UC SANTA BARBARA
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Practice Makes Perfect

Fresh off being named the No. 1 public green university in the country, UC Santa Barbara has won three Best Practice Awards in the annual Energy Efficiency and Sustainability Awards competition sponsored by the California Higher Education Sustainability Conference (CHESC).

UCSB was a winner in the categories of Innovative Waste Reduction, Sustainability Innovations and Monitoring-Based Commissioning.

In Innovative Waste Reduction, UCSB won for its Optimizing Waste Management Services Through Stakeholder Engagement project. With the guidance of custodial staff, a pilot project was designed to improve custodial waste removal efficiency, as well as increase recycling rates by updating the existing waste infrastructure. Among the changes that were implemented, underutilized and outdated waste containers in the 10 buildings were replaced with new containers. Stickers informing users of acceptable items in the waste stream and the service schedule for those bins were also added. The program is expected to result in a 12 percent — or 18-ton — reduction of landfill waste each year and reduce the time needed to service the indoor waste infrastructure.

In the Sustainability Innovations category, UCSB won for the public relations campaign, Action Today for Tomorrow. The goal of the campaign, which included bus advertising, movie trailers and on-campus digital informational messaging, was to increase education around environmental issues and visibility about the University’s achievements in sustainability and goals for the future to both internal

and external stakeholders. Other pieces of the campaign included sustainability information posters around the campus; a community lecture series, “Water We Going to Do?”; the annual Central Coast Sustainability Summit; and participation in the Santa Barbara Earth Day celebration.

In the Monitoring-Based Commissioning category, UCSB won for its Chilled Water Loop Optimization project. In 2014, UCSB’s Facilities Management Engineering and Building Automation staff launched a project to improve the efficiency of the infrastructure that supplies air conditioning to many campus buildings. Eight separate chiller plants provide chilled water to the loop, for which the staff developed methods for balancing power for compressors, as well as peripheral components such as pumps and cooling towers. The result of the project is an energy savings of 2.1 million kilowatt-hours each year, or 2.5 percent of UCSB’s total electricity use. That’s a cost savings of $235,000 per year. Southern California Edison provided an incentive of $511,000 to support the project.

Representatives from UCSB will receive the awards at the annual California Higher Education Sustainability Conference, July 20-24, at San Francisco State University. The conference is open to the public and registration will open soon.

CHESC highlights cutting-edge research, as well as case studies with proven successes in curriculum development, operational programs, and community partnerships. The conference is jointly organized by independent/private colleges, California Community Colleges, California State Universities and the University of California.

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.