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UCSB Scientist is Office of Naval Research Young Investigator

Nicola Hill, assistant professor of materials at the University of California, Santa Barbara, has been named an Office of Naval Research Young Investigator.

Hill will receive $275,000 over three years to further her ongoing research on "spintronics," a growing field that attempts to exploit the spin of electrons in magnetic fields as a means of information storage. Spintronics remains in its early stages, but one day it could have exciting applications for ultra-high density magnetic data storage, even powerful quantum computers.

The assistant professor has started an "ambitious new research program in the theory of magnetic nanostructures, a field which holds great promise for its potential to revolutionize technologies such as magnetic data storage, next generation computers and magneto-electronic devices," said Fred Lange, chair of the university's Department of Materials.

The Young Investigator Program supports basic research by exceptional faculty at U.S. universities who have received their Ph.D. in the last five years. Awardees are judged on prior professional achievement, their research proposals and the support of their respective universities.

In addition to this honor, Hill was named one of the Top 100 Young Innovators of 1999 by Massachusetts Institute of Technology award-winning magazine,

"Technology Review," late last year.

The first-ever awards, created to mark the magazine's centennial, recognizes young men and women who have the potential to make significant technological innovations in the 21st century. According to the magazine, Hill's research skills, intellect and the gracious way she serves as a role model for young women in physics and materials science combine to make her an innovator to watch.

Hill joined the UC Santa Barbara faculty in 1997. She holds a Ph.D. in chemistry from the University of California, Berkeley.

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.