UC SANTA BARBARA

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Gift Enables UCSB to Launch Year-Round Adapted Recreation Program

UC Santa Barbara has received a $75,000 contribution from the Bialis Family Foundation, of Santa Barbara, to establish a recreation program serving children and adults with physical and developmental disabilities.

The gift to launch the UCSB Adapted Recreation Program comes from the foundation's Clara Project, which is helping agencies throughout Santa Barbara County create and expand existing programs to enrich the opportunities available to people with disabilities.

"We are very confident that the adapted programs provided by UCSB's Recreation Department will substantially enhance both the quality and the variety of activities available to disabled participants throughout the Santa Barbara area and beyond," said the donors, Gary and Ellen Bialis, in correspondence about the gift.

The new program will expand sports and recreational activities for children and adults both on campus and in the surrounding region by offering year-round sports and recreational activities tailored to the special needs of participants.

UCSB will collaborate with local agencies and municipalities to maximize available resources, enhance opportunities, and avoid duplication of services.

"We are extremely grateful to the Bialis family for their generosity and commitment," said Jon Spaventa, director of the UCSB Physical Activities and

Recreation Department.

"Their wonderful gift will allow us to develop a dynamic program of adapted recreation for the greater Santa Barbara community."

Beginning next summer, the campus will assume leadership of the Junior Wheelchair Camp, working in partnership with the City of Santa Barbara.

An adapted recreation program will follow in the fall.

Several all-day Saturday sports clinics are also being planned during the program's first year for children from Santa Barbara, Ventura, Kern, and San Luis Obispo counties.

"We are pleased to know there will be an adaptive recreation program at UCSB," said Diane Glenn, director of the campus's Disabled Students Program.

"This is a great opportunity for students with disabilities to become more involved in sporting activities, and it is a privilege that UCSB will be able to offer these opportunities to community members as well."

The Clara Project was named in memory of Gary Bialis's aunt, who was born with cerebral palsy during a time when the only option for people with severe disabilities was being placed in an institution.

Clara, who died in 1970, inspired the Bialis family to strive to create and fund programs to enrich the lives of those with disabilities.

"One of our foundation's primary goals has been the establishment of a comprehensive program to enrich the lives for both children and adults with physical and developmental disabilities," said Gary and Ellen Bialis.

At the UCSB women's basketball game on Jan. 17, there will be a benefit for the UCSB Adapted Recreation Program and Junior Wheelchair Camp.

For more information about the new program, contact the Department of Physical Activities and Recreation at (805) 893-2181.

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Department of Physical Activities and Recreation

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