

UC SANTA BARBARA

THE *Current*

August 20, 2013

[Shelly Leachman](#)

Longtime Supporters Endow \$1 Million Chair in Experimental Science

With a passion for science and faith in its potential for life-changing advancements, longtime UC Santa Barbara benefactors Pat and Joe Yzurdiaga have gifted the campus with a \$1 million endowed chair in the field.

The recently appointed first incumbent to the Pat and Joe Yzurdiaga Chair in Experimental Science is already a star in science circles, and is becoming increasingly familiar to a broader audience: Joseph Incandela.

A professor of physics at UCSB and spokesman for the Compact Muon Solenoid (CMS) experiment at the European Organization for Nuclear Research's (CERN) Large Hadron Collider (LHC), Incandela is a key player on the international team of scientists credited in 2012 with observing the long-sought Higgs boson particle. With six fellow LHC project members, he was awarded a 2012 Special Fundamental Physics Prize by the Milner Foundation.

Incandela will give his inaugural lecture as holder of the Yzurdiaga Chair, "What Next? The Aftermath of the Higgs Boson Discovery," in a public event on Friday, August 23. His talk will begin at 4 p.m., in Kohn Hall, located on campus inside the Kavli Institute of Theoretical Physics.

"We are most grateful for the philanthropic leadership of Pat and Joe Yzurdiaga and their longtime and generous contributions to our campus," said Chancellor Henry T.

Yang. "The Pat and Joe Yzurdiaga Chair in Experimental Science will provide permanent funding to further strengthen the exciting research being conducted in our highly ranked Department of Physics. We are delighted and proud that the inaugural chair holder is our UCSB Professor Joe Incandela, who is renowned for his key role as CMS spokesperson in the groundbreaking discovery of the Higgs boson particle at CERN, and is a recipient of the prestigious Milner Prize."

Such accolades are part and parcel of what make Incandela a great fit as the first ever Yzurdiaga Chair, said the donors themselves, who believe in meritocracy almost as much as they do in the possibilities that science holds for humanity. Giving to UCSB since 2002, the couple previously established the Pat and Joe Yzurdiaga Graduate Student Fellowship Fund to support exceptional students in physics, biochemistry, chemistry, and molecular and cellular biology.

"We have great productivity in this country based on what we have found scientifically," said Joe Yzurdiaga, a financial advisor with Crowell, Weedon & Co. "When you want to leave a legacy, you want to leave it as productive and as close to what you believe in as possible. We decided to go for something that's very narrow -- the physical sciences -- to do it at UCSB, and to not distribute all the investment income. You always keep some so the corpus grows, which means, in essence, that you serve humanity forever.

"I'm a big-picture guy," he added. "Where can I do the most good?"

Incandela has a similar sensibility. He characterized endowed chairs such as the Yzurdiagas' as an invaluable resource for scientists hoping "to step back and consider new challenges, and develop new ideas to confront those challenges."

"Science empowers humanity at the same time as it enlightens," Incandela said. "It provides the basis for new technologies that have enabled mankind to confront and solve problems that could not have been imagined to be solvable in earlier times. Of course there are also negative effects of some technologies, but this is the general nature of power. It depends how it is used. I believe that expanding science is inevitable and will always be a net benefit.

"To put it succinctly," he added, "the Pat and Joe Yzurdiaga Chair in Experimental Science gives me a license to be creative, to think more broadly, and potentially go after bigger questions in science. I would go so far as to say that it even inspires me to do this."

Incandela has been involved in the CMS experiment for more than 16 years. He was named deputy physics coordinator to the project in 2007, was appointed deputy spokesperson in 2009, and in 2011 became the first U.S. scientist to be elected head spokesperson. He was the only physicist from outside Europe in the group honored for discovering the Higgs boson in 2012.

"Joseph Incandela has demonstrated outstanding leadership in being the spokesman for one of the two international teams that conducted the Higgs boson search at the LHC facility in Geneva, and it's a distinct honor for the physics department of UCSB to have Professor Incandela named as the first occupant of the Pat & Joe Yzurdiaga Chair in Experimental Science," said Philip Pincus, chair of physics at UCSB.

"Prestigious named chairs such as this provide flexible resources for research support and demonstrate institutional recognition of exceptional contributions. We are forever grateful to our friends and benefactors such as the Yzurdiagas. Such endowments provide perpetual benefits."

That's what it's all about for the Yzurdiagas. The couple has previously supported Caltech and the Jules Stein Eye Institute at UCLA, where Joe Yzurdiaga earned a B.S. in business administration. Pat Yzurdiaga has long been an active community member and volunteer, and is currently a member of the Music Academy of the West Women's Auxiliary and the Philanthropic Educational Organization. She is a sustaining member of the Community Arts Music Association (CAMA) Women's Board and the Santa Barbara Museum of Art Women's Board. Together they enjoy spending time with the summer fellows at the Music Academy of the West as part of the Compeer Program.

Their generosity of money and time is inspired by a single wish, said Pat Yzurdiaga: "To make the human condition better."

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