A Sustainability Blitz at UC Santa Barbara

UC Santa Barbara’s commitment to sustainability received a sizable boost of energy as the 2008-09 academic year got under way. An estimated 5,000 students attended September’s New Student Convocation, where environmentalist and explorer Céline Cousteau was the keynote speaker. Meanwhile, students, faculty, and staff have been greeted by sustainability messages all over campus thanks to a new effort by campus administrators who have vowed to sharpen the focus of UCSB’s many existing environmental initiatives.

Cousteau, the daughter of ocean explorer and filmmaker Jean-Michel Cousteau and granddaughter of the legendary Jacques Cousteau, has devoted most of her life to projects that protect the Earth and its natural resources. During her address at UCSB, she spoke about how students can make a difference in helping preserve the environment. Later that night at Campbell Hall, she and her father presented a video that explored the documentary filmmaking and expeditions of the Ocean Futures Society, of which Jean-Michel Cousteau is president.

Chancellor Henry T. Yang has already pledged his commitment to sustainability at UCSB. Last spring, he announced the adoption of a comprehensive campus sustainability plan designed to make significant contributions to energy conservation, resource management, and environmental awareness — as well as to education and research — on the UCSB campus and beyond. During his traditional address at convocation, Yang told the students that the university has adopted a new motto for its sustainability efforts: “Leave No Footprint Behind.”

But the push for sustainability at UCSB extends far beyond convocation. A green blitz greeted students around the campus this year. A power-point slide show highlighting the university’s green accomplishments and goals is being displayed on television monitors in various locales, especially in the residence halls and University Center. In addition, three-sided, tabletop displays, printed on 100 percent recycled paper, have been placed in the residence hall dining areas. These explain the sustainability programs on campus, highlight the university’s accomplishments, and provide information on how each student can contribute to the effort.

The sustainability movement is being shepherded by Ron Cortez, who joined UCSB in March as associate vice chancellor for administrative services. Cortez is the highest-ranking administrator ever assigned to environmental issues at UCSB. He is expected to provide guidance for a soon-to-be-announced sustainability committee.

“I really love sustainability,” said Cortez, who also oversees emergency planning, business services, and environmental health and safety. “I really like doing things with the environment.” He sees his role here as harnessing the substantial but somewhat scattered efforts around the campus and coordinating them to maximize the university’s sustainability. “We have a commitment from the chancellor,” Cortez said. “I think I can help to get things organized and also tackle some of the bigger types of projects.”

In an exemplary display of commitment to sustainability, UCSB students and administrators have collaborated to fund construction of a 133kW solar panel array on the roof of the Recreation Center’s Multi-Purpose Activities Center (MAC). This 816 solar panel array will supply enough electricity to meet 80% of the electrical demand of the MAC, classrooms, a fitness center, the climbing wall, locker rooms and the pottery studio. Production and utilization of renewable energy is an important strategy employed by the university to reduce utility costs and to reduce the production of greenhouse gases. Shown below is Recreation Center Director Gary Jurich alongside the new array, 40 feet above the ground.

The sustainability push for 2008-09 will culminate with UCSB’s hosting the 2009 Sustainability for California’s Higher Education Coalition: University of California, California State University, and California Community Colleges conference. It will be held June 21-24, 2009. The theme will be “Working Our Way to Zero,” focusing on goals such as zero waste, zero net greenhouse gas emissions, zero non-renewable energy sources, and zero pesticides.
The Orientation Programs Office in the Division of Student Affairs has recently expanded to include year-round parent services as a way to partner with parents in promoting student success. This expansion of services formally recognizes the major impact parents have on their college students and is intended to assist parents in becoming more knowledgeable and informed about UCSB resources and services available to students.

As a parent or family member of a UCSB student, you are automatically able to take full advantage of the new parent services program, Gaucho Parents. The Gaucho Parents Web site at www.sa.ucsb.edu/parents is a great place to start learning about campus life, resources for you and your student, academic policies, and parent involvement opportunities.

From now on, two parent newsletters will keep you informed about and connected to UCSB. In addition to Campus Connection, there is also a new monthly e-mail newsletter—Gaucho Parents Gazette—which includes information about campus activities, upcoming events, and ways to support your student. You must elect to receive the Gaucho Parents Gazette by contacting gauchoparents@sa.ucsb.edu or visiting the Gaucho Parents Web site. Campus Connection will continue to be distributed by mail to your student’s permanent home address twice each year.

Additionally, our staff members are resources for you during your time as a Gaucho Parent. Contact Whitney White in Parent Services (for general questions and inquiries) at whitney.white@sa.ucsb.edu or (805) 893-3643 or Candace Stevenson in the Dean of Students Office (for problem response) at candace.stevenson@sa.ucsb.edu or (805) 893-4521. General questions may also be directed to gauchoparents@sa.ucsb.edu. Please don’t hesitate to contact us with your questions, concerns, or comments. We look forward to getting to know your family and helping to make your experience as a Gaucho Parent the best it can be!

Gaucho Parents—A Valuable New Resource for Parents

Parent Feedback Requested

The developers of Residence Host Training, on-line education designed to teach Isla Vista residents about the law, rental lease requirements, and safe and legal party hosting, are looking for parents to provide feedback on the training. More detailed information about Residence Host Training is available in our on-line Campus Connection archive (www.sa.ucsb.edu/parentnewsletter) in a fall 2006 article called, “Safer Celebrations.”

Completing the training yourself is a great way to learn more about the social and legal environment of Isla Vista, where your son or daughter may choose to live while a student at UCSB. If you are interested in taking the on-line training and willing to be contacted for your feedback, please e-mail Onolee Zwicke at onolee@cox.net. Residence Host Training can be found at www.ACT-California.com. Parents may enter the site as a “Resident” and create their own username and password to review the site. However, prior to taking the course, please e-mail Onolee so that you receive a link to the evaluation survey of the RH1T course.

The development of Residence Host Training was funded in part by a California State Incentive Grant Award for comprehensive substance abuse prevention.

Introducing Two New Student Affairs Professionals

Dr. Alka Arora
The Student Affairs Division is pleased to welcome Dr. Alka Arora as the director of UCSB’s Women’s Center. Before coming to UCSB, Dr. Arora served as program director for the Office of Faculty Advancement and the Diversity Research Institute at the University of Washington. With a strong commitment to coalition building and transformative community work, she has been a leader in environmental justice, anti-violence, and anti-racist activism in Seattle. Dr. Arora earned her bachelor’s degree in mathematics from USC and her doctorate at the University of Washington in women studies. Her dissertation research focused on building and transformative community work, she has been a leader in environmental justice, anti-violence, and anti-racist activism in Seattle. Dr. Arora earned her bachelor’s degree in mathematics from USC and her doctorate at the University of Washington in women studies. Her dissertation research focused on building a movement for social and environmental justice.

Melanie Matson
The Student Affairs Division is also pleased to welcome Melanie Matson as the director of UCSB’s Rape Prevention Education Program (RPEP), which is housed in the Women’s Center. Melanie serves as the primary resource on campus for students who are affected by sexual assault and domestic violence. Before coming to UCSB, Melanie worked in Rice County, Minnesota, as the director of social change at the HOPE (Healing, Outreach, Prevention, and Education) Center, a nonprofit organization that works to end sexual and domestic violence. Melanie brings a wealth of experience in coordinating multidisciplinary responses to sexual assault and addressing broad issues of violence against women. She has a master’s degree in counseling psychology from Bethel University in Minnesota, and is currently completing her doctorate in educational leadership from the University of St. Thomas in Minnesota.
Driver Education

A few years ago, after three UCSB students were fatally injured in separate traffic accidents, we ran an article that highlighted the risks of driving while sleepy deprived and/or distracted. Now, reports from the American National Highway Traffic Safety Association indicate that in the past five years 22% of all crashes resulted from the driver's dealing with technology.

Also, a recent Associated Foreign Press article in Yahoo! News highlights research from Britain's Transport Research Laboratory that finds texting behind the wheel is more dangerous than driving while under the influence of alcohol. Using a simulator, the Transport Research Laboratory found that reaction time slowed by 35% when young drivers (ages 17-24) were writing or reading text messages while driving as compared to reaction time deterioration of 12% at the legal alcohol limit. This research also revealed that these drivers had difficulty maintaining a safe distance from other cars and tended to drift out of their lane more often.

Using a hand-held cell phone and writing or reading text messages while driving can lead to accidents and has resulted in legislation making them illegal in California. Governor Schwarzenegger recently signed bill SB28 that bans text messaging while driving. This ban will go into effect on January 1, 2009. In addition to using cell phones while driving a car, students commonly use cell phones while biking on campus, a practice that can also pose a risk of accident and injury. Last spring quarter there were ninety-nine bike accidents as reported by Student Health Services, some of which were caused by cell phone use.

We expect that you have had countless conversations with your son or daughter about safe driving and the need to make wise choices. We encourage you to continue to do so. A large part of students' resistance to changing behavior is their sense of immunity to tragedy. Young people honestly think nothing bad will happen to them. Ultimately they will make their own choices; but hopefully as they do, they will hear your words of caution. One father told us he wrote his sons a long letter about safe driving habits. His fundamental advice was first drive the car and consider everything else secondary. Educating your sons and daughters on the importance of driving safely will increase the likelihood that they will achieve the bright futures you and they have in mind.

UCSBBriefs

The eighth annual New Student Convocation welcoming the entering class of 2008 was held on September 22, 2008. Chancellor Henry T. Yang and seventy faculty members and administrators in full academic regalia participated in the formal ceremony designed to transmit campus values of scholarship, leadership, and citizenship to over 5,000 new students in attendance. The keynote address was given by environmentalist Céline Cousteau. Following the ceremony, students had the opportunity to attend one of ten panel discussions held in residence halls featuring faculty, staff, and resident assistants. Faculty, staff, and students also attended receptions at Santa Catalina and Tropicana Gardens.

Commencement 2009 dates have been set for Saturday, June 7, 2009 (College of Creative Studies), and Saturday, June 13, and Sunday, June 14, 2009. Information regarding the ceremonies is available on the UCSB Commencement Web site at www.ua.ucsb.edu/commencement. You are advised to make hotel and restaurant reservations early since accommodations fill up quickly in the Santa Barbara area during this time of year. Visit the Commencement Web site for local accommodations, dining suggestions, professional photography information, and much more. If you have questions regarding Commencement, please call (805) 893-7382.

The UCSB Reads program has selected Ethics for the New Millennium by His Holiness the Dalai Lama for winter 2009. Beginning January 21, 2009, 2,500 books will be given away to UCSB students in the lobby of Davidson Library. Among the program's stated goals are to increase awareness of ethical issues and the impacts of our behavior on others, to encourage reading and discussion of important issues across campus, to highlight academic strengths in the humanities and fine arts and other areas on campus, and to create a sense of fun and camaraderie on campus while addressing an important issue. As part of this program the Dalai Lama will give two lectures on campus on April 24, 2009. We hope your son or daughter will part of this exciting event, and we encourage you to read this book along with us and share in our common intellectual experience. More information is available on the program Web site at http://UCSBReads.library.ucsb.edu.

The UCSB Voter Registration Volunteer Coalition, composed of representatives from Associated Students and various student organizations, conducted a voter registration drive during fall quarter in preparation for the November 4 presidential election. Through a “Voting is Sweet….Apathy Isn't” registration and education campaign, the non-partisan coalition headed by the Office of Student Life voter registration intern, Jaclyn Feldstein, registered over 10,200 students. The coalition not only broke UC records but also won the Ultimate College Bowl, a contest that strived to have every student in the nation register and vote in the 2008 election. As a winner, UCSB will receive a free concert by the band Death Cab for Cutie. The final voter registration numbers, including those registered by other UCSB student groups and locally affiliated organizations, are still being tallied for the campus and the community of Isla Vista. UCSB expects to match, if not top, the previous number of 17,000 registered in the 2008 election. As a winner, UCSB will receive a free concert by the band Death Cab for Cutie. The final voter registration numbers, including those registered by other UCSB student groups and locally affiliated organizations, are still being tallied for the campus and the community of Isla Vista. UCSB expects to match, if not top, the previous number of 17,000 registered in the 2008 presidential election, thereby maintaining its reputation as the leader in voter registration in the UC system and, some would argue, in the state and nation. Voter registration was conducted in the residence halls, classrooms, and highly trafficked areas of campus; at various student activities and campus events; and door-to-door in the Isla Vista community. University and colleges are mandated by the 1998 reauthorization of the Federal Higher Education Act to make a “good faith effort” to register all enrolled students. This federal legislation supports UCSB’s long-standing goals of engendering leadership and citizenship in its student body. For more information about UCSB’s voter registration, voter education, and get-out-the-vote efforts, please access the UCSB Voter Registration Web site at http://www.sa.ucsb.edu/voterreg.

Parents, families and students are encouraged to register for our emergency notification system called UCSB ALERT at http://alert.ucsb.edu to receive timely notices in the event of an emergency. Once registered, parents may receive messages via text-capable cell phones, BlackBerry devices, wireless PDAs, pagers and e-mail.

In January, the Community Housing Office (CHO) will host a rental fair on campus and workshops in the residence halls to assist students in finding rental housing for the next school year. Students who attend these workshops will also learn about rental responsibilities and rights. For more information call (805) 893-4371 or visit the CHO Web site at http://www.housing.ucsb.edu/hchoices/cho-general-info.htm.

The Isla Vista Foot Patrol, part of the Santa Barbara Sheriff's Department, is staffed by officers from the UCSB Police Department, the Santa Barbara Sheriff's Department, and the California Highway Patrol. This agency provides law enforcement and crime prevention services to Isla Vista through a community policing model. This past summer construction was completed on the Foot Patrol's new, larger facility at 6504 Frigo Road, and officers moved into the building in time for the beginning of fall quarter.

Lt. Brian Olmstead, head of the IV Foot Patrol, reports an increasing number of laptop computers have been stolen in Isla Vista. He recommends that students purchase a software-based, laptop tracking service that tracks and locates stolen laptops. Ljack for Laptops offers a standard version for $39.99 and can be purchased on-line at various Web sites.
Important Dates and Information for Financial Aid Recipients

December 15, 2008 – Fees for winter quarter 2009 must be paid or deferred with the Billing Office (805-893-2155) by 4 p.m. on this date. The aid (except some parent loans) is automatically credited to your son’s or daughter’s BARC account as long as he or she is enrolled in a minimum of 6 units prior to this date.

January 1, 2009 – The 2009-2010 Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) is available on the Web at www.fafsa.ed.gov and can be filed with the federal processor beginning on this date. Electronic filing of the FAFSA is recommended.

January 26, 2009 – Eligibility for some aid programs is partially based on full-time enrollment as of the fifteenth class day of each quarter. The Pell Grant, Cal Grant B Access Grant, Academic Competitive Grant and Smart Grant may be reduced or cancelled if a student is not enrolled full-time (in 12 units) on the fifteenth day of class.

March 2, 2009 – This is the FAFSA priority filing deadline for UCSB financial aid and for Cal Grants. Students who file after this deadline will be considered only for federal Pell Grants and student loans.

March 15, 2009 – Fees for spring quarter 2009 must be paid or deferred with the Billing Office by 4 p.m. on this date.

Web Site Update
The Financial Aid Office at UCSB now offers a series of tutorials available on-line that are intended to walk students and parents through completion of forms such as the dependent verification worksheet and the parent asset update form. The tutorials, available in both English and Spanish, were designed using Adobe Captivate and provide audio instructions created by UCSC’s professional staff and student employees. In addition to the tutorials, the UCSB Financial Aid Office has developed a series of informative video sessions, known as “GauchoCasts”, that walk current and prospective students through the financial aid application and award process at UCSB. For example, the second presentation in a series of seven covers the verification process and uses animated characters in a cartoon-like setting that takes place in a radio studio. Big Steve and Joe field calls from students and parents about their burning financial aid questions. You can view the tutorials and “GauchoCasts” by following these URLs:
- http://www.finaid.sa.ucsb.edu/Forms/Tutorials/FormTutorial.asp
- http://www.finaid.sa.ucsb.edu/Media.sapl

Currently under development is a new tutorial (also available in Spanish) designed to help walk California families through the 2009-2010 FAFSA in a clear and concise manner.

UCSB Financial Aid Office 2008-2009 Request for Review
The 2008-2009 Request for Review (RFR) process addresses changes in the family financial situation in cases where the information on the 2008-2009 FAFSA and the 2007 tax returns do not represent the family’s current financial situation.

A 2008-2009 Request for Review can be submitted for the following four situations:
- A final divorce decree issued after the date the FAFSA was filed
- Loss of employment, loss of social security benefits, or loss of child support
- A death of a parent (or spouse of an independent student) after the date the FAFSA was filed
- Family medical expense paid in 2007 and not covered by insurance

Request for Reviews forms can be found on the Financial Aid Office Web site at:
- http://www.finaid.sa.ucsb.edu/Forms.asp

Staying Connected
UCSB Campus Calendar: http://events.sa.ucsb.edu/calendar/
UCSB Home: http://www.ucsb.edu or call (805) 893-8000
Campus Connection Newsletter: http://www.sa.ucsb.edu/parentnewsletter; e-mail: Newsletter@sa.ucsb.edu
Campus Learning Assistance Services: http://www.clas.ucsb.edu or call (805) 893-3269
Associated Students: http://www.as.ucsb.edu or call (805) 893-2566
Counseling Services: http://counseling.sa.ucsb.edu/ or call 4411
Career Services: http://career.ucsb.edu or call (805) 893-4412
Division of Student Affairs: http://www.sa.ucsb.edu or call (805) 893-3651
Educational Opportunity Program: http://www.sa.ucsb.edu/eop or call (805) 893-3235
Financial Aid Office: http://www.finaid.ucsb.edu/ or call (805) 893-2432
Gauchos Parents: http://www.ssa.ucsb.edu/parents
Housing & Residential Services: http://www.housing.ucsb.edu or call (805) 893-2760
Office of the Registrar: http://www.registrar.ucsb.edu/ or call (805) 893-3592
Office of Student Life: http://www.sa.ucsb.edu/osl/ or call (805) 893-4569
Orientation Programs: http://www.sa.ucsb.edu/orientation/ or call (805) 893-3443
Student Health Service: http://www.sa.ucsb.edu/studenthealth/ or call (805) 893-3371
UCSB Bookstore: http://www.bookstore.ucsb.edu/ or call (805) 893-3271
UCSB Wellness Program: http://wellness.sa.ucsb.edu/