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A Lasting Legacy

After serving on the faculty for more than 30 years, and spending half that as dean of the Gevirtz Graduate School of Education, Jules Zimmer's legacy at UC Santa Barbara was already strong. And now it's cemented.

An anonymous gift from a technology company headquartered in Santa Barbara, and made in Zimmer's honor, has established the Jules Zimmer Dean's Chair at Gevirtz School. Jeffrey Milem, current dean of GGSE, is the inaugural holder of the administrative chair.

"I'm so grateful. It's quite an honor," Zimmer said of the chair being endowed in his name. "I had so many wonderful students in my life, and I feel like this is an honor for all of them. My experience as dean of the Gevirtz School was absolutely fulfilling. There were a lot of great friendships built and a lot of wonderful challenges.

"Also, it was an honor to work with Henry Yang for the many years we worked together, and I especially appreciate Dilling, his wife," Zimmer added. "Jeffrey Milem is a wonderful dean and he is a good leader for the GGSE at this time. I try to follow what they're doing and the school has moved a long way since I was dean."

Zimmer served as GGSE's acting dean in 1993, then as dean from 1994-2004. Among his many accomplishments in that time was overseeing the planning process for the school's new building. It was Zimmer's vision that led to the building's defined entrance and proper sitting areas on every floor inside, as well as landscaped spaces outside. With funds raised by the Dean's Ambassador Circle, the

outdoor spaces were eventually named the Jules and Laurie Zimmer Learning Garden.

Zimmer had a 34-year career at UCSB. He began in counseling psychology, but as his interests grew in the field of early childhood development he took a year off to study with famed psychologist Jean Piaget in Switzerland and returned to become program leader for Early Childhood Education. His first group of students helped transform the campus childcare center into one of the best of its kind.

“We are greatly inspired by the generous establishment of our Jules Zimmer Dean’s Chair, which is not only an exciting milestone for GGSE and our campus, but a wonderful tribute to the lasting legacy and benevolent leadership of the Chair’s namesake,” Chancellor Henry T. Yang said of the gift. “I had the distinct honor and pleasure of working with Jules for his decade-long tenure as dean, during which time we embarked on a journey working with our dedicated alumni, wonderful students and distinguished faculty to bring the school to new heights, including the Gevirtz naming endowment.

“We extend proudest congratulations to Dean Jeffrey Milem as our inaugural chairholder,” Yang added, “and recognize his dedicated continuation of extraordinary commitment and leadership to GGSE.”

Milem’s research focuses on the ways in which colleges and universities can be organized to enhance equity, access, and success for all students; the racial context within higher education; and the relationship between how colleges and universities organize themselves and student outcomes and faculty role performance.

A widely recognized expert in the area of racial dynamics in higher education, Milem has been commissioned by numerous organizations and entities to conduct scholarly research. Among them are the Institute of Medicine of the National Academies, the Association of American Medical Colleges, the Harvard Civil Rights Project, the American Council on Education, the Association of American Colleges and Universities and the American Educational Research Association’s Panel on Racial Dynamics in Higher Education.

“It is my deep honor to know that I will be the inaugural holder of the Zimmer Chair,” Milem said of being named to the new chair. “Like all the deans that have come before me, I am acutely aware of the ways that financial resources, visibility and recognition aid in leading our school forward. To that end, the Zimmer Chair is a game changer for the Gevirtz School. The chair represents our shared values of academic excellence, friendship, generosity, vision and a commitment to the future — all values Jules Zimmer himself embodies. Our school will reap the benefit of this philanthropic investment in perpetuity — for that I am eternally thankful.”

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.