

Our University

A NEWSLETTER FROM THE UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA PRESIDENT FOR THE UC COMMUNITY



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UC in the Wild

By Donna Hemmila

Blue Oak Ranch is the kind of place that gives environmentalists night terrors.

With 3,260 acres of scenic woodlands and streams within commuting distance of Silicon Valley, the former cattle ranch was a perfect candidate for suburban sprawl. Think picturesque vineyards, artificial ponds, maybe a few cows grazing in the distance for special effects and clusters of multimillion-dollar McMansions dotting the ridges.

That, at one time, was the direction Blue Oak Ranch was heading. An investment group was pursuing plans to develop the spread for upscale housing, forever changing the ecosystem and depriving Californians of an important natural habitat.

Thank Mother Earth for fault lines. The Calaveras Fault runs right under the spot where the investment group hoped to build a reservoir. With earthquake potential stalling the development, the nonprofit Nature Conservancy alerted an anonymous donor who bought the land in 1991 and preserved it. Then in 2007, that generous donor gave the ranch – valued at \$5 million – to the University of California, making it the newest addition to the roughly 135,000 acres that comprise the UC Natural Reserve System.

Mike Hamilton, the Blue Oak Ranch Reserve director, is telling the new reserve's story from the top of a ridge overlooking a verdant slope dotted with gnarled oaks and rock outcroppings. A stream with river otters and trout gurgles at the bottom of the hill. In the distance, the skyline of San Jose rises out of the haze.

The reserve, permanently protected by a Nature Conservancy easement, lies about seven miles east of the city and is surrounded by 180,000 acres of parks and open space in the Mount Hamilton Range.

"What makes this reserve unique is it's so close to a large urban area," says Hamilton. "You can study the

Living on the land

Mike Hamilton, a conservation biologist, took his first UC reserve position in 1982, thinking it would be a perfect job for a couple of post-doc years.

He's spent 27 years as an onsite UC reserve director, most of that time at the James San Jacinto Mountains Reserve in Riverside County.

"It's turned into a dream job for me being in the field all the time and being involved with academics," Hamilton says. "It's been a great career. It's one of the best jobs at UC."

In August he moved into the barn at Blue Oak Ranch to become its live-in director, the reserve's single full-time human inhabitant. A reserve steward, Jeff Wilcox, drives into the reserve every day, braving five miles of single-width, death-wish dirt road. His job involves physical maintenance, which includes chopping firewood, clearing trails and keeping the wild, non-native pigs out.

Hamilton lives full time in an apartment in the cedar-plank barn. His goal is to make the reserve completely sustainable. Solar panels provide electricity, a well gives water, propane fuels the cook stove and a wood stove heats the place with fallen limbs culled from the property. Hamilton has rigged a wireless Internet connection through a small relay tower aimed at the UC Lick Observatory at the top of Mount Hamilton.

"You can't overlook Silicon Valley and not have high tech," he says.

Hamilton has been a researcher with the Center for Embedded Networked Sensing. The UCLA-based project develops wireless embedded sensor networks, a tool researchers use throughout the reserve system to monitor soil, air and water quality and plant and wildlife habits. He'd like to install wireless networks throughout Blue Oak Ranch to transmit real-time data to researchers.

Blue Oak Ranch is a work in progress while space for overnight visitors is being planned. Hamilton envisions a dorm in the hayloft to accommodate up to 25 students. A few camping spots are being laid out behind the barn, and, if a grant comes through, a cluster of yurts will be installed for faculty researchers on a hill across from the barn.

"Right now I'm enjoying the solitude," says Hamilton.

effects of climate change that result from that proximity."

For Blue Oak Ranch, like all the 36 reserve sites in the UC system, is much more than a thing of beauty.

"The mission of the reserve system parallels the mission of the university – research, teaching and community service," said Alexander Glazer, reserve system director.

At any given time, he said, more than 150 UC courses are offered in the reserve system with 50 or more doctoral thesis projects in progress. In addition, classes from community colleges and California State University campuses use the reserves. More than 10,000 K-12 students visit each year for field trips and environmental science classes.

The variety of terrain and natural wonders are as diverse as California itself: coastal habitats, islands, salt marshes, high deserts, prairie lands, mountains and forests. The system, established in 1965, began with seven sites the university already owned. Today, through donations and collaborations, it is the largest university-managed land preserve in the world. UC owns about 23 percent of the reserve land it manages. State and federal agencies and the Nature Conservancy own the rest. Access is restricted to research and education uses.

Field trips. For researchers, the reserves serve an essential role for long-term monitoring of environmental change impacts on California's wild lands, said Todd Dawson, a UC Berkeley professor of integrative biology and environmental science. Dawson is the faculty director of Blue Oak Ranch and uses the reserve system for his own research and teaching. He is a principal investigator with the Keck HydroWatch project based at the Angelo Coast Range Reserve and the Sagehen Creek Field Station. The project is studying the life cycle of water.

"Most of my graduate students spend some time during their graduate tenure working at and enjoying these amazing resources," said Dawson. "They are priceless. In the future they are likely to become even more important as they may be the places we can take students of all ages as well as the public to show them what real wild spaces can be and can be used for."

These natural habitats have become a proving ground for hundreds of long-term research projects. Those studies include everything from the deep-water habits of elephant seals at Año Nuevo Island Reserve, off the south coast of San Francisco, to the climate change at the Boyd Deep Canyon Desert Research Center outside Palm Desert.

The onsite reserve directors like Hamilton, typically scientists with doctoral degrees, screen all research applications and issue permits to selected researchers. They make sure projects don't interfere with each other and that

they are appropriate to the site. The directors are also involved with community outreach and act as liaisons with local schools and environmental groups.

Blue Oak Ranch supports populations of black oak, coast live oak, valley oak and its namesake blue oaks. That makes it an ideal place to study the mystery of why California's oak trees aren't reproducing. The habitats support more than 130 species of birds. Hamilton says he sees golden eagles soaring overhead every day, and mountain lions, bobcats, coyotes and herds of mule deer roam the hills. Three rare species live in Blue Oak Ranch: the California tiger salamander, the foothill yellow-legged frog and the red-legged frog.

Blue Oak Ranch Reserve currently has 25 project permits issued, Hamilton says, and many researchers have visited to scope out the potential to set up long-term projects.

Hamilton expects this reserve to become one of the busiest in the system since it's within driving distance of so many university campuses including UC Santa Cruz, UC San Francisco and UC Berkeley.

Ask it

Chances are there's something you've always wondered about, meant to look up or wished someone would explain. Now is your chance to satisfy that curiosity. E-mail donna.hemmila@ucop.edu your questions and we'll find the UC brainiac who can answer it. Science, health, culture, language - whatever your question, don't be shy. *Just Ask it!*

Q: What are the most efficient ways that carbon can be removed from the atmosphere?

A. In order to remove carbon dioxide and stabilize atmospheric greenhouse gas levels, carbon capture and storage has to be considered with an integrated strategic approach. The processes of capture, stripping and regeneration, transportation and permanent storage need to be achieved both efficiently and economically.

However, carbon dioxide streams invariably contain other gases (methane, carbon monoxide and nitrogen). It is highly desirable to remove carbon dioxide selectively. Many methods, such as amine scrubbing, chemical and physical adsorption, have been proposed to remove atmospheric carbon dioxide.

Amine solvents can be used to remove carbon dioxide, but extensive heating and post-scrubbing treatments are needed before carbon can be stripped and the amines can be reused. Two main adsorption technologies can also be used for this purpose: pressure swing adsorption (PSA) and temperature swing adsorption (TSA).

However, these methods have either low carbon dioxide capacity and poor selectivity or require an extensive amount of energy. Thus, PSA and TSA need more selective and efficient absorbents to be economically feasible for carbon dioxide capture.

Recent reports show that many zeolitic imidazolate frameworks (ZIFs), a new type of microporous crystalline material, can selectively capture carbon dioxide. The selectivity is more than four times higher than that of the state-of-art material, BPL carbon. Due to the large volume ZIFs enclose, they act as carbon dioxide reservoirs capable of holding an exceptional amount (83 liters) of carbon dioxide for each liter of ZIF material under ambient pressure.

Remarkably, carbon dioxide can be easily removed from ZIFs without heating or any complex regeneration. These materials are readily prepared in large quantities. Thus, these ZIFs hold great promise in ameliorating the pressing environmental problem of controlling atmospheric carbon dioxide emissions.

Bo Wang is a graduate student researcher in the UCLA chemistry department.

Due to the volume of Ask it! submissions, not all questions can be answered online.

People

Top chef

In the days of mystery-meat school cafeterias, dishing up 30,000 student meals a day may have been a lot easier than the challenges today's campus chefs face. But not as much fun.

"Students are well-traveled, and they have good palates," said Chuck Davies, associate director of residential dining and executive chef at UC Berkeley. "Most of what we do is driven by students requests."



Berkeley students can submit comment cards about their dining preferences. Typical requests include things like "more vegan options," "not enough fish," "too much fish."

When students started requesting more organic foods, Davies and a team of UC Berkeley residential dining staff set in motion a project that would make university culinary history.

In April 2006, Cal Dining became the first U.S. university kitchen to be certified

Sample of Cal Dining dishes

**Hazelnut en croute
Heart of artichoke bisque
Caribbean lime chicken
Steamed mussels with
lemongrass
Vegan paella
Dal with cumin**

organic. Three years later, the Cal organic salad bars – stocked with fresh produce, tofu and organic salad dressings from an alumni-founded company – are among the most popular campus food attractions.

Davies, who had worked for a natural food store chain in Seattle before joining the university, decided that it wasn't enough to just start offering organic choices. He wanted to take the extra step

of seeking certification from CCOF, a nonprofit organic certifier based in Santa Cruz. The process took a year. After granting certification, CCOF continues to audit the purchasing invoices and inspect the kitchens to make sure the campus is maintaining its organic status. And the green dining options continue to grow.

"We're fortunate to be in an area where so much organic produce is available," said Davies. And the volume of food purchased from sustainable local farms helps keep the cost down.

Cal Dining highlights the multi-ethnic makeup of the campus with a variety of Asian and Indian foods along with student favorites like mac and cheese and pizza and plenty of vegetarian and vegan options. Theme meals are big for holidays: dessert buffets on Valentine's Day and soul food for black history month. The campus chefs work with four chef consultants to kick the dishes up a notch.

"The chefs actually go look at what students are throwing away," said Davies. "They can tell what's a hit and what's not."

The number of faculty, staff and students living off campus who buy meal plans has been growing, he said, due to big quality improvements after Cal Dining Director Shawn LaPean arrived in 2003.

"This year we're selling 2,600 non-resident meal plans," Davies said. "Previously we'd sell about 100 in a year."

Cal Dining is also getting more of the campus catering business and provides food service for the Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory.

Mark Chekal-Bain, community relations director at the Berkeley Lab, said he eats at the Cal Dining-run lab cafeteria two or three times a week.

"Everyone loves Taco Salad Tuesday," he said. "The salad bar is fabulous. It's fresh, and it's a reasonable price. It's a good deal."

Davies, a graduate of the Culinary Institute of America in New York, is also a French-trained pastry chef. He has worked in hotel and restaurant kitchens, but cooking at Cal is his dream job. He proudly displays in his office a gold medal he and a team of Cal chefs won in a university dining cook-off. (They beat Harvard.) In 2007, Cal Dining won a prestigious Ivy Award from Restaurants & Institutions magazine.

The Cal Dining mission is to deliver a satisfying culinary experience along with the calories.

"When you consider students living in campus housing, they eat with us every day," Davies said. "It's like going to the same restaurant every day."

Featured Campus: **UCLA**



Teaching rain forest survival

The UCLA Center for Tropical Research sponsors an eco-education program for rain forest dwellers in Ecuador.

Read more about the program.

<http://www.today.ucla.edu/portal/ut/teaching-eco-ethics-jordan-karubian-85624.aspx>

Systemwide news

Campuses attack budget crisis

Faced with a \$450 million budget shortfall, UC campuses are instituting a range of cost-saving measures: consolidating programs, freezing hiring, cutting back faculty recruitment, laying off staff and deploying more efficient administrative systems.

UC faces a \$450 million shortfall in state funding over a two-year period.

To address the ongoing budget crisis, the university has instituted a number of systemwide and campuswide cost-saving measures designed to protect academic programs and student services as much as possible.

On a systemwide level, UC has frozen senior manager salaries, including those of the president and chancellors, and has cancelled bonuses for all senior managers and non-senior managers who earn more than \$100,000.

The UC Office of the President has reduced its budget by \$67 million and the total full-time-equivalent staff by 628 since the beginning of the UCOP restructuring in 2007-08. That includes \$25 million in unrestricted central administration funds that can be passed on to the campuses for teaching and research purposes.

The magnitude of the budget shortfall has forced UC's 10 campuses to institute a range of cost-reducing efficiencies and staffing measures.

Consolidation of IT services, energy-efficiency programs and cutbacks in travel are among the money-saving measures campuses are using.

All campuses have some form of staff hiring freeze in place, and some have instituted layoffs or staff reductions through attrition and retirement. All campuses have cut back on the recruitment of new faculty.

President Yudof has asked UCOP staff to review UC policies, and if needed propose new ones, governing the use of employee furloughs. No decisions have been made on whether a furlough program would be initiated. Consultation with faculty and employee groups will take place before that strategy would be deployed.

At their March meeting, UC Regents received an update of what each campus is doing to deal with the budget crisis.

Read each campus report:

UC Berkeley, UC Davis and UC Irvine

<http://www.universityofcalifornia.edu/news/article/20819>

UCLA, UC Merced and UC Riverside

<http://www.universityofcalifornia.edu/news/article/20821>

UC San Diego, UC San Francisco, UC Santa Barbara and UC Santa Cruz

<http://www.universityofcalifornia.edu/news/article/20822>

UC Day shows university's value



Sacramento event emphasized UC's contributions to the state's economy. The annual event brings

together alumni from the 10 campuses to talk with legislators about UC's importance to the state.

With an aim to highlight the university's problem-solving expertise, UC faculty tackled some of California's most pressing challenges during a forum held in conjunction with UC Day in Sacramento.

The annual UC Day brings together alumni from the 10 campuses to talk with legislators and their staffs about the importance of the university's contributions to the state and the need for public support. More than 300 attended the event held on March 10. This year's theme – Today's Ideas, Tomorrow's Solutions – emphasized the role UC innovations play in driving the state's economy.

The faculty forum, held in the Governor's Council Room in the Capitol, focused on the federal stimulus package, water, energy efficiency and the mortgage crisis. UC President Mark Yudof moderated.

"The UC is a very important research client for us," said Norman Bourassa, a California Energy Commission staffer who attended the forum. "At any given time we have \$12 million to \$15 million in contracts with UC research groups."

Bourassa is the buildings program manager in the commission's Public Interest Energy Research department. He attended the panel discussion to hear what UC experts had to say about the impacts of the federal stimulus funding and the latest in energy efficiency.

"This is no time for business as usual," said Arun Majumdar, director of the Environmental Energy Technologies Division at Lawrence Berkeley Laboratory. "We need some major changes and innovation."

Energy efficiency. Majumdar challenged UC to become a test bed for energy-efficiency strategies by cutting the energy use of its campus buildings by 50 percent. Buildings use 40 percent of the energy in the United States and, Mujumdar said, represent the biggest opportunity to cut energy consumption and costs.

California has made great strides in designing energy-efficient buildings, he said, but the next innovation has to be based on how occupants use a building. Researchers at several UC campuses and labs are developing smart building systems that marry occupant preferences for light, heat and air-conditioning with power-saving technologies.

Economic stimulus. Nicole Biggart, dean of the UC Davis Graduate School of Management, talked about the impact UC has on the economy as an employer and innovation partner fueling job creation in private industries. UC is poised to benefit not only from federal stimulus funds for education, she said, but also for

improvements to the energy delivery system and electronic patient records systems, both areas where UC technology can shape development.

"An investment in us is an investment in jobs in a very powerful and big way," Biggart said. "We transform the economy ... with new industries and new technologies, with more efficient and better ways of doing things." Read UC Davis story. http://www.dateline.ucdavis.edu/dl_detail.lasso?id=11230

Drought. Jay Lund, professor of environmental engineering at UC Davis, said California needs to manage surface and groundwater resources better and to work on water conservation in urban areas. In response to an audience question about desalination as a solution to water shortages, Lund said the cost would have to be cut in half for seawater to become a real commercial option.

Mortgage crisis. James Wilcox, professor of finance at UC Berkeley Haas School of Business, offered his solutions to the mortgage crisis, suggesting "deseuritization" of securitized mortgage pools to make restructuring individual mortgages easier.

Wilcox has a plan to save both homeowners and lenders from the heavy costs of foreclosures through an equity-sharing lending program. A third of the value of a home at the time of foreclosure is lost during the foreclosure process, he said. Under his plan, lenders would still absorb losses from the "underwater" mortgages, but not as heavily, and there is potential to recoup loss when the home is resold.

For example, on a home with a mortgage of \$400,000 that is now worth \$200,000, Wilcox suggests lenders offer the owners a conventional loan for the current value. In exchange for absorbing the \$200,000 loss, the lender would get a percentage of the profits when the home is sold.

"This gives homeowners an incentive to stay in the house and maintain it," Wilcox said. "This could be used for currently distressed homeowners and new home owners."

Alumni stand up for UC. Earlier in the day, alumni visited legislative offices to talk about the importance of UC in their communities.

Carolyn Vara, a UC Davis alumna from the San Joaquin Valley, attended UC Day as part of the UC Merced contingent.

"I have 10 years of UC Day," said Vara. "I started coming here to lobby for funds to get UC Merced built. Now we are promoting all the accomplishments of our wonderful faculty and students. "

Using kirigami, a type of origami, Vara immortalized the UC Merced bobcat mascot in gold foil to decorate the tables reserved for UC Merced alumni, friends and students attending the UC Day luncheon in the Sheraton Grand Hotel across from the Capitol. She has folded more than 1,500 paper bobcats over the years as part of her lobbying efforts on behalf of the newest UC campus.

"UC Day is a wonderful opportunity to engage our alumni and our students and parents to come and speak on behalf of UC with our legislators as to why it's important to continue to support the programs that we do and the impact that it has overall on the economy and the citizens of California," said Jorge Ancona, assistant vice chancellor of UC Irvine Alumni Relations.

Human capital. Yudof asked alumni and advocates attending the luncheon to carry the message of UC's impact on the state to their legislators and to remind them that California won't get out of the recession without a bigger investment in human capital.

"It is human capital that will make this state strong. It is human capital by which I mean educating the young people," Yudof said. "The best tech transfer we do every year is the graduating class."

Without a renewed commitment from the state to support higher education, Yudof said, the greatest public higher education system in the world will "wither on the vine."

UC Day ended with the Alumni Associations of the University of California presentation of awards to former Assemblyman Gene Mullin as Legislative Advocate of the Year and the 24 members of the UC President's Board on Science and Innovation as Advocates of the Year.

Mullin was honored for his work in the creation of the Researcher Protection Act of 2008. The board was honored for its efforts to promote the importance of UC's research and technology transfer initiatives.

View more photos of UC Day:

<http://dam.ur.ucdavis.edu/netpub/server.np?base&site=ucday2009&template=home.np>

Smart buildings: UC improves energy efficiency

Buildings consume 40 percent of all the nation's energy. To change those energy-wasting habits, UC researchers are "re-educating" buildings to conserve power and limit greenhouse gas emissions. From "cool roofs" to better bulbs, UC has answers.

Americans spend most of their lives inside some of the biggest energy hogs on the planet, and it's not their automobiles.

Commercial and residential buildings consume 40 percent of all the nation's energy, and 70 percent of all electricity, according to the U.S. Department of Energy. In 2009, the department estimates that residential buildings will gobble up 22 percent of the country's total energy with commercial buildings using about 18 percent. Additionally, buildings account for about 40 percent of the total U.S. carbon emissions.

To change those energy-wasting habits, UC researchers are "re-educating" buildings to conserve power and reduce pollution. Through synergistic relationships with government agencies, private entrepreneurial companies and end users committed to a greener built environment, UC researchers are rapidly bringing new technologies into the marketplace.

"Most economic and technical analyses suggest that buildings offer one of the best opportunities, if not the best, to economically and rapidly reduce energy demand and limit greenhouse gas emissions," Arun Majumdar, director of Environmental Technologies Division at the Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory, said during his recent testimony before the U.S. Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

UC innovations are making the most of those opportunities, saving money, fighting global warming and at the same time transforming the construction and retrofitting of homes and commercial buildings. And UC discoveries are among the most promising for creating the ultimate zero-net energy building, one that produces enough on-site renewable energy and system efficiencies to offset the energy consumed from the power grid.

Next generation lighting

At UC Davis, the California Lighting Technology Center is pioneering a daylight harvesting system that could save millions of dollars for big box retailers and other large commercial building tenants. The center has licensed the technology to two companies, Watt Stopper/Legrand and Axis Technologies. Watt Stopper is currently testing the system at a West Sacramento Wal-Mart.

"Daylight harvesting has been one of the most promising technologies," said Konstantinos Papamichael, associate director of the lighting center.

Systems that adjust a building's interior lighting to take advantage of natural light coming through windows and skylights have been in use but they're expensive, said Papamichael. The current systems need to be recalibrated every time the interior environment changes. That involves a lighting technician coming to the building and methodically recalibrating the lights to adapt to changing conditions.

"With our system, you just go under the skylight, connect it and the magic happens," he said.

Manual recalibration can be costly for a retailer especially whose interiors frequently change with seasons and sales. At Wal-Mart, for example, Papamichael said, when the test of the UC Davis system began the dark red and green merchandising displays of Christmas filled the space. After the holidays, the white shelves were more visible. A lesser lighting system would have been fooled into thinking there was more daylight available and dim the interior lights. The UC Davis system uses two sensors, rather than the one-sensor system now commercially in use. One sensor points to the interior and the other through the skylight. The system uses information from both sensors to automatically adjust the lighting.

"We've increased energy savings for Wal-Mart, and we've proved that it works," said Papamichael, who expects demand for the system to increase when new California energy efficiency building codes go into effect in August.

The light harvesting system is just one product under development at the lighting center, which was established by the California Energy Commission's Public Interest Energy Research program. The center's main focus is to solve real world problems and bring those solutions to market as quickly as possible working with industry partners who have access to customers.

Transforming the marketplace

When the New York Times went looking for a way to reduce energy costs for its new 51-story Manhattan headquarters building, nothing on the market in 2003 met its requirements or budget. The Times needed something compatible with the design of its sleek, new architectural monument, which features a transparent, glass curtain wall. But it also needed something to control the glare of the light streaming in and the heating and cooling effects of the large walls of glass. The Times turned to the Berkeley Lab's Environmental Energy Technologies Division.

"We've increased energy savings for Wal-Mart, and we've proved that it works."
> Konstantinos Papamichael, associate director, California Lighting Technology Center

"We had been doing research on these smart lighting controls for a decade," said Eleanor Lee, co-principal investigator on the Times project. "This collaboration led to a significant leap forward in the concept of façade systems. We look at pilot demonstrations that can help to accelerate products to the market. These dynamic façade systems are what we think are going to transform the market."

The Times system includes computer-controlled shades that respond to seasonal and time-of-day daylight changes and dimmable lighting. The lab innovations allowed the Times to overcome the downsides of glare and occupant discomfort

but still take advantage of building with glass walls to maximize daylight and save lighting costs. The lab's work also forced the marketplace to adopt a new generation of green technology.

Vendors typically shy away from manufacturing systems they consider so specialized they won't be profitable for mass markets, said Lee. But with the high-profile Times project and the massive scale of its purchasing needs, manufacturers were willing to produce the new systems in hopes that other large projects will adopt them. Other Manhattan developers have expressed interest in the technologies. The Times estimated that it saves \$20,000 a year per floor in lighting and air-conditioning costs.

Donna Hemmila is editor of Our University.

More News

First lady to speak at UC Merced commencement

http://www.ucmerced.edu/news_articles/03272009_first_lady_obama_to.asp

Regents endorse Prop 1A budget ballot measure

<http://www.universityofcalifornia.edu/news/article/20765>

UC partners with utilities to save money

<http://www.universityofcalifornia.edu/news/article/20762>

Applications for technology award due April 27

<http://www.universityofcalifornia.edu/news/article/20684>

Stimulus bill tax credit may change your paycheck

http://atyourservice.ucop.edu/news/general/0903-eco_stim.html

START now allows 5 percent voluntary time reduction

http://atyourservice.ucop.edu/news/general/0902-start_prog.html

Celebrate Year of Science

<http://scienceatcal.berkeley.edu/>

Read more UC news

<http://www.universityofcalifornia.edu/news/>

Working at UCOP: Stories for and about Office of the President staff

Budget challenges focus of town hall meetings

UC President Mark Yudof talked to employees about the budget crisis and steps the university is taking to stabilize the retirement fund and restructure UCOP.

The state budget contains \$115 million in permanent funding cuts for the University of California, creating difficult decisions for filling the gap, UC President Mark Yudof told Office of the President employees at town hall meetings Feb. 19 and 20.

Student fees likely will rise, UCOP is under pressure to be leaner and more efficient, and the university is investigating its legal authority for systemwide employee furloughs – though “my current thinking is we won’t need to go there,” Yudof said in response to a question about whether UC employees would be furloughed like state workers.



Yudof said he has to prepare for the possibility – and if so it would be systemwide – but “right now I’m not persuaded we need to begin furloughs. ... I’m really hoping we can avoid this.”

UCRP restart. The state budget could have been “a lot worse,” but still creates a \$450 million shortfall for UC over the next two years.

(<http://www.universityofcalifornia.edu/news/article/19562>)

The shortfall includes underfunded enrollments and unfunded mandatory costs for utilities, employee health benefits and other inflationary costs. Moreover, the state budget eliminates \$20 million the governor had proposed for re-starting employer contributions to the UC Retirement Plan.

“We’re OK for a while,” Yudof said, but additional steps will be needed, even with contributions restarting next year. There could be differences for new employees and new vesting periods, he said. Yudof also urged employees to write to elected officials to encourage them to provide funding for UC’s pension plan as they do for other state employees.

“It’s an outrage, and we have to get it reversed,” Yudof said. “My No. 1 goal is to maintain the pension benefits of all current employees.”

The February town halls were the first for Yudof, who took office in June. The hourlong sessions, co-hosted by the UCOP staff assembly, included questions and answers that covered the budget, the retirement plan, UCOP reorganizing,

the possibility of furloughs and senior management pay cuts, and issues such as keeping academic quality. Yudof also outlined his priorities: maintaining access to the university, increasing accountability, articulating the value of UC, stabilizing the retirement fund and restructuring UCOP.

Restructuring. UCOP already has reduced its headcount by several hundred to about 1,400. Restructuring continues with a focus on adding value and being efficient. While there could be some layoffs, decisions will be made on an office-by-office review and “there is no final number,” said Yudof, who encouraged employees to submit any comments at the restructuring Web site. (www.universityofcalifornia.edu/future/feedbackform.html)

“My hope is that most of this is behind us,” he added. “I think I see the light at the end of the tunnel.”

Yudof praised employees for their work and said they should be proud to be associated with UC, which he called “the greatest public university system in the world.”

Cost-cutting strategies. When asked if he would consider another voluntary separation program, Yudof said he might but that it would be structured differently from the one offered last year.

UC has instituted a senior management pay freeze. (<http://www.universityofcalifornia.edu/news/article/19314>)

Yudof said he would consider pay cuts for senior managers, though not at the 50 percent level suggested by a union member.

Campus efforts. Yudof has met with campus chancellors to discuss their budgets. The campuses are trying to preserve academic programs and student services, looking to areas such as trimming administrative costs, deferring IT and reducing faculty searches, he said.

While student fees will need to be raised, Yudof hopes to minimize the impact on low-income students with the Blue and Gold Opportunity Plan. (<http://www.universityofcalifornia.edu/news/article/19471>) The plan will fully cover systemwide UC fees of California students if their family earns less than \$60,000 a year, and they qualify for financial aid.

What you can do. UC needs to persuade members of the public why the university and its economic, environmental, medical and cultural contributions are important to them.

“We have to connect the dots for them,” Yudof said. But don’t expect a national ad campaign, he said. “We can’t buy one and a half minutes at the Super Bowl.”

UC officials said they plan to have more employee meetings with Yudof, perhaps in smaller group formats.

"I'm glad he did it," said Teri Lee, MESA communications director. "I hope the lines of communication remain open."

To learn more about UCOP restructuring, visit www.universityofcalifornia.edu/future.

(Listen to a recording or read the transcript of town hall meetings.)
(<http://www.universityofcalifornia.edu/future/forums.html>)

New communications chief is a crisis veteran



Lynn Tierney, UCOP associate vice president for communications, was at ground zero when the WTC towers fell. That experience and its aftermath have taught her to live each day with purpose.

Her first day on the job at the UC Office of the President, Lynn Tierney saw her career come full circle.

As the new associate vice president of communications, Tierney arrived on Feb. 2, just in time to see the launch of the Blue and Gold Opportunity Plan, a new financial aid initiative for lower-income students.

"The first week I get to UC is a time when they make significant outreach to low-income students," she said. "I started out as a community organizer years and years ago. So it was interesting to see my work come back to this."

Tierney began her career in Nebraska working with Native American and elderly populations on housing and anti-poverty programs. Between that job and arriving at UC, she has had more than a lifetime's share of crisis communication experience.

On Sept. 11, 2001, Tierney was the deputy fire commissioner of the New York City Fire Department. All of the firefighters she traveled to the World Trade Center with on that infamous day died in the tower collapses. Tierney sought refuge in the loading dock of one of the towers when the first tower fell. She had to crawl to safety through a blinding cloud of ash and debris, holding onto the belt of her assistant. She doesn't mind talking about those experiences because, she said, the more people learn about that day, the more they can understand it.

"At the very worst time in our history, I saw the very best in the people who responded," she said. "That whole day whether you lived or died was a matter of

happenstance and a few feet. I have grasped how short life is and how precious and how you should live it purposefully every day."

Much of Tierney's time in New York revolved around the World Trade Center. She worked for 13 years in public affairs for the Port Authority, the owner and operator of the towers. That included communications for its police force in 1993 when the first terrorist bombing of the World Trade Center happened.

Much of Tierney's time in New York revolved around the World Trade Center. She worked for 13 years in public affairs for the Port Authority. That included communications for its police force in 1993 when the first terrorist bombing of the World Trade Center happened.

Most recently, she came to UCOP from the Federal Aviation Administration where she was assistant administrator of communications.

Tierney gives credit to her "Irish humor" for getting her through the crises she's had to deal with. She was born in Connecticut where her father was a newspaperman. Raised outside Boston, Tierney first came west to attend Nebraska Wesleyan University in Lincoln.

"My father was a news guy," she said. "I grew up in news and public affairs. I had an early interest in crisis management."

Tierney said she feels lucky to have landed at UC where so much incredible research and education takes place.

"Human attention is the most precious resource there is," said Tierney. "Earning a piece of someone's attention to deliver your message is a great challenge. But if there's any system in the world that's poised to break through the din and deliver a relevant message, it's this system."

What have you done to live a greener life at work or at home?

Our University asked a few UC Office of the President staff what they have done to live a "greener" life at work or at home? Here's what they had to say.

Matthew St. Clair, facilities administration

"I carry my reusable metal canteen with me everywhere, so I never need to use bottled water. I print everything double-sided if I need to print. In terms of home life, I bicycle or walk or take public transportation. I buy food that is local and/or organic."

Susana Atwood, ethics, compliance and audit services

“I’m on the sustainability committee. I turn off all of my electronics every night. I take public transportation to work – I take a bus and BART. I share a car. I try not to use as much heat energy at home. I always feel guilty when I go on vacation because of the airplane fuel.”

Lagreeh Flores, technology transfer

“I am conscious about the environment. At home, I recycle everything. And I encourage my kids, when I visit them, to recycle. I believe everyone should recycle.”

Bonnie McKellar, budget

“I honor the (energy) pledge and turn off my computer and the printer every night. I’m conscientious about putting items into the compost bin and into the recycling bin. I also try to work with my colleagues to make sure they put things in the right place. At home, it’s primarily water conservation. One area I would like to be able to conserve more and can’t is in commuting with someone, but it doesn’t fit my schedule, unfortunately.”

Did you know?

A record number applied for admission to UC for fall 2009: 126,701, a 4.7 percent increase over last year.

Freshman applications increased 2.9 percent to 98,000.

Applications from transfer students increased 11.2 percent to 28,699.