UCSB Reads Launches Its Fifth Season

The UCSB Library is inaugurating the fifth year of its award-winning UCSB Reads program with a new book entitled The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks. Each year, this program invites the campus community to join in reading a book on some of the most pressing topics of our times. This year’s theme, “Our Bodies, Our Cells: Exploring Identity” aims to unveil a broader understanding of themes around genetic knowledge, identity, and individual rights. Written by renowned science writer Rebecca Skloot, this book narrates the profound, unsettling story of one woman who, completely unaware, defined the course of medical history for years to come: “Doctors took her cells without asking. Those cells never died. They launched a medical revolution and a multimillion-dollar industry. More than twenty years later, her children found out. Their lives would never be the same” (book cover).

The UCSB Library will be giving away 2,500 hardcover editions and 100 electronic, Kindle versions of the book to UCSB students starting on January 6, 2011. In partnership with the Santa Barbara Public Library System, Santa Barbara City College, Westmont College, and Antioch University, the library will also sponsor a variety of events, activities, and exhibits related to the book and its general themes throughout winter quarter.

One of the highlights will be the author’s visit to campus on April 11, 2011. Because UCSB Reads selections are intended to have an interdisciplinary appeal, faculty across numerous departments will be able to use this year’s book and related material in their classes during the quarter. The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks offers a particularly rich array of threads for discussion, including themes around race, gender, identity, genetics, bioengineering, bioethics, the history of medicine, economics, law, religion, immortality, and innovation.

Parents who would like to share in the UCSB Reads initiative are encouraged to remind their students to pick up the book, to read and discuss it with them, and to participate in related community events. More information about UCSB Reads can be found at http://guides.library.ucsb.edu/ucsbreads.
Student Leaders Kick Off a Year of Collaboration

Leadership Development in the Office of Student Life hosted the annual Student Leader Retreat on Saturday, September 25 in collaboration with Associated Students, UCSB’s undergraduate student government. More than 300 participants—mostly students who serve in leadership positions in campus organizations and student government—gathered to network, build their leadership skills, and formulate plans for collaboration during the 2010-2011 academic year.

The day began with addresses by Dr. Michael Young, vice chancellor for student affairs, and Associated Students president Paul Monge-Rodriguez, who encouraged student leaders to take advantage of opportunities to collaborate by identifying common values and missions and by sharing financial and human resources. This was followed by a panel of campus administrators, students, and recent alumni who discussed collaboration and the influence of student coalitions throughout UCSB’s rich history of student activism and leadership. Student participants, who also had the opportunity to share their vision for the coming year, expressed powerful common themes like community, service, collaboration, growth, and expansion.

The purpose of the retreat was to enhance networks among campus organizations and foster ongoing collaboration. To this end, participants worked in groups of ten to develop a charter for a council related to their common interests and subsequently shared their vision with the larger group. The result was an inspiring presentation of novel ideas on topics such as enhancing interfaith dialogues among students, promoting research opportunities, improving communication among campus organizations, and more.

Each year, UCSB’s Office of Student Life registers and provides support for more than 300 organizations that enrich our community through a wealth of student-initiated academic, cultural, political, religious, and recreational co-curricular activities. In the words of one fourth-year Black studies major who attended the retreat, “Having over 300 organizations at UCSB is awesome but if these organizations do not intertwine themselves in any type of way, we miss out on great opportunities for collaboration and unique learning experiences. My message to other students is ‘Don’t miss out!’”

Ten years ago, the Student Leader Retreat could accommodate only 40-50 students and participants had to pay a registration fee to attend. The result of extensive student input and staff ingenuity is a new, improved event that can welcome more participants for free and is executed at a fraction of the cost. Still, events like the Student Leader Retreat would not be possible without voluntary student fee initiatives and the generosity of UCSB parents and alumni. Thanks to this support, Leadership Development is able to host programs year-round, including the SLC Certification Program (UCSB’s non-academic leadership certification program), the quarterly Leadership Challenge® Workshops, and the ED 173: Introduction to Leadership Development class. For more information on Leadership Development at UCSB, visit http://leadership.sa.ucsb.edu. To find out how you too can support programs like this, visit www.sa.ucsb.edu/giving/. Students looking for opportunities to get involved are encouraged to explore the campus organizations website at http://orgs.sa.ucsb.edu.

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Diversity. Before coming to UCSB, Joshua held roles at Northern Illinois University (NIU) as assistant director in Housing & Dining and Residential Communities and as acting director of the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender Resource Center. Prior to joining NIU, Joshua worked in residence life at Binghamton University, State University of New York. He is currently finishing a doctorate in higher education with a research focus on identity intersections of race, religion, and sexuality. Joshua received a master’s degree in social sciences, student affairs, and diversity at Binghamton University and a master’s degree in marketing analysis from The University of Alabama. He is an alumnus of the Social Justice Training Institute and has presented nationally on topics including media and marginality, queer people of color, multiracial student identity, intersections of religion and sexuality, and facilitating dialogues on diversity. Joshua is a trained diversity facilitator and served as the National Association of Student Personnel Administrators IV-E Asian Pacific Islander Concerns Knowledge Community Representative.

Kegan Allee has joined the UCSB Rape Prevention Education Program (RPEP) at the Women’s Center as advocacy support specialist. In this role, Kegan provides crisis counseling and support for people who have experienced sexual assault, dating/domestic violence, and stalking, in addition to assisting with RPEP education and acting as a resource for non-traditional and re-entry students. Originally from Florida, Kegan received a bachelor’s degree in political science from the University of Florida, a master’s degree in women’s studies from San Diego State University, and is currently a Ph.D. candidate in sociology at UCSB. Kegan worked as a student supervisor at the UCSB Adventure Climbing Center for two years and as an indoor and outdoor rock climbing instructor for UCSB Adventure Programs. This work inspired her dissertation topic on gender and rock climbing. While in graduate school, Kegan staffed weekly hotline shifts and offered in-person crisis counseling at the Santa Barbara Rape Crisis Center and was a member of the Speaker’s Bureau.

UCSB Ranks High Among Top Universities

UCSB continues to collect laurels from popular periodicals and prestigious institutions alike. This year, U.S. News and World Report awarded UCSB its highest rankings yet, placing it 9th in its “Top 50 Public National Universities” and 39th in its “Best National Universities” listings. The Washington Monthly ranked UCSB 11th on its list of the “Top 30 National Universities.” Continuing to earn its recognition abroad, UCSB was also listed 29th among the world’s top 200 universities by the British periodical Times Higher Education.

Even more notably, UCSB’s graduate programs have significantly risen in rankings among research universities, according to a recently published report by the National Research Council (NRC) evaluating over 5,000 doctoral programs in 62 fields in 212 universities in the United States. Out of 31 UCSB programs assessed by the NRC, 10 were given ranking ranges that extended into the top 5 in the country, 14 that reached into the top 10, and 20 that reached into the top 20. “Together, our 47 graduate programs – 31 of which were participants in this study – invite 800 new graduate students per year to study with world-class faculty at UC Santa Barbara,” said Gale Morrison, dean of the Graduate Division. “Our university currently has nearly 3,000 graduate students. Building on the current outstanding programs in which these students study, we need to continually examine our goals as they relate to national and worldwide societal and scientific developments and challenges. The information from this study will be used for ongoing conversations about how to continuously improve our programs and ensure the success and professional impact of our graduates.”

Programs assigned ranking ranges into the top 5 include chemical engineering, communication, computer science, electrical and computer engineering, geography, marine science, mechanical engineering, physics, and theater and dance. Those with ranges reaching into the top 10 include history; Hispanic languages and literature; anthropology; and ecology, evolution, and marine biology. Among those with ranges reaching into the top 20 are art history, comparative literature, English, chemistry and biochemistry, psychology, and religious studies. Most impressively, the Materials Department was ranked number 1 over its entire range and was the only department in the country to be ranked so highly in any field of engineering.

Chancellor Henry Yang shared that the new rankings are a reflection and confirmation of UCSB’s continuing rise in world-class stature. Adding that doctoral programs form the foundation of a research university, he thanked and credited UCSB’s outstanding faculty, students, and staff for the quality, diversity, and interdisciplinary nature that led to these excellent rankings. For more detailed information on the NRC assessment, visit UCSB’s Graduate Division website at www.graddiv.ucsb.edu/nrc.

Social Host Liability Ordinance Enforced in Santa Barbara County

In order to address the problem of underage drinking, a social host liability ordinance will be enforced in Santa Barbara County beginning in December 2010. This ordinance holds individuals responsible for hosting, or knowingly providing a place for, underage drinking. Penalties for violating the ordinance include mandatory education classes and fines ranging from $500-2,000. Parents are encouraged to discuss this ordinance and the penalties for violation with their students. More information can be found in the “Chapter 48” section of the Santa Barbara County Code at http://library.municode.com/HTML/16322/book.html.
Masatoshi Hirokawa is from Niigata, Japan. He just entered the one-year master's program in economics – a program that attracts more international graduate students than any other at UCSB, with the exception of electrical and computer engineering. To help prepare him for his new academic challenges, last August he attended the new summer Language and Culture Workshop sponsored by the Office of International Students and Scholars (OISS). Masatoshi came out of the program not only more articulate in his spoken English, but also with a new athletic passion – running marathons. In workshop off-time, the principal faculty instructor also trained Masatoshi to run marathons and he just finished his first 26.2-mile run in October in an astonishing 4 hours and 34 minutes.

OISS is the home away from home of over 1,800 international students and scholars like Masatoshi, who typically rank in the top 1% in their disciplines in their home countries. OISS issues the immigration documents that allow international students and scholars to enter the United States and offers services ranging from an English conversation program run by community volunteers to move-in assistance offered by OISS staff. In September, OISS held its largest ever international student orientation with nearly 400 incoming students in attendance for the two-day event.

UCSB’s international enrollments mirror overall national trends and the rate of international students coming to the US has risen in 2010, with China as the leading country of origin. Graduate students make up the overwhelming majority of international students at UCSB, and almost all of them are enrolled in engineering and science programs. Over 50% of all international students and research scholars at UCSB are from just two countries – China and India. Men outnumber women by two to one. In addition, international graduate students form the majority in a number of departments and programs in the sciences, where they are likely to be found working late at nights and on weekends. The 50% of international students not from China and India make up a diverse group. About 100 undergraduates come to UCSB as part of the UC systemwide Education Abroad Program from every European country, Asia, and Latin America. While Africa is underrepresented as everywhere else in the US, UCSB does have students from Eritrea, Kenya, Ghana, Nigeria, and South Africa. The largest single group of international students from the Middle East comes from Iran, even though the US has not had diplomatic relations with the country since 1979.

International students have formed cultural and social organizations, such as the International Students Association, which holds weekly student socials, and specific associations for students and scholars from China, Japan, India, and Iran. In addition to the programming provided by these organizations, the Recreation Center offers avenues for activities popular with international students, such as badminton, ping pong, and soccer. Even more importantly, the presence of a diverse global community at UCSB benefits our campus with opportunities for cross-cultural interaction and enrichment. Domestic and international students have the opportunity to interact in the classroom, in graduate research groups, and in the residence halls, as well as through programs like the OISS international film series, which attracts students from all backgrounds. For the past two years, for example, the OISS Language Partner program, in collaboration with resident advisors in Manzanita’s Global Village program, paired domestic undergraduates with international students to promote language practice, cultivate cross-cultural friendships, and open up new windows on the world.

Our international student and scholar community is about to become much larger, particularly as UCSB’s international recognition grows. The London publication Times Higher Education, for example, has just ranked UCSB 29th of all universities in the world – and with our science and engineering programs receiving rankings that place them among the top it the nation, our international students deserve no small portion of the credit for UCSB’s excellence and reputation as a world-class university.

For more information about the Office of International Students and Scholars, visit http://www.oiss.ucsb.edu or call (805) 893-2929.
Supporting Sexual and Gender Diversity at UCSB

With recent national events affecting non-heterosexual and non-gender conforming youth, there has been a heightened level of support offered to lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer (LGBTQ) students at UCSB. In recent months, UCSB’s LGBTQ and ally community came together in a number of ways to remember those who passed away, to educate the community, and to transform grief into action. UCSB’s Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender (LGBT) Resources worked with student leaders and campus departments to create a week of events focused on the motto “Together, it Gets Better.” The week began with renowned scholar and activist Kate Bornstein’s address to the community about the reality of bullying and strategies for survival. Other events included workshops on self-defense, suicide prevention, and bystander intervention, in addition to student-facilitated film discussions in the residence halls and in the Resource Center for Sexual and Gender Diversity (RCSGD).

Located in the Student Resource Building, the RCSGD is a space created for LGBTQ students to share resources, receive support, and find community. The resource center includes a study and social area, as well as a library of resources to support LGBTQ students and educate the broader community. The RCSGD houses UCSB’s Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Resources staff, who support LGBTQ students, faculty, and staff, as well as promote educational initiatives for the broader community. Among their ongoing programs is Safe Zone training, which aims to educate the campus on how to be supportive of LGBTQ people. Since the inception of the training last winter, LGBT Services staff have facilitated over 50 presentations to audiences that include the UCSB Police Department, the Office of Equal Opportunity and Sexual Harassment/Title IX Compliance, Residential Life, Student Health, Counseling Services, and Career Services. Safe Zone training is the result of collaboration between Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Resources and Associated Students Queer Commission and is continually updated to meet the needs of the community. In addition to LGBT Resources and the RCSGD, over ten student organizations provide social and educational opportunities and work with UCSB staff to address intolerance, discrimination, and disrespectful behavior on campus. To learn about LGBT resources on campus, visit the Resource Center for Sexual and Gender Diversity’s website at http://www.sa.ucsb.edu/sgd/, or contact Joshua Moon Johnson at (805) 893-5847 or Joshua.MoonJohnson@sa.ucsb.edu.

Amazing Day Foundation Funds Student Mental Health

The Division of Student Affairs received a generous donation of $10,000 from the Amazing Day Foundation to support a student mental health intern, who will work with UCSB’s fraternities and sororities. This Greek mental health intern expands the number of students working with assistant student mental health coordinator Ryan Sims from four to five. The new intern will perform outreach to fraternities and sororities in an internship with UCsB’s first Greek mental health intern, will work with fraternities and sororities in an internship funded by the Amazing Day Foundation in memory of Sean Vernon Feliciano.

Senior Ryan Franco, UCSB’s first Greek mental health intern, will work with fraternities and sororities in an internship funded by the Amazing Day Foundation in memory of Sean Vernon Feliciano.

UCSB Policies Website

Have you ever wondered about where to find information on policies that impact students at UCSB? To learn more about UCSB and University of California systemwide policies, including Higher Education Opportunity Act (HEOA) notifications and UCSB Campus Regulations, visit the Student Affairs website at http://www.sa.ucsb.edu/policies/index.aspx.
Helping Students Find Work
in a Sluggish Economy

A truly bright spot in the current economic recession is the marked shift in students’ attitudes towards the job search this fall. UCSB students seem to be taking a proactive approach and seriously engaging in the process. According to Career Services, while the market remains tight, there are jobs out there. For better or worse, many companies prefer hiring an entry-level student with a college degree over a more experienced and expensive worker.

Given the current landscape, how can students get positioned for success? Micael Kemp, director of UCSB Career Services, has some recommendations for parents to share with their students. First of all, students should draft a résumé and cover letter and take them to Career Services for a critique. The second step is for them to sign up for Gaucholink, Career Services’ online job and internship listing service. From Gaucholink, students can upload their résumés, post to résumé books, participate in on-campus interviews, set up email notifications for new positions, and much more. With about ten minutes of effort, students can have Gaucholink working for them 24/7.

Third, students should attend all campus career fairs. Even now, Career Services is hosting an average of 50 employers per quarter. Parents can best help their students during this process by coaching them to keep an open mind and research companies before making decisions. According to Career Services, students often foreclose on employers before investigating them. A common type of refrain is “Enterprise Rent-A-Car? I didn’t go to college to work for a car rental service!”

Yet according to Micael Kemp, “by walking away before speaking to company representatives, students never hear that all employees at Enterprise, for example, have a college degree and many are earning six figures in as many years.”

Fourth, students should be reminded to use social media strategically. Most employers look up candidates on Facebook before making hiring decisions, so students should strip out the party photos and un-join groups that make them look unprofessional. Their “What’s on your mind?” comments should read more like “I’m updating my résumé and getting ready for the career fair” and less like “I’m at level 357 of Mafia Wars!”

If they don’t have a LinkedIn account, students should create one. They will need to build a profile and then join groups like UCSB Alumni Association and career-specific groups. Parents can help students by building their own LinkedIn account and connecting with as many people as they can. Students can then connect to their parents and begin to leverage their parents’ friends and associates directly. For instance, you can search Apple and find that Dana, one of your friends, knows someone who works there. You ask Dana to connect you and, voilà!, you have an “in” at Apple. Dana’s friend can tell you how to best approach Apple, what departments are seeking help, and the names of some of their managers. The power of this type of networking cannot be overstated – students can go from making a cold call to a warm one at the click of a mouse.

Finally, for additional support and resources, students should make use of the rich arsenal of tools available through UCSB’s Career Services. More information is available at career.ucsb.edu/
parents/index.html.

FAQs: Financial Aid Information

If a student has not yet applied for financial aid for the 2010-2011 academic year, is it too late?
No. Although the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) priority filing deadline for 2010-2011 financial aid was March 2, 2010, students can still apply for financial aid for the 2010-2011 academic year to be considered for the Pell Grant, direct loans (subsidized and unsubsidized), and the Parent Loan for Undergraduate Students (PLUS). The FAFSA application is available online at www.fafsa.ed.gov. UCSB’s school code is 001320.

If a student has already applied for financial aid for 2010-2011, when will he or she receive an offer of financial aid?
If additional documentation is required to verify the accuracy of the FAFSA information, students will be sent an email in April or May directing them to check their “Aid Status” on the Office of Financial Aid and Scholarships website (www.finaid.ucsb.edu). When all requested documents are received, they will be reviewed and an offer of financial aid will be created. At that point, students will be sent another email directing them to view their financial aid award letter online.

How do I qualify for the 2010-2011 Blue and Gold Opportunity Plan?
Under the Blue and Gold Opportunity Plan, the University of California (UC) provides that financially needy undergraduates with family income up to the median for California households ($70,000) and who are enrolled in their first four years (two years for transfer students) will have their UC statewide fees covered by scholarship or grant awards. UCSB students must complete the FAFSA by the March 2, 2010 priority deadline. To learn more about the Blue and Gold plan, visit the UCSB Office of Financial Aid and Scholarships website at www.finaid.ucsb.edu or see www.universityofcalifornia.edu/ bluedogold.

What scholarships are available?
UCSB awards its limited allocation of scholarship aid primarily to continuing UCSB students who filed the FAFSA by the March 2, 2010 priority deadline and who meet the dual criteria of financial need and academic merit. Additionally, there are links to free scholarship search engines on the scholarship section of the Office of Financial Aid and Scholarships website.

How does a student receive his or her financial aid?
Most types of financial aid will be credited to the student’s account with the UCSB Billing Office (BARC). If the aid placed on the student’s BARC account does not cover all the institutional charges, he or she will be expected to pay the difference by the winter quarter fee deadline of December 15, 2010.

What is the PLUS Loan?
A student’s financial aid award letter may offer the PLUS Loan, which parents may assume on behalf of their dependent undergraduate student to help fund educational expenses. The interest rate is fixed at 7.9% and repayment begins 60 days after the last disbursement of the loan. Parent PLUS loan borrowers may choose to defer repayment while the student is enrolled and for an additional six months after the student is no longer enrolled. Interest that accrues during these periods will be capitalized if not paid by the borrower. All PLUS Loan applicants must pass a credit check to have their loan approved.
Finding off-campus housing in the local community? The Community Housing Office (CHO), UCSB’s center for advice and information on off-campus housing in the Isla Vista, Goleta, and Santa Barbara areas, will be hosting workshops in each university residence hall during the first two weeks of January to educate students about finding housing, choosing good roommates, and being informed renters. On January 13, students are invited to attend CHO’s annual Rental Fair to meet and greet local property providers, ask questions, and see what properties are available for the upcoming school year. The staff at CHO is available to read over rental leases prior to signing and to answer parents’ and students’ questions about leases, co-signing, and security deposits. Additionally, CHO maintains an up-to-date online rental database with vacant and shared housing options. CHO also offers a move-in/move-out videotaping service to aid in the return of students’ deposits and facilitates mediation for students in dispute with roommates or property providers. CHO is located on the third floor of the University Center and can be found online at http://www.housing.ucsb.edu/hchoices/cho-general-info.htm. For questions about community living, email ucsbcho@housing.ucsb.edu or call (805) 893-4371.

UCSB Adventure Programs is proud to announce alternative to the typical spring break itinerary— including Grand Canyon and Colorado River adventures, as well as local educational excursions like the Wilderness First Responder course. Adventure programs offers year-round, cost-effective trips and classes in rock climbing, kayaking, canyoneering, canoeing, SCUBA diving, and more. Working closely with UCSB’s Wellness Program, Adventure Programs encourages students to lead healthy, balanced, and active lifestyles through outdoor programs in Santa Barbara and beyond. All interested students, staff, faculty, and community members are welcome to join the adventure. For more information on spring break offerings, visit http://gauchosplay.com/adventure-programs/spring-break-2011. To learn more about UCSB Recreational Sports and Adventure Programs, visit www.GauchosPlay.com or www.facebook.com/UCSBAdventure.