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THE **Current**

April 28, 2011
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UCSB Receives \$100,000 Grand Challenges Explorations Grant for Groundbreaking Research in Global Health and Development

UC Santa Barbara announced today that it is a Grand Challenges Explorations winner, an initiative funded by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. Guillermo Bazan, professor in the Department of Chemistry and Biochemistry, will pursue an innovative global health and development research project funded by the Foundation.

Grand Challenges Explorations (GCE) funds scientists and researchers worldwide to explore ideas that can break the mold in how we solve persistent global health and development challenges. Bazan's project is one of over 85 Grand Challenges Explorations Round 6 grants announced today by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation.

"GCE winners are expanding the pipeline of ideas for serious global health and development challenges where creative thinking is most urgently needed. These grants are meant to spur on new discoveries that could ultimately save millions of lives," said Chris Wilson, director of Global Health Discovery at the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation.

To receive funding, Bazan and other Grand Challenges Explorations Round 6 winners demonstrated, in a two-page online application, a bold idea in one of five critical global health and development topic areas: polio eradication, HIV, sanitation and family health technologies, and mobile health. Applications for the current open round, Grand Challenges Explorations Round 7, will be accepted through May 19, 2011.

Bazan's award is for the study of how semiconducting molecules that penetrate the membranes of living organisms can facilitate the conversion of wastewater into energy. The Foundation is interested in the possibility of using this technology to alleviate the emerging world's problem with sanitation, which presents a significant health hazard and negatively impacts people's dignity.

Grand Challenges is a \$100 million initiative funded by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. Launched in 2008, Grand Challenge Explorations grants have already been awarded to nearly 500 researchers from over 40 countries. The grant program is open to anyone from any discipline and from any organization. The initiative uses an agile, accelerated grant-making process with short two-page online applications and no preliminary data required.

Initial grants of \$100,000 are awarded two times a year. Successful projects have the opportunity to receive a follow-on grant of up to \$1 million.

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[Guillermo Bazan](#)

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.