UC SANTA BARBARA

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An ‘Upward-Mobility Machine’

UC Santa Barbara placed number 3 in a ranking of how top colleges and universities nationwide measure up in their efforts toward economic diversity. The Upshot’s College Access Index published today in The New York Times.

The University of California dominated the list, taking six of the top seven slots. Only UC Irvine and UC Davis ranked higher than UCSB. UC San Diego came in at number 4, UCLA at number 5 and UC Berkeley at number 7, with the Times describing UC as California’s upward-mobility machine.”

According to the Times, the index is based on the share of students receiving Pell grants (which typically go to families making less than $70,000 per year); the graduation rate of students on Pell grants; and the net cost, after financial aid, that a college or university charged low- and middle-income students.

According to the Times, while affluent students predominate at many liberal arts colleges, “the University of California, by contrast, enrolls large numbers of high-performing students of all economic backgrounds.”

Economic diversity, the Times stated, is a hot topic with academic research demonstrating that many highly qualified low-income students choose not to attend a selective college or university. “They instead enroll at a college closer to home, with fewer resources — and many don’t end up getting a four-year degree,” noted an article associated with the ranking. “The educational divide is a major reason that climbing the income ladder remains so hard.”

UCSB has performed well in a variety of rankings focused on economic diversity. The university placed number 14 in the 2015 Washington Monthly Ranking, and was highlighted in the magazine's College Guide as one of 10 "Access Improvers." In addition, UCSB was ranked number 6 among public universities in U.S. News & World Report's just-released list of colleges and universities that offer students the best education value based on academic quality and net cost of attendance.

The complete College Access Index can be found at http://www.nytimes.com/2015/09/17/upshot/californias-university-system-....

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.