

THE Current

June 4, 2009

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UCSB Students, Faculty Member Receive Chancellor's Research Awards

Three graduating seniors, two graduate students, and a faculty member have been recognized for their outstanding contributions to undergraduate research at UC Santa Barbara.

The Chancellor's Award for Excellence in Undergraduate Research for 2009 has been awarded to MacKenzie Chapman, a linguistics major in the College of Letters and Science from Mill Valley; Risa Katzen, a history major in the College of Letters and Science from Alamo; and Tobias Mansuripur, a physics major in the College of Creative Studies from Tucson, Arizona.

Chapman, whose research examines the functions of a previously unstudied discourse in Mandarin, was nominated by three faculty members to receive the undergraduate research award.

Her senior honors thesis makes a significant contribution to several fields of Chinese linguistics, including Chinese discourse and Chinese dialectology, as well as to scholarship in interactional linguistics, according to faculty mentors.

In her research, Katzen compares the women's suffrage movements in the United States and South Africa.

Her senior honors thesis, titled "Anything to Fit In," is described by faculty nominators as "superb," "highly original," and as charting new territory previously not covered by historians.

Lisa Jacobson, associate professor of history, notes that Katzen's research accomplishment is "truly masterful."

Already, Mansuripur is making important scientific contributions to the interdisciplinary field of micro-scale fluid mechanics and transport science.

He is the lead author of a research paper that will appear in a special issue of the New Journal of Physics on micro- and nano-fluidics.

In addition, Mansuripur was recently awarded a prestigious Winston Churchill Scholarship to pursue graduate studies at University of Cambridge in England.

Jung-Eun Janie Lee and Andrew Stull have each received a Fiona Goodchild Award for Excellence as a Graduate Student Mentor of Undergraduate Research.

Lee, from Seoul, Korea, is a Ph.D. candidate in linguistics.

Stull, of Goleta, is a doctoral candidate in psychology.

After completing his Ph.D. this summer, Stull will become a postdoctoral researcher in the laboratory of UCSB Psychology Professor Mary Hegarty.

David Valentine, associate professor of earth science, has been given the Chancellor's Award for Undergraduate Research, which is bestowed annually upon a faculty member with a distinguished record of mentoring undergraduate students in their research projects.

Valentine received the award in recognition of his outstanding teaching and research contributions and for providing "career-changing experiences" by fully integrating undergraduates into research activities.

He enables students to play key roles on research vessels and in fieldwork, supports their professional development at academic conferences, and includes students on scholarly publications.

Since 2002, he has mentored 29 undergraduates in a variety of subjects that have resulted in four journal publications and 17 published abstracts.

In two of the publications, an undergraduate is first author.

More than a quarter of all UCSB undergraduates are now involved in original research with graduate students and faculty members. Students compete for hundreds of thousands of dollars in grants for undergraduate research each year. Research conducted under the supervision of professors who are eminent in their fields fosters critical thinking skills and helps prepare students for future careers and advanced study.

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.