

UC SANTA BARBARA

# THE *Current*

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## Local Heroes

UC Santa Barbara was doubly represented in the Santa Barbara Independent's Local Heroes issue for 2020. Honored among others who have "put their skills to work for the common good" are UCSB Arts & Lectures and the Department of Theater and Dance.

Arts & Lectures was recognized for its efforts in reimagining its approach to bringing live events to local audiences when the pandemic made in-person gatherings impossible. Undeterred, A&L went virtual with offerings that bring thinkers and creatives into audience member's living rooms. Among them: House Calls, Fanless Concerts, Tabletop Shakespeare and a free public film series at the West Wind Drive-In in Goleta. In addition, the critically acclaimed lecture series "Race to Justice," which continues through April, features authors Ibram X. Kendi and Ta-Nehisi Coates, Sister Helen Prejean and the Alvin Ailey Dance Theater, among others.

The Department of Theater and Dance was acknowledged for reinventing its BFA program and for creating a new online medium for theater, all with the goal of supporting students. To wit: "Alone Together," a Launch Pad production that brought together 61 actors and 23 directors in action on Zoom; "The Spotlight Project," a Launch Pad summer reading series; and "Immortal Longings," a blend of Shakespeare's "Julius Caesar" and "Antony and Cleopatra."

In addition, when the pandemic was in its early stages, the production team used the lockdown time to produce face coverings for health care workers.

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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.