

UC SANTA BARBARA

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UC Santa Barbara Students, Faculty Member Receive Chancellor's Research Awards

With commencement around the corner, UC Santa Barbara has recognized two graduating seniors, two graduate students, and a faculty member for their contributions to undergraduate research.

The Chancellor's Award for Excellence in Undergraduate Research for 2012 has been awarded to Jessica Moore, a feminist studies major from Eagle Rock, Calif., and Christopher Badger, a computer science major from Calabasas.

Moore's academic vision and research acumen are in full display in her honors thesis on the attitudes and practices of college women concerning body hair. Described in nomination letters as "imaginatively conceived, expertly executed, and theoretically sophisticated," her work builds on that of historians and feminist scholars who have analyzed the development of expectations about women's bodies, relating these practices to consumerism, fashion, changes in women's status, and large-scale social and economic change. Exploring the relationships among societal pressure, generational change, and women's agency, Moore was lauded for her unparalleled motivation and passion.

Described as a "truly exceptional undergraduate student" who is "eager to acquire new knowledge, and expresses a true joy for learning," Badger worked with two

professors to design a new peer-to-peer information system called iTrust, which is resistant to the censorship common in many countries. In the course of that project, Badger originated a key idea, showing that declustering, or randomizing, the connections in a network to protect against attacks also decreases its diameter, thereby improving information distribution and retrieval. Badger served as lead author of a paper describing this research, and presented the findings at the 2012 WEBIST Conference in Portugal.

Melissa Bator and Lisa McAllister have each received a Fiona Goodchild Award for Excellence as a Graduate Student Mentor of Undergraduate Research. Bator is a doctoral candidate in the Department of Communication, where her research interests revolve around interorganizational collective action. McAllister is a doctoral candidate in the Department of Anthropology, where she is a graduate student fellow at the Broom Center for Demography. Both have made exceptional contributions to the scholarly development of undergraduate students.

Mathematics professor Jeffrey Stopple is the 2012 faculty recipient of the Chancellor's Award for Excellence in Undergraduate Research, which annually honors a faculty member with a distinguished record of mentoring undergraduate student researchers.

Stopple was honored for his work with senior honors projects and with students in the University of California Leadership Excellence through Advanced Degrees (UC LEADS) program, which aims to foster future leaders by preparing promising students for advanced education in science, technology, mathematics, and engineering. Among the four UC LEADS students mentored by Stopple in recent years, Kimberly Spears Hopkins '04 went on to earn a doctorate in math from The University of Texas at Austin, and receive a National Science Foundation Postdoctoral Research Fellowship at UCLA. She credited Stopple with teaching her "how to think and speak about complex problems -- the two most valuable skills I've ever learned."

In the last five years, Stopple has also mentored 13 students in independent study in math, and supervised many senior theses. Several of his students have gone on to earn masters and doctoral degrees, win prestigious awards, and attain their own faculty positions. Stopple's own research focuses on analytic number theory. His vast work on the topic includes the book "A Primer in Analytic Number Theory: From Pythagoras to Riemann," published by Cambridge University Press in 2003.

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.