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# CULTURE



TEDx 2022 speaker Varsha Punati drew a connection between arriving at the base camp on Mount Everest and developing an inner sense of resilience.

## Let's Talk

CSUMB again hosts a series of TED-style talks by students and faculty on a variety of topics.

By Agata Popęda

This is the third time CSU Monterey Bay presents a TEDx series, an offshoot of globally-known TED Talks, delivered by local students and sometimes by CSUMB staff. This year's 12 talks follow the TED formula of short, powerful performances.

"It's something valuable for students and the broader community," says Dan Burfeind, the senior coordinator of student organizations, leadership development and assessment, who is also the CSUMB TEDx organizer. "TED Talks perfectly align with the education mission of higher education institutions."

The TED formula is being licensed and followed everywhere from universities to elementary schools. The theme of this year's series at CSUMB is "Waves," and topics touch various original but important issues, from how to use music to influence social messaging to bipolar disorder to deficit thinking in education. The speakers were selected from a pool of 30 applicants.

"It's a great learning and professional development opportunity," Burfeind adds. "Before we see the speakers on stage they already did the hard work of memorizing sentences, going through the initial discomfort many feel when it comes to public speaking, becoming confident and clear."

There is a lot of magic happening in the process, Burfeind says, noting there are a lot of personal stories, including stories about trauma: "It can be healing for students."

Why is the TED Talks formula—short and performative—so attractive? According to Burfeind, it's the matter of attention span.

TED is very protective of its brand. The talk cannot be longer than 18 minutes. There are guidelines that recommend steering away from the subjects of politics and religion. Also, it's about sharing one idea and one idea only. Burfeind always asks the students about their favorite TED Talks and they show him five to seven minutes of material. There is also a one-minute TED Talk—about short attention spans.

The speakers have two to three months to prepare their talk, and also practice how to stop fidgeting with their hands, pause in the right spaces and—finally—how to be in the spotlight.

The current series will be recorded, so a broader audience can later see the talks on YouTube. If you would like to see talks in person, act quickly, as there are only 100 spots available. ★

**TEDx** Noon-5pm Friday, Feb. 7. CSU Monterey Bay (Otter Student Union Ballroom), 3118 Inter-Garrison Road, Seaside. Free; limited seating. 582-3000, [csumb.edu](http://csumb.edu).