

Distinguished Alumni Awards to Return with Star Power

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April 4, 2022



Fred Nigro, Lauren Ridloff and Keith Weaver will be honored as recipients of CSUN 2022 Distinguished Alumni Awards on June 4.

California State University, Northridge's Distinguished Alumni Awards will return for the first time in three years in 2022 with a star-studded cast of honorees.

All three of the honorees have ties to the entertainment industry: powerful business manager Fred Nigro, trailblazing actress Lauren Ridloff and influential executive Keith Weaver.

These distinguished alumni will be celebrated on June 4 at the Skirball Cultural Center in Los Angeles.

“Our 2022 honorees share a professional connection to the entertainment industry, but what makes each one a Distinguished Alumni is their personal character and ability to build community,” said CSUN President Erika D. Beck. “Fred Nigro is one of the most accomplished figures in Hollywood business management, but his personal service makes everyone feel like a star. Lauren Ridloff is a superhero on the stage and silver screen and a hero in real life for working mothers, the Deaf community, and Black and Mexican communities. And Keith Weaver is a community-minded connector on a global scale, leveraging relationships between government agencies and the entertainment industry.”

Nigro '74 (Accounting) is one of Hollywood's most powerful business managers and is recognized as such yearly by The Hollywood Reporter. Nigro was a founding partner at Nigro Karlin Segal Feldstein & Bolno, now known as NKSFB, LLC, one of the largest and most influential business management firms in the country.

Nigro has represented larger-than-life entertainers such as Tom Cruise, David Letterman, Nicole Kidman, Steve McQueen, Demi Moore and Fleetwood Mac. He also is a volunteer leader for CSUN's David Nazarian College of Business and Economics. Before his education at CSUN, Nigro was awarded a Bronze Star and Purple Heart for his valor and service in the U.S. Navy.

Ridloff has lifted hearts and inspired audiences from Broadway to the big screen. She earned acclaim for her breakthrough, Tony Award-nominated performance in “Children of a Lesser God” and acting in AMC's popular series “The Walking Dead” — and she broke barriers last year as Marvel's first Deaf superhero in the film “Eternals.”

Ridloff '01 (English) was crowned Miss Deaf America for 2000-02. After graduating from CSUN, she moved to New York and became an elementary school teacher before putting her professional career on hold to help raise her two sons. Originally brought on as an American Sign Language tutor for “Children of a Lesser God,” Ridloff earned the main role of “Sarah Norman” and received recognition from the theater community and national media for her emotionally resonant performance. Her recent role as “Makkari” in the blockbuster “Eternals” raised her profile and brought her inspiring story to a global audience.

Weaver '96 (Journalism), M.P.A. '07 is a master of versatility, with professional experience that marries two industries (government relations and entertainment). He is also an entrepreneur.

He began working for Sony Pictures Entertainment in 2002 as a vice president and climbed the ranks of the entertainment industry giant, where he serves as its executive vice president of global policy and external affairs. In his role, he coordinates the government activities of a range of Sony's U.S. properties, including Sony Music, Sony Electronics and Sony Computer Entertainment.

Prior to Sony, Weaver was a manager of community and government relations for Kaiser Permanente, then a staff director in the California State Senate Redistricting Office. He also has served as the chair of the California State Film Commission and the vice chair of the Board of Neighborhood Commissioners for the city of Los Angeles.

Weaver is the co-founder of Uncle Nearest Premium Whiskey, one of the fastest-growing and most award-winning American whiskey or bourbon companies in the world.