UC SANTA BARBARA

THE Current

November 26, 2019

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Sunny Days Ahead

Visitors to the busy courtyard outside of UC Santa Barbara's Humanities and Social Sciences Building (HSSB) now have an outdoor study spot that is as good for the environment as it is for student productivity and collaboration.

As of Nov. 22, two new Sunbolt solar-powered tables have been added to the space, and they provide much more than just a nice place to sit. The tables, which each have four electrical outlets and eight USB charging ports, are a manifestation of UCSB's commitment to remain one of the greenest campuses in the nation. They can provide up to 150 device charges per day, solely from the power of the sun.

In addition to collecting energy, the large solar panels that sit atop each table act as umbrella-like shades during the day and power built-in LED lights at night. The tables, which are made of sustainable materials, are also ADA-accessible.

"The HSSB courtyard is an attractive and popular space for students, staff and faculty," said John Majewski, Michael Douglas Dean of Humanities and Fine Arts. "The addition of these solar benches will enhance the use of the space and serve as a tangible statement of UCSB's commitment to sustainable energy."

Majewski also noted that the solar-powered tables will create more outdoor working space for students that can be accessed day or night, and that they happen to be located near a PrintSpot location, for added convenience. "The space is especially ideal for group projects and collaborations," he said.

Funding for the tables came from a bequest from a donor, the late Louise Lowry Davis, given to enhance the HSSB courtyard space. Further funding was provided by Collaborate fees and by a sustainability grant from The Green Initiative Fund (TGIF).

The committee that coordinated their purchase hopes to bring more furniture to the courtyard in the coming months, all in keeping with UC Santa Barbara's collaborative culture. "The strength of UCSB is in our ability to work together," said Majewski. "This project is part of a larger effort by the College of Letters & Science and Facilities Management to renew this common space while also demonstrating the power of renewable energy to support the daily needs of this campus."

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.