

UC SANTA BARBARA

# *THE Current*

October 24, 2005

Joan Magruder

## **UCSB's Plous Lecturer to Talk About Human Longevity**

Michael Gurven, assistant professor of anthropology at UC Santa Barbara, will discuss the evolution of human longevity Wednesday, November 16 at 4 p.m. in the McCune Conference Room on the sixth floor of the Humanities and Social Sciences Building.

The talk, which is free and open to the public, is the annual Plous Lecture, presented by the recipient of the Harold J. Plous Award.

One of the university's most prestigious faculty honors, the award is given annually to an assistant professor who has shown "exceptional achievement in research, teaching, and service to UCSB."

Gurven argues that a long human lifespan is not only a recent phenomenon but a core attribute of *Homo sapiens*.

"The existence of a long, post-reproductive lifespan is a novel feature of human life history," Gurven says.

"Its occurrence in humans, and its absence in most other mammals, is one of the most challenging puzzles of evolutionary biology."

Gurven will present and test some leading theories about why humans may be designed to live long lives and discuss his field research on the Tsimane people of Bolivia.

---

## **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.