

UC SANTA BARBARA

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QAD Founders Establish UCSB Endowed Chair in Computer Science

Karl and Pamela Lopker and the Lopker Family Foundation have made a major gift to help establish the first endowed chair in computer science in the College of Engineering at UC Santa Barbara.

The endowed professorship will support the teaching and research activities of a distinguished scholar recruited to fill the position.

The donors have named the chair in honor of Venkatesh "Venky" Narayanamurti, a dynamic leader and distinguished physicist who served as dean of UCSB's College of Engineering from 1992 until 1998.

He left UCSB to join the faculty of Harvard University as the Armstrong Professor and Dean of Engineering and Applied Sciences.

"This generous support not only honors the visionary leadership and significant contributions of UCSB's former Dean of Engineering, Venky Narayanamurti, but it is also a tribute to our outstanding College of Engineering," said Chancellor Henry Yang. "We are proud of the success of both of our alums, Karl and Pamela Lopker, and we are grateful to them and to the Lopker Foundation for their vision and generosity in making such a significant investment in the advancement of computer science and engineering through this endowed chair."

Matthew Tirrell, Richard A. Auhll Professor and Dean of the College of Engineering, said "Venky's energy, contagious enthusiasm, and vision were instrumental in propelling the College of Engineering to the status it is accorded today---among the nation's premier engineering schools.

We are grateful for this generous gift and proud to have such dedicated alumni committed to the continued excellence of education at UCSB."

Endowed chairs are highly prized academic positions that enable a university to develop more fully a field of study by providing ongoing financial support for enhanced research and instruction.

"The Venkatesh Narayanamurti Chair will enable computer science to recruit a stellar young faculty member," said Linda Petzold, chair of the department.

"We are honored and delighted to have this first-ever chair in the discipline at UCSB."

Karl and Pamela Lopker, both UCSB graduates, are highly successful entrepreneurs.

He earned a degree in electrical and computer engineering, and she majored in mathematics and economics.

Together, the Lopkers founded QAD, a leading developer of software for global manufacturers.

Previously, Karl Lopker founded Deckers Outdoor Corporation.

"As UCSB alumni, we wanted to give back to the university and provide funding for public education, which is under so much financial constraint in the State of California," said Pamela Meyer Lopker '77, chair of the board and president of QAD in Summerland.

Karl Lopker '73 is chief executive officer and a director of the corporation.

The Lopkers said they wanted to honor "Venky," who was instrumental in reaching out to the local business community to foster collaboration between the College of Engineering and high tech business and for creating new opportunities for graduating students.

"Venky did a great job of getting us involved with UCSB and with sponsoring graduate student research, and that has worked out well for all of us," said Pamela Lopker.

"He helped change the perception of the university as an insular academic environment to one of it being very much involved in the community.

It is appropriate to honor him in this important way."

At UCSB, the money for an endowed chair is invested, and the annual interest income supports scholarly activities in a carefully chosen subject.

This essentially guarantees permanent funding for the chair.

"UCSB will now have an opportunity to attract and retain the top talent in computer science and engineering," said Lopker.

" All that is good for the community, good for the business community, good for students, and good for California."

UCSB's Department of Computer Science offers programs leading to the bachelor of arts and bachelor of science in computer science, and the M.S. and Ph.D. in computer science. There are 446 undergraduate majors enrolled in the programs and 154 graduate students pursuing advanced degrees.

The campus is in the midst of its first comprehensive campaign to raise private funds to ensure UCSB's excellence for future generations.

Currently, alumni and friends have contributed more than \$302-million toward a \$500-million goal of The Campaign for UC Santa Barbara.

About the Donors

UCSB alumni Karl and Pamela Lopker are partners in their philanthropic support for higher education and other activities through their family foundation.

The Lopkers are distinguished entrepreneurs and international business leaders. Karl Lopker founded Deckers Outdoor Corporation in 1973, and served as president until he sold the company in 1981.

He currently is a director of the corporation.

Together, in 1979, the couple founded QAD, which has since become a leading provider of software for manufacturers worldwide.

At QAD, they direct global research and development efforts and serve as technology visionaries.

At corporate headquarters in Summerland, Karl is a director and chief executive officer of QAD, and Pamela is chair of the board and president.

Over the years, the Lopkers have been generous benefactors of UCSB, supporting research and graduate fellowships in the College of Engineering, and providing scholarship and programmatic support for the Art Department. They are members of the Lancaster Society, UCSB's premier giving society.

At UCSB, the Lopkers have also served as volunteer leaders, mentors, and guest lecturers, sharing their expertise with students in engineering's Technology Management Program and other disciplines.

In honor of their many outstanding accomplishments, they were named Distinguished Alumni of UCSB.

Pamela Lopker was also chosen as the first recipient of the Narayanamurti Entrepreneurial Leadership Award, which is given annually to an entrepreneurial leader associated with the campus.

The award is named in honor of Venkatesh Narayanamurti, former dean of the College of Engineering.

The Lopkers have two children and reside in Santa Barbara.

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.