

UC SANTA BARBARA

# THE *Current*

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UC Office of the President

## **‘Bold Solutions’**

The University of California today launched the TomKat UC Carbon Neutrality Project with a \$300,000 gift from the TomKat Foundation, established by Tom Steyer and Kathryn Taylor. The TomKat UC Carbon Neutrality Project seeks to develop and deploy solutions to the challenges of climate change.

The project was announced June 2, as UC President Janet Napolitano and Steyer served on a panel at the 2016 Clean Energy Ministerial Meeting in San Francisco organized by the U.S. Department of Energy. The summit brings together energy ministers and other high-level delegates from the 23 participating countries to assess progress and identify critical next steps in transitioning to a global clean energy economy.

UC Santa Barbara’s Institute for Energy Efficiency will lead the TomKat UC Carbon Neutrality Project, in partnership with the National Center for Ecological Analysis and Synthesis, capitalizing on the vast resources and research of the entire UC system, to advance the University’s continued commitment to carbon neutrality and sustainability.

“The University of California is a global leader in developing the bold, innovative solutions that will solve the climate crisis,” Steyer said. “I’m proud to support UC Santa Barbara’s leadership on clean energy and UC’s goal of achieving zero net greenhouse gas emissions by 2025.”

With generous support from the TomKat Foundation, the project will bring together working groups of researchers, practitioners and students with wide-ranging areas of expertise and from diverse disciplines. They will advance UC's Carbon Neutrality Initiative, which aims to eliminate the use of fossil fuels through major investments in energy efficiency, behavioral incentives, the development of alternatives to natural gas, and the widespread deployment of renewable energy.

"We are deeply grateful to Tom Steyer, Kathryn Taylor and the TomKat Foundation for their visionary and inspirational gift, which aims not only to advance research and education in the area of climate change, but also to find solutions for the benefit of our global society," said UCSB Chancellor Henry T. Yang. "As a leader in sustainability, UC Santa Barbara is honored to host this exciting project and to work collaboratively with the Office of the President and our sister UC campuses."

"The project will assemble multi-disciplinary teams of leading experts, each dedicated to finding solutions to the most challenging aspects of climate change," said project director David Auston of UC Santa Barbara, who is a member of the UC Global Climate Change Leadership Council. "It's a terrific model with the potential for great impact that extends beyond the UC System when scaled and exported to the state, national and global levels."

Established in 2008, the TomKat Foundation creates and partners with innovative organizations that envision a world with climate stability, a healthy and just food system, and broad prosperity. The TomKat Foundation believes that understanding the relationships between our financial practices, the impact of our energy usage and the methods by which our food is raised and consumed is critical to the success of sustaining a healthy planet that is able to support generations to come.

It is fitting, then, that the organization is partnering with UC as the university pioneers a multipronged approach to combating global warming. Last year, UC launched its framework of sustainable investing. The university is a signatory to the Paris Pledge and has committed to invest \$1 billion in climate change solutions over the next five years. UC also is working with the Breakthrough Energy Coalition to spur government research and development of innovative energy technologies and to build a network of investors to support climate change solutions.

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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.