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STEVEN CHAFFEE NAMED FIRST ARTHUR N. RUPE CHAIR

UCSB's highly regarded Department of Communication has gained the service of one of that field's most eminent scholars.

Steven H. Chaffee, professor of communication at Stanford University for the past 18 years, has accepted the Arthur N. Rupe Endowed Chair and will study the effects of the mass media on society.

The Rupe chair was endowed with a \$500,000 contribution from the Arthur N. Rupe Foundation of Santa Barbara.

It is the first endowed chair in the Department of Communication.

In recruiting for the position, the department sought a top flight scholar with an international reputation for furthering knowledge of the good and ill caused society by mass media.

In Chaffee, currently head of Stanford's Department of Communication, it gets precisely that.

"His presence at UCSB, and the Department of Communication in particular, adds strength to strength," said department chairman David Seibold.

"The faculty in the mass communication area of our department is among the most influential in the world.

Professor Chaffee's scholarship and leadership in mass communication effects and political communication enhances the international prominence of the department."

"He's a star," Seibold said. "He's about as big as you get."

Chaffee has held a lifelong interest in the mass media.

He earned a master's degree in journalism from UCLA in 1962 and worked as an editor and reporter at several Los Angeles area newspapers before deciding to pursue a Ph.D. in communication at Stanford. As a professor, he served 16 years on the faculty of the University of Wisconsin and has been at Stanford for 18 years. He was at various times the head of his department at both universities.

Along the way, the honors
mounted.

In 1990, Wisconsin awarded him the Harold L. Nelson Award for career contributions to education for journalism and mass communication. In 1992, the International Communication Association honored him with the B. Aubrey Fisher Mentorship Award for service to his students and communication research.

And in 1996, he won the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication Presidential Award in recognition of his dedication and service.

His research has been at the forefront, advancing world knowledge of the effects of mass media on voting habits, child development, culture and developing nations, to name but a few areas.

His writings include 13 books and more than 90 articles.

Chaffee said the timing is right for a move.

"It's a fine opportunity for me to join a very fine group of scholars," he said.

The media's influence on politics will continue to be a major interest.

"It's not that I think our democracy is sinking, but I do feel that every so often, it needs a booster shot," Chaffee said.

"It's up to the media to do that. That's the reason for the First Amendment.

I'm not so concerned with whether voters vote Democratic or Republican, but whether they know what

they're voting for.

This has been my main area of study lately."

Chaffee will not want for projects at UCSB.

First will come his research.

"I have about 100 studies I want to do," he said. "I need

to narrow it down to about six."

He will also undertake writing the history of one of the professional organizations to which he belongs.

He also has received a courtesy appointment to the faculty of the Department of Political Science.

Seibold said Chaffee will prove an asset in one other way, as well. "One of the reasons we're so thrilled about him is that he epitomizes the mentorship spirit," Seibold said.

"At one point he told me that around 40 major prominent scholars have been his students.

He's going to be great not only for our students but for our younger faculty.

"We're really, really lucky to have him."

About UC Santa Barbara

The University of California, Santa Barbara is a leading research institution that also provides a comprehensive liberal arts learning experience. Our academic community of faculty, students, and staff is characterized by a culture of interdisciplinary collaboration that is responsive to the needs of our multicultural and global society.

All of this takes place within a living and learning environment like no other, as we draw inspiration from the beauty and resources of our extraordinary location at the edge of the Pacific Ocean.