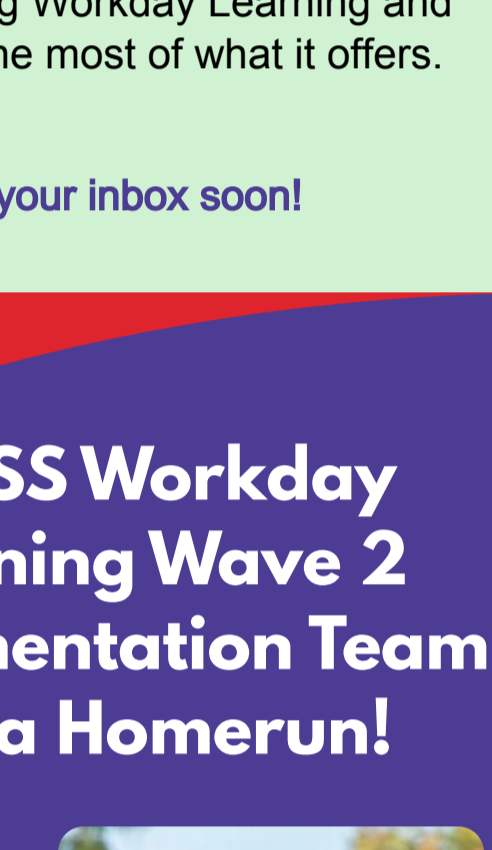
This phased implementation supports a smoother transition from old systems, reduces disruptions, and allows for continuous improvement based on real user feedback. Ultimately, this leads to a more user-friendly platform that streamlines student services, improves data accuracy, and supports better decision-making across the institution.

Workset C brings the CHESS member colleges one step closer to Workday Student going live!

Introducing Workday Learning: A New Way to Learn at Work!

We're excited to introduce **Workday Learning**, a modern employee Learning Management System (LMS) designed to streamline and enhance how employees access training and professional development opportunities.

Starting this summer, **Workday Learning** will roll out at Clovis Community College (CCC), Luna Community College (LCC), Northern New Mexico College (NNMC), San Juan College (SJC), and CHESS.



What is Workday Learning?

Workday Learning is a new, modern employee LMS integrated directly into the Workday platform. It will make it easier than ever to manage your professional development and compliance training.

What's Next?

Be on the lookout for training and resource emails from your college's HR Team to help you get started. You'll receive everything you need to feel confident navigating Workday Learning and making the most of what it offers.

Stay tuned—more details are coming to your inbox soon!

SPECIAL THANKS!



CHESS Workday Learning Wave 2 Implementation Team Hits a Homerun!



Trish Heaton



Tessa Valles



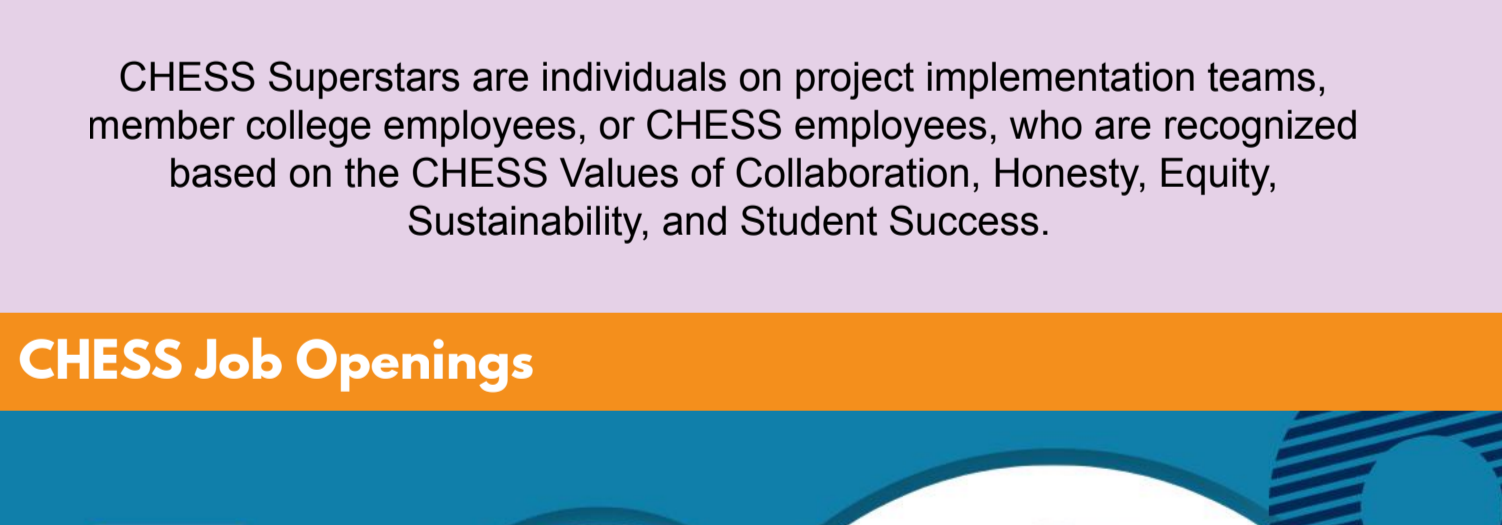
Melissa Black

Mindy Watson, CHESS Strategic Change Officer, nominated **Trish Heaton**, **Tessa Valles**, and **Melissa Black** as **CHESS Superstars** in recognition of their incredible work on the Wave 2 Workday Learning Project. Each received a Collaboration Superstar award. Mindy said:

"I would like to nominate Trish Heaton, Tessa Valles, and Melissa Black for their hard work, dedication, and collaboration to see the Wave 2 Workday Learning Project through to go-live. They acknowledged the staffing and other resource challenges faced by many of the college partners for this project and stepped up to provide support wherever possible, rebuilding trainings, building and conducting testing, assisting with timelines, and more. Their dedication to ensuring not only project success but college success is admirable. A huge thank you to the CHESS Team for their work on this project!"

CHESS Superstars

Congratulations to Our Newest CHESS Superstars!



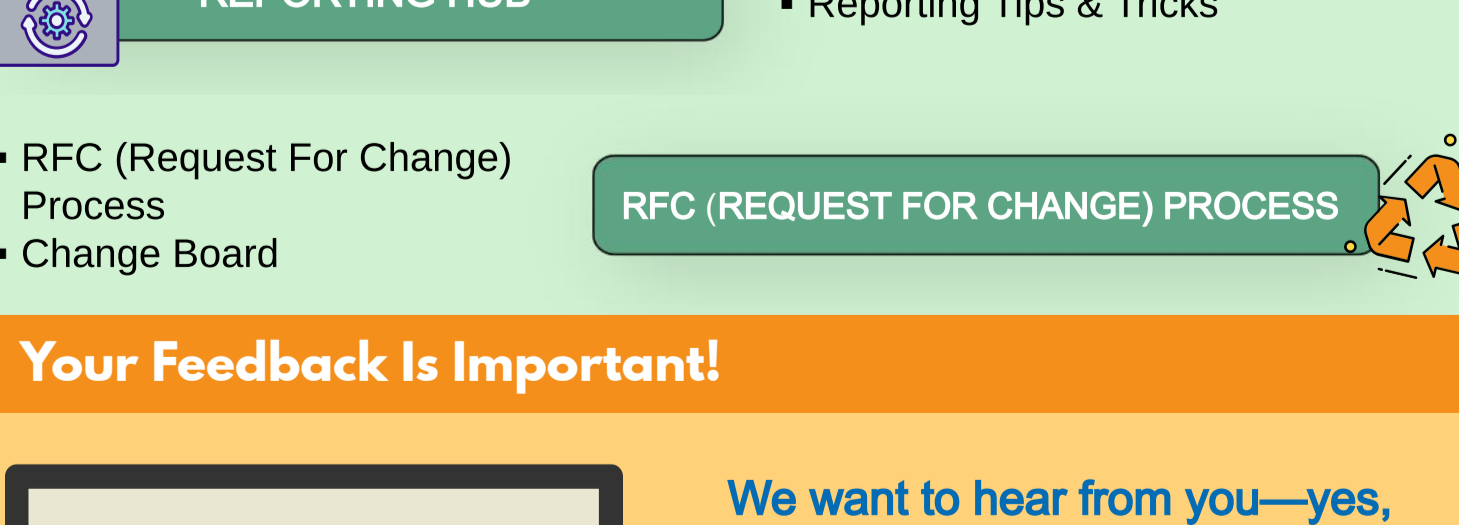
Julie & Emily's nominations came from Antoinette Barela with CHESS. Antoinette stated: "I am honored to nominate Emily Perez of SFCC and Julie Schroeder of Campus Works for their outstanding collaboration on the Project and with Testing. Their ability to work across teams, communicate effectively, and maintain a unified focus on project goals has been instrumental to the success of Testing. I am honored to nominate Emily Perez of SFCC and Julie Schroeder of CampusWorks for their outstanding collaboration on the project and their vital contributions to Testing. Their ability to work across teams, communicate effectively, and remain focused on project goals has been instrumental to the success of our testing efforts. Throughout the project, Emily and Julie consistently demonstrated a strong spirit of partnership—actively listening, sharing knowledge openly, and stepping up to support others whenever needed. They cultivated a collaborative environment where challenges were addressed proactively, and diverse perspectives were welcomed. A key example of their collaborative excellence was their joint effort during Lifecycle Test Creation. Emily and Julie worked closely together and coordinated with Workday to help meet critical testing goals. They led productive cross-functional meetings, identified and resolved issues affecting multiple testers, and played a key role in reducing team stress and uncertainty. Their dedication to shared success, strong team dynamics, and solution-oriented collaboration make them truly deserving of this recognition. I am sincerely grateful for their leadership and contributions, and I wholeheartedly recommend them for this award."

Cheri's nomination came from Katharine Baggett with CNM. Katharine wrote: "I would like to nominate Cheri Bullard for the Superstar Award. She has been my right hand since I started as the CNM lead on Core / Cross Functional and one of the main reasons we manage to stay on top of all we do. She helps me add stability when I need it the most and helps me find humor in the strangest of situations, which I think is why we are always able to accomplish all we do. She has truly been an asset to me on this journey."

Amanda & Karen's nominations came from Antoinette Barela with CHESS. Antoinette said: "I would like to formally nominate Karen Doughty from SJC and Amanda Lamb Rupe from CHESS for the Collaboration and Student Success recognition. These two outstanding professionals have demonstrated exceptional dedication, teamwork, and initiative in supporting their collaborative efforts remained aligned with project goals and deadlines. Their proactive approach included quickly organizing and leading meetings, as well as facilitating cross-team collaboration to ensure all members felt supported and informed with testing. Notably, they took the initiative to create a visual chart outlining outstanding test creation needs for Lifecycle Objectives within their Workstreams. This tool has greatly enhanced clarity and focus for the teams involved and has been instrumental in helping us stay on track. Their commitment, problem-solving mindset, and collaborative spirit have made a meaningful impact on the success of Testing, and they truly exemplify the values of collaboration and student-centered success."

CHESS Superstars are individuals on project implementation teams, member college employees, or CHESS employees, who are recognized based on the CHESS Values of Collaboration, Honesty, Equity, Sustainability, and Student Success.

CHESS Job Openings



Now Hiring

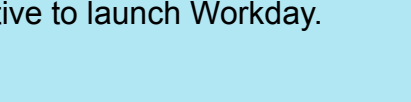
- ✓ ESS Technical Analyst
- ✓ Human Resources Director

Join our team and make a difference—now hiring!

[View our open positions at chess.edu](#)

Quick Access to the Technology Support Hub

The **Technology Support Hub** is located within the Member Hub on the CHESS website. The pull-down menus will quickly get you to the right information. Use the buttons below to get the information you need most!



SERVICE REQUEST HUB

- Create a New Service Request Ticket
- Follow Up on a Service Request

TENANT INFORMATION HUB

- Top Reports by Functional Area
- Reporting Tips & Tricks

REPORTING HUB

- RFC (Request For Change) Process
- Change Board

RFC (REQUEST FOR CHANGE) PROCESS

Your Feedback Is Important!

We want to hear from you—yes, you!

Whether you've got brilliant ideas, helpful suggestions, or just want to give CHESTER the Squirrel a virtual high-five, this is your chance to speak up. Your feedback helps us make CHESS even better for everyone. So go nuts and drop us a line—CHESTER'S all ears (and tail)!

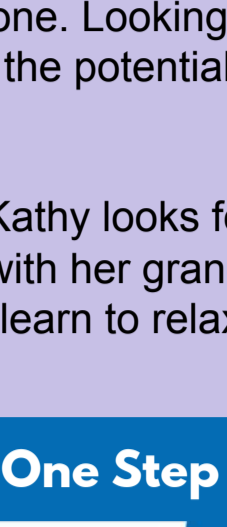
[CLICK HERE TO LEAVE FEEDBACK](#)

Contact CHESS

Do you have any questions? Do you have suggestions for new stories?

CONTACT:

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karen.grandinetti@chess.edu



The **CHESS Connection** provides news about CHESS and our Workday Enterprise Resource Planning and Student Information System projects. Please feel free to share.

CHESS, the Collaborative for Higher Education Shared Services, is a nonprofit comprised of member colleges that employ a unique approach to transform the student experience and streamline administrative operations through state-of-the-art technologies. *Mission: All Together* is the CHESS initiative to launch Workday.