

UC SANTA BARBARA

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UCSB Physicist Wins National Award from the U.S. Department of Energy

Benjamin Monreal, assistant professor of physics at UC Santa Barbara, has won an Early Career Research Program Award from the Office of Nuclear Physics at the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE).

The award is for \$904,000 over five years, and is for Monreal's project, "New Experiments to Measure the Neutrino Mass Scale."

The award is part of the Obama Administration's commitment to investing in innovation and research, according to a DOE press release. The funding is granted under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act. The new effort is designed to bolster the nation's scientific workforce by providing support to exceptional researchers during the crucial early career years, when many scientists do their most formative work.

"This investment reflects the Administration's strong commitment to creating jobs and new industries through scientific innovation," said Steven Chu, U.S. Secretary of Energy. "Strong support of scientists in the early career years is crucial to renewing America's scientific workforce and ensuring U.S. leadership in discovery and innovation for many years to come."

Michael Witherell, vice chancellor of research at UCSB, said: "In this very competitive program, 69 scientists from around the country were chosen out of 1,750 applicants

to receive large research grants early in their career. We are proud that Ben Monreal received one of these awards for his innovative research on neutrinos, and excited to find out what this research will show. This is one more indicator that we continue to have one of the best physics departments in the country."

Monreal joined the UCSB faculty in 2009. He completed his B.S. in physics at Yale in 1999, and his Ph.D. in experimental particle physics at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) in 2004. From 2004 through 2008, he was a postdoctoral research associate at MIT. Monreal's research is interdisciplinary at the intersection of nuclear, particle, and astrophysics. At UCSB, he is building a research group to carry out direct neutrino mass measurements, underground dark matter searches, and dark matter phenomenology.

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.