

UC SANTA BARBARA

# THE *Current*

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## **A Sustainability Blitz at UC Santa Barbara**

UC Santa Barbara's commitment to sustainability is getting a boost of energy as the 2008-09 academic year begins.

Close to 5,000 students are expected to attend next week's New Student Convocation, where environmentalist and explorer Celine Cousteau will be the keynote speaker. Meanwhile, students, faculty, and staff will be greeted by sustainability messages all over campus thanks to a new effort by campus administrators who have vowed to sharpen the focus of UCSB's environmental initiatives.

Cousteau, the daughter of ocean explorer and filmmaker Jean-Michel Cousteau and granddaughter of the legendary Jacques Cousteau, has devoted most of her life to projects that protect the earth and its natural resources. She's expected to focus on the environment during her keynote address on Sept. 22. On the same day, she and her father are slated to present a video at UCSB's Campbell Hall that explores the documentary filmmaking and expeditions of Ocean Futures Society. Jean-Michel Cousteau is president of OFS.

Chancellor Henry T. Yang, who also will speak at convocation, has already pledged his commitment to sustainability at UCSB. Last spring he announced the adoption of a comprehensive Campus Sustainability Plan designed to make significant contributions to energy conservation, resource management, and environmental

awareness – as well as to education and research – on the UCSB campus and beyond. As part of that commitment, the university has adopted a new motto for its sustainability efforts: "Leave No Footprint Behind."

The push for sustainability at UCSB extends far beyond convocation. A green blitz will greet students around the campus this year. A power point slide show highlighting the university's green accomplishments and goals will be displayed on television monitors in various locales, especially in the residence halls and University Center.

In addition, three-sided tabletop displays, printed on 100 percent recycled paper, will be placed in the residence hall dining areas. These will explain the sustainability programs on campus, highlight the university's accomplishments, and provide information on how each student can contribute to the effort.

The sustainability movement is being shepherded by Ron Cortez, who joined UCSB in March as associate vice chancellor for administrative services. Cortez is the highest-ranking administrator ever assigned to environmental issues at UCSB. He is expected to provide guidance for the soon-to-be-announced Sustainability Committee.

"I really love sustainability," said Cortez, who also oversees emergency planning, business services and environmental health and safety. "I really like doing things with the environment."

He sees his role here as harnessing the substantial but somewhat scattered efforts around the campus and coordinating them to maximize the university's sustainability.

"We have a commitment from the chancellor," Cortez said. "I think the area where I can help is in getting things organized and also tackle some of the bigger types of projects."

The sustainability push for 2008-09 will culminate with UCSB hosting the 2009 Sustainability for California's Higher Education Coalition: University of California, California State University, and California Community Colleges conference. It will be held June 21-24. The theme will be "Working Our Way to Zero," focusing on goals such as zero waste, zero net greenhouse gas emissions, zero non-renewable energy

sources, and zero pesticides.

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## **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.