

UC SANTA BARBARA

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Bill Schlotter

Dr. Eileen Boris to Fill Hull Chair in Women's Studies, the First Women's Studies Endowed Chair in UC System

The University of California has its first endowed chair in women's studies.

Eileen Boris, a professor and activist with decades of scholarship in issues of racial and gender justice, has been named to fill the Hull Chair in Women's Studies at the University of California, Santa Barbara.

Boris comes to UCSB from the University of Virginia where she was part of the Studies in Gender and Women Program since September 1998.

Prior to that, she had been a 14-year member of the Department of History at Howard University in Washington, D.C.

The Hull Chair will be an excellent base from which to continue her work, Boris said.

"It is very exciting to be at an institution where deans and chancellors and donors recognize the importance of women's studies," Boris said.

Boris said she was particularly pleased with UCSB's emphasis on interdisciplinary alliances and the bonds that exist between the Women's Studies Program and the departments of Black, Chicano and Asian-American studies.

"That's very important because if women's studies is to be about all women it must realize that all women are not the same," Boris said.

"My own research is focused on the workings of what I call racialized gender within class society."

The Hull Chair is funded with a \$400,000 contribution by UCSB Foundation Trustee M. Blair Hull, founding and managing partner of Hull Trading Company of Chicago.

Hull, a UCSB alumnus, made the gift to bring visibility to the study of women worldwide and to express his appreciation for the enduring strength and significant contributions of women in society.

He also wanted to honor the memory of his mother, Jean Hull, and other women of his family.

Women's Studies Program chair Jacqueline Bobo said the mission of the Hull Chair is to pursue the study of social justice issues significant to women's lives.

"The chair ... combines the very best scholarship with a demonstrated commitment to applied theory -- that is, intellectual work that makes a tangible difference in people's lives," Bobo said.

"Professor Boris's credentials are an ideal match for this prestigious position.

She is an outstanding scholar and social activist."

Boris's many honors include the 1995 Philip Taft Prize in Labor History, a Senior Fulbright Lectureship in American Studies at the University of Helsinki in 1993-94 and an OAH-Japanese American Studies Association short-term residency in women's history in Japan in 1998.

She is a founding member of the Women's Committee of 100, which fights for welfare rights.

In 2000, Boston University's College of Arts and Sciences honored Boris with a Distinguished Alumni Award.

In addition to racialized gender, Boris is interested in issues involving women's labors, law and the state, the anti sweatshop movement, economic justice and poverty.

Among her first goals are to organize an interdisciplinary faculty forum to explore new knowledge in women's studies and to host a conference on women's activism for social justice.

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.