

UC SANTA BARBARA

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Owners of Radio Station KDB to Entertain New Purchase Offers as UCSB-Led Community Effort to Raise \$3.6 Million Falls Short

The owners of Santa Barbara's classical music radio station, KDB, will be entertaining new offers to purchase the station as part of an understanding reached with the University of California, Santa Barbara and announced today.

Through March 31, the university had an agreement with the station's owners that it would retain exclusive rights to purchase KDB. However, after close to two years of behind-the-scenes efforts culminating in an intense, four-month long public drive to raise \$3.6 million in the community to purchase the station, the university has released KDB's owners from that agreement.

While the response to the fund-raising appeal was heartening -- more than 900 donors generously pledged financial support for the purchase -- the total raised from the community fell far short of the purchase price.

"We want to see that this valuable Santa Barbara resource is preserved, and we had hoped to do so by purchasing the station and operating it for the community," said UCSB Chancellor Henry T. Yang. "While that remains our dream, right now we must support the owners in their efforts to find another party that has the resources to

buy the station and the determination to retain its classical music format. I want to personally thank the interim owners for offering us the opportunity to share this dream. I also want to thank the wonderful people of Santa Barbara who generously came forward to support this effort. We can all be pleased with how we raised public awareness of the value of KDB and what its loss as a classical music station would mean to the community."

The university had sought to purchase the station in order to preserve KDB and its classical music format. It planned to hire a management company to operate the commercial station, with guidance from a community and campus advisory group.

The current owners of the station are community leaders who stepped in to purchase KDB two years ago when it became clear the station had to be sold. Their intention was to own the station only temporarily, while efforts were undertaken to find a purchaser who would retain the station's format and maintain its role as a community arts resource.

Before the current owners purchased the station, all of the commercial broadcasting groups that had offered to buy KDB had stated that they would convert it to a more profitable rock and roll format. KDB provides access to classical music 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

At this time, only 29 full-time, self-supporting classical music stations remain on the air in the United States.

Santa Barbara is the smallest community with such a station. KDB attracts a greater proportion of listeners in its local area than do any of the other remaining classical stations, even those in much larger markets.

While the owners are now set to begin discussions with other potential purchasers of the station, they stress that their aim remains to find a buyer who wants to retain KDB's classical music format.

In a statement, the owners said: "We recognize the important role the station plays to the public and the performing arts on the Central Coast. We also appreciate the university's substantial efforts to work with individuals and organizations in the community in trying to save KDB as we know and love it. The outpouring of support has been impressive, and we remain determined to do our best to find a purchaser for the station who shares our vision for it."

John M. Wiemann, vice chancellor for institutional advancement at UCSB, expressed the university's gratitude to all who have assisted in the effort, especially the Santa Barbara Foundation. "We sincerely appreciate the contributions from individual donors as well as the support of community arts groups, the many volunteers, and the Santa Barbara Foundation," he said. "The university remains dedicated to helping the community retain KDB as a classical music station, and we will continue to do whatever we can to see that that goal is accomplished."

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.