UC SANTA BARBARA
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Keeping Campus Green

An environmental research podcast, an expanded residential composting project and a pollinator garden are among the proposals to win grants from The Green Initiative Fund (TGIF) at UC Santa Barbara in its most recent cycle. More than $122,773 has been awarded across 14 projects, all meant to make the campus more sustainable.

The initiatives are expected to be completed over the next year, and to yield long-term environmental benefits. TGIF annually supports a host of innovative efforts that are often student-driven, selected by a committee composed primarily of students and entirely funded by students as well.

UC Santa Barbara students this spring voted overwhelmingly to reaffirm TGIF by way of a lock-in fee. The quarterly fee of $3.47 per student hasn’t changed since the fund’s inception; in a given year it contributes as much as $180,000 to the fund.

“This spring, the TGIF fee was reaffirmed with 84.8% of the vote, showing how supportive our students are of improving the sustainability of our campus,” said Jewel Persad, TGIF grant manager and campus sustainability manager. “Since the fund launched in 2006, we have given out close to $3 million in grant awards. In that time, TGIF has supported over 250 projects that increase the amount of renewable

energy used on campus, as well as water and energy efficiency, boost student access to sustainable food systems, provide student internship opportunities in sustainability, and reduce waste created by our university.

“None of this would be possible,” Persad added, “without the creative ideas and commitment from our students to creating a more sustainable and socially just community.”

Among the recipients for 2022 are three of UCSB’s natural reserves:

• **Coal Oil Point Reserve**, which includes 170 acres of restored habitats and over 1,000 species, was awarded $9,577 for a project to electrify gas-powered landscaping equipment (replacing old, energy inefficient equipment) and acquire and install a storage shed for the equipment.

• **Santa Cruz Island Reserve** will use its TGIF grant of $20,846 to partially support the purchase and installation of a 9.72 kW solar array that will supply electricity to two accommodations that are under construction. The new staff homes will provide living space for staff and will increase the support of UCSB undergraduate education and UCSB faculty research at the Reserve.

• **Valentine Eastern Sierra Reserves**, which comprise two outposts in Mammoth Lakes, will receive $6,138 to purchase and install hydration stations at each: one at the Sierra Nevada Aquatic Research Laboratory, and another at Valentine Camp Reserve. Each

year over 3,500 university level students — nearly half of them from UCSB — utilize these sites.

Among the other notable new projects to be funded by TGIF for its 2021-2022 cycle:

• **The Carbon Action Plan: UCSB Decarbonization through Electrification** ($16,819) will use TGIF funds to hire two graduate students to measure, verify and analyze the fossil fuel burning infrastructure used by Housing, Dining, and Auxiliary Enterprises (HDAE) on the campus, to identify where changes can be implemented to reduce carbon emissions.

• **UCSB’s Environmental Research Podcast** ($8,870) — Funding will be used to launch a podcast highlighting environmental research being conducted by UCSB scholars. This podcast will elevate diverse researchers’ voices and increase science

communication to the broader community. By educating the public on cutting-edge discoveries and areas of innovation in the environmental sector, this podcast will promote more informed decision-making to support eco-friendly and sustainable lifestyles.

• **The Human Crusade** ($4,553) — The Human Crusade is an exhibit booked to open Winter 2023 at the UCSB Library Ocean Gallery. It will tell the story of humanity and the environment through a span of four large collage art pieces. The exhibit will provide students with a new perspective on climate change. TGIF funds will cover the costs of the art installations created for the exhibit.

A complete list of the projects to be funded can be found here.

Created in 2006 by an overwhelming majority vote of UCSB students, TGIF was the first student-funded sustainability initiative of its kind — and the first green fee — in the UC system. It has since impacted nearly every part of the campus, over the years supporting hundreds of projects that are helping UC Santa Barbara conserve water, reduce waste, boost energy efficiency and increase the use of renewable energy.

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.