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Allied for Innovation

Joseph Incandela, vice chancellor for research and a professor of physics at UC Santa Barbara, has joined the board of directors of the Alliance for Southern California Innovation. Founded by technology entrepreneur and former California insurance commissioner Steve Poizner, the non-profit organization is aimed at nurturing and accelerating the growth of an entrepreneurial ecosystem in Southern California.

As the challenges of starting and growing new companies in Silicon Valley continue to mount, the Southern California region, with its wealth of engineering talent and world-class universities, is well positioned to become America's next hub for technology and life science startups. The Alliance will develop initiatives that encourage tech entrepreneurs, venture capitalists and top talent to locate to and stay in Southern California, complementing and extending the success of Silicon Valley and the Bay Area.

"Southern California has the right building blocks to become the next leading technology and innovation hub in the United States," said Poizner. "Through a collaborative effort, the region has the potential to bring a trillion-dollar economic impact to the state and country."

The organization's board of directors includes senior leaders from universities, and research consortium, and distinguished community leaders.

In addition to Incandela, members from other universities and research institutes in Southern California, include:

• Amir Naiberg, associate vice chancellor, chief executive officer and president of the Technology Development Corp. at UCLA

• Edward W. Holmes, M.D., chief executive officer of the Sanford Consortium for Regenerative Medicine

• Kaushik Bhattacharya, vice provost and the Howell N. Tyson, Sr. Professor of mechanics and materials science at CalTech

• Michael Pazzani, vice chancellor for research and economic development and professor of computer science and engineering at UC Riverside

• Paul Roben, associate vice chancellor for innovation and technology commercialization at UC San Diego

• Randolph Hall, vice president of research and professor of industrial and systems engineering at the University of Southern California

• Richard Sudek, chief innovation officer and executive director of applied innovation at UC Irvine

Community leaders from Southern California on the board of directors include:

• Thomas Gewecke, chief digital officer at Warner Bros. Entertainment, Inc

• Irwin Jacobs, founding chairman and CEO emeritus at Qualcomm

• Scott Wolfe, a partner with Latham and Watkins LLP

• Michael Yanover, head of business development at Creative Artists Agency

• Sherry Lansing, former CEO of Paramount Pictures

• Marc Stern, chairman of The TCW Group, Inc.

• Steve Poizner, technology entrepreneur

Among the technology trailblazers, investment experts, and startup veterans on the Alliance advisory committee are:

• Eric Schmidt, executive chairman of Alphabet Inc.

• Jeff Henley, vice chairman of Oracle

• Larry Sonsini, chairman of Wilson Sonsini, Goodrich & Rosati

• Ted Eliopoulos, chief investment officer for CalPERS

• Gene Sykes, managing director of Goldman Sachs and chief executive officer of the Los Angeles 2024 Exploratory Committee

The committee will provide strategic counsel to the Alliance on matters such as best practices and lessons learned from Silicon Valley and the Bay Area.

“Across machine learning, life sciences, cloud services, urban development and more, we’re in the midst of an exciting era of technological advancement that will create new businesses, jobs and opportunities,” said Schmidt. “Southern California has a thriving startup culture and group of entrepreneurs, as well as terrific researchers and institutions. It’s perfectly placed to become a global hub. I'm excited that the Alliance, working with universities and experts across the region, will work to boost research and to connect local entrepreneurs with the capital and expertise they need to thrive.”

The Alliance has entered into a collaboration agreement with Bill Maris, founder and former CEO of Google Ventures, who just launched Section 32, a new venture fund located in Southern California. The Alliance will provide referrals of exciting startup opportunities, and expects to form similar collaborations with other top venture capitalists committed to strengthening their presence in Southern California.

“Southern California is not only my home, but a region with a long history of creating and advancing new industries. Innovation isn’t confined to any one part of our state, and Southern California is ripe with top-tier investment opportunities in various sections. Section 32 is proud to be the first venture fund to partner with the Alliance,” said Maris.

The Alliance has also entered into a collaboration agreement with EvoNexus, the largest pro bono tech incubator in Southern California, and plans to work with other accelerators and incubators to help startups prepare for the challenges of starting their companies and raising venture capital.

The Alliance has engaged on a pro bono basis the Boston Consulting Group, one of the world's leading management consulting firms, to conduct a comprehensive study of Southern California's innovation economy and to develop an action plan for making Southern California the next global tech center. BCG plans to announce its findings by next fall.

More information about the Alliance can be found at www.AllianceSoCal.org.

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.