

UC SANTA BARBARA

THE *Current*

May 25, 2010

[Andrea Estrada](#)

UCSB History and Global and International Studies Scholars Appointed to MacArthur Foundation Chairs

UC Santa Barbara Professors Richard Appelbaum and Nelson Lichtenstein have been named to John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation Chairs. Each professorship will be supported by a \$1 million endowment for a five-year term, and the annual earnings on those funds will finance a range of teaching, research, and public service activities.

Appelbaum is a professor of sociology and of global and international studies, where he is also director of graduate studies. Lichtenstein, a professor of history, is also director of UCSB's Center for the Study of Work, Labor, and Democracy. They will pursue joint programming and research focused on the theme of "Human Rights in the Workplace: At Home and Abroad."

The MacArthur Foundation Chairs currently at UCSB are among seven chairs funded by a UC systemwide endowment from the MacArthur Foundation. The endowment was established in 2009 for the purpose of supporting research, public service, and teaching that promotes the objectives of the MacArthur Foundation, which include working to defend human rights, advance global conservation and security, make cities better places, and understand how technology is affecting children and

society.

At the end of five years, the two endowed chairs currently at UCSB will be redistributed to other UC campuses.

Appelbaum and Lichtenstein plan to pursue a variety of scholarly activities during the period of their appointment to MacArthur Foundation Chairs. Among these are three important conferences on topics that will include an evaluation of the International Labor Organization and its work; a historical and comparative look at guest worker programs; and an examination of evolving labor conditions, laws, and enforcement in emerging economies.

"For most of this era, work rights were not part of the international human rights discourse," said Lichtenstein. "They were the province of the trade union; the collective bargaining agreement; a state's welfare, labor, and wage and hour regulations; and the international agreements that governed labor migration, voluntary or coerced.

"But in recent years, the definition and protection of a work-oriented rights regime has become increasingly central to the entire concept of human rights," he added.

Noted Appelbaum: "Globalization has made it increasingly difficult for workers to achieve the basic human rights to which they are entitled. Retailers, such as Wal-Mart, along with the brands that they carry, now source from supply chains that extend around the world, moving production from factory to factory in search of the lowest possible costs. One of our central challenges is to better understand how workers' rights can be best achieved when businesses can move about the world with relative ease.

Issued: 5/25/10;

Corrected: 6/1/10

Issued: 5/25/10;

Corrected: 6/2/10

Related Links

[John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation](#)

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.