

UC SANTA BARBARA

# THE *Current*

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## Home Away From Home

As workers put the final touches on Sierra Madre Villages, UC Santa Barbara's Department of Housing & Residential Services invited staff and faculty members on Monday to tour the campus's newest undergraduate housing.

"We're really excited about this project because it allows us to provide housing for upper-division undergrads," said Marc Fisher, UCSB vice chancellor for administrative services and the campus architect. He was on hand for the tours of the buildings located at 555 Storke Road. "It's a nice opportunity to keep our students on campus in a safe and beautiful living environment."

Visitors were treated to a preview of the brand-new two- and three-bedroom dorms that comprise the three-story buildings, each of which is double-occupancy per bedroom. The units also contain compact and fully furnished living and dining areas as well as full kitchens. Additional amenities for Sierra Madre include elevator access, two community centers, recreation areas, conference rooms and a small convenience store. The buildings will house 515 sophomores to seniors in 35 three-bedroom and 74 two-bedroom units.

In keeping with the campus's commitment to sustainability and green building, the project is targeting a LEED Gold Certification, with strategies that emphasize energy and water efficiency, furnishings made from reclaimed materials and outdoor environmental quality. The campus's Cheadle Center for Biodiversity and Ecological Restoration, meanwhile, is creating a manmade vernal pool, a seasonal pond of the type typically found in the adjacent natural areas. According to Allyson Kelley, a

representative for ProWest Constructors, the company in charge of building the villages, local architectural services and builders were crucial to making the project meld with the particular characteristics of the local environment.

“They understand the materials and the textures of the area,” she said.

Sierra Madre also represents improvements in student housing gleaned from previous projects. For example, linoleum countertops have been passed over in favor of granite, which are able to withstand burning and warping and require far less maintenance. Higher-capacity refrigerators that accommodate more items also have been installed and lounges within the common areas are designed to provide additional study space.

While the faculty residential building at the north end of the project remains to be completed in the following weeks, students will be able to take up residence in their new digs by Move-In Weekend on Sept. 19-20.

For more information about Sierra Madre Villages, visit Housing and Residential Services’ project webpage at <https://www.housing.ucsb.edu/housing-options/options-filter/sierra-madre-villages>.

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## **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.