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UCSB Geographer Michael Goodchild Awarded Dangermond Professorship

UC Santa Barbara Professor Michael Goodchild, a global pioneer in geographic information science, is the first scholar appointed to the Jack and Laura Dangermond Professorship in geography.

The Dangermonds established the endowed chair with a major philanthropic gift to advance the development of geographic information system technology in an academic environment.

They are co-founders of Environmental Systems Research Institute, Inc., a leading developer of geographic information systems software.

UCSB Chancellor Henry T. Yang expressed his sincere gratitude to the Dangermonds for their long-term philanthropic leadership and their generous commitment to support geographic information science education and research.

"The Jack and Laura Dangermond Chair will advance research and discovery at the frontiers of geography, continuously and richly expanding our understanding of the world," he said.

"Our campus is proud that Professor Goodchild, one of the world's leading scientists in geospatial analysis and modeling, will be the inaugural chair holder."

A native of England, Goodchild earned a doctorate in geography in 1969 at McMaster University in Canada.

Soon after, he began his research in the emerging field of geographic information science, a name he invented.

Goodchild came to UCSB in 1988 to direct the National Center for Geographic Information and Analysis (NCGIA).

His groundbreaking research has resulted in the development of new analytic methods for the integration and analysis of very large spatial databases.

Goodchild, who serves as director of UCSB's Center for Spatial Studies, said: "This endowed chair is a great honor for me.

I've worked with Jack and Laura Dangermond and their company over several decades.

They have been very generous already in their support of UCSB with student scholarships and an annual Dangermond lecture.

This chair is wonderful additional recognition of their relationship with UCSB, and of the increasing importance of geography in the world."

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

"The Geography Department is extremely excited about the Dangermond Chair, the first endowed professorship established in the history of the department," said Dar Roberts, department chair.

"Jack and Laura Dangermond have, and continue to play, an incredibly important role in the discipline.

They have been long-term supporters of the department, contributing to continued excellence in undergraduate and graduate training at many levels.

It is entirely appropriate that the first professor to be awarded the chair is Dr. Mike Goodchild."

Goodchild, who recently was elected a member of Britain's prestigious Royal Society, is described by the world's oldest scientific academy as "the unchallenged global leader of Geographic Information Science."

His other accolades include election to the National Academy of Sciences, the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, and the Royal Society of Canada.

In addition, he received a Founder's Medal from the Royal Geographical Society for his contributions to geographic information science, and an Award of Distinction for Exceptional Scholarly Contribution to Cartography from the Canadian Cartographic Association.

He is a fellow of the Royal Society of Canada, and a gold medalist of the Royal Geographical Society.

At UCSB, Goodchild has served as director of both the NCGIA and the Center for Spatially Integrated Social Science.

He was also associate director of the Alexandria Digital Library Project, a globally distributed geo-referenced digital library in the University Library's Map & Imagery Laboratory.

Goodchild is the author of more than 15 books and 400 articles, and chair of the National Science Foundation's advisory committee on Social, Behavioral, and Economic Sciences.

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.