UC SANTA BARBARA

THE Current

October 12, 2016
Shelly Leachman

Sharing a Vision for Sustainability

Aiming to inspire action and regional collaborations that may seed potential solutions to environmental issues in the area, UC Santa Barbara will again host the Central Coast Sustainability Summit.

The sixth annual gathering of representatives from government, chambers of commerce, nonprofit organizations, campuses, utility companies and private industry is set for Monday, Oct. 17, from 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., in UCSB's Loma Pelona Conference Center.

"We are very excited about this year's summit and grateful for the partnership of our colleagues from the Community Environmental Council; the Cities of Goleta, Santa Barbara, and Carpinteria; and the County of Santa Barbara," said Jewel Snavely, event organizer and campus sustainability coordinator. "With so many complex environmental and economic challenges in our region, this event provides an important opportunity for learning about best practices and innovative solutions on issues including sustainable transportation, energy efficiency, carbon farming and energy resiliency. New collaborations to help advance sustainability on the Central Coast may be sparked as a result of these discussions — that's certainly our hope."

The morning keynote talk, "The Keys to Sustainability in the 21st Century," will feature Terry Tamminen, CEO of the Leonardo DiCaprio Foundation, which focuses on protecting wildlife, saving the oceans, restoring wildlands and empowering communities. Tamminen has served in sustainability roles in both the private and public sectors, including as secretary of the California Environmental Protection

Agency.

Concurrent sessions to follow Tamminen's talk will cover topics including municipal energy efficiency, more sustainable local and regional transportation, financing options for climate resiliency initiatives and rapid scaling of carbon farming energy.

A major focus for the afternoon: water. A panel discussion of regional water issues will feature Tom Fayram of the County of Santa Barbara; Charles Newman of the Montecito Water District, Joshua Haggmark of the City of Santa Barbara, and Ryan Drake of the Goleta Water District.

"As we enter our fifth year of drought in California, we're thrilled to have a panel of water experts from Goleta, Santa Barbara and Montecito sharing current conditions and forecasts, as well ideas they are exploring to diversify our water sources," said Mo Lovegreen, director of sustainability. "With our own expert, UCSB's Robert Wilkinson, who researches water policy, moderating the panel, it promises to be an informative and robust discussion."

Hydrogen fueling and community choice energy are on the docket for the afternoon agenda, as is former California Assemblymember, now Santa Barbara County Supervisor-elect Das Williams, who will speak on biofuels, Senate Bill 32 and the future of cap and trade. An afternoon keynote will focus on "The Distributed Grid: California's Transition to a Cleaner, Faster, More Resilient Grid."

"We are excited to see the Sustainability Summit continue to bring thought leadership to the Central Coast," said Jefferson Litten, director of energy and climate programs at the Community Environmental Council, a key partner in the annual event. "The presentations will address some of the most pressing issues that our community faces — our regional water supply, the transition to a clean energy future and alternative transportation. The event will be a great chance to share updates on energy storage, Community Choice Energy and other opportunities to implement sustainability measures in our region."

The Central Coast Sustainability Summit is a collaborative effort of the Community Environmental Council; the Cities of Goleta, Santa Barbara and Carpinteria; the County of Santa Barbara; and UC Santa Barbara. The event brings together elected officials, staff and faculty members and interested parties from local governments and organizations to discuss common sustainability issues and share best practices.

Founded in 2011, the Central Coast Sustainability Summit assembles regional stakeholders in sustainability to swap information and ideas, with an eye toward providing inspiration and creating a shared vision for such efforts across California's central coast. Since it was first convened, the summit has been the launching point for new county and regional initiatives, including the Multi-jurisdictional Renewable Energy Task Force and the cross-agency Volunteer Management Program.

More details and a complete program for the summit can be found here.

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.