UC SANTA BARBARA

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Shelly Leachman

Honoring Alumni

An award-winning film producer, an artistic entrepreneur couple, and a real estate philanthropist. Four accomplished individuals will be recognized during the 2022 UCSB Alumni Awards, as UC Santa Barbara resumes in-person celebration of its extraordinary alumni and their achievements beyond campus. The event will be held at 6 p.m. Friday, Oct. 7 at Lagoon Plaza.

Walt Disney Animation Studios producer Yvett Merino '94 will receive the Distinguished Alumni Award. Real estate investor and philanthropist Diane (Hilbert ‘68) Dodds will be honored with the Graver Alumni Service Award (posthumously). Lynda Weinman and Bruce Heavin, co-founders of Lynda.com, will be recognized with the Honorary Alumni Award. Each recipient will speak and share insights.

Yvett Merino, who earned her bachelor’s degree in sociology, is the Academy Award winning producer of “Encanto,” and the first Latina to receive the Oscar® for Animated Feature. She has served as production manager on the Oscar-winning feature, “Big Hero 6,” as well as the Oscar-nominated “Moana.” Launching her Disney Animation career in the technology department, she moved into the world of production as a supervisor on “Tangled,” “The Lion King 3D,” and on “Wreck-It Ralph.” Merino was also a part of the team that started Voces@Disney, the studio’s first Latinx employee resource group, where she served as co-president for two years.

Diane Dodds earned a bachelor’s degree in English. As a student she enjoyed Shakespeare, Chaucer, literature, sociology, history and psychology. She loved the

beach, cruising through Isla Vista, and spending hours in downtown Santa Barbara. She enjoyed being president of her dorm wing. She earned a secondary teaching credential, worked in banking and finance, and spent twenty years helping to manage a tax and investment business. Diane was very passionate about her alma mater and philanthropically supported many areas, including Alumni Day of Service, Alumni Scholarship Fund, Mosher Alumni House and Isla Vista Foot Patrol. She was proud to be a Gaucho and an active member of her church, Opera Santa Barbara, and the UCSB Alumni Board.

Lynda Weinman began her computer graphics career in the early 1980's, first working in animation for film, TV and industry, and later as faculty member and adjunct faculty at Art Center College of Design, the American Film Institute, and in San Francisco State University's multimedia studies program. She is the author of numerous how-to books and instructional videos, and is most known for co-founding one of the world's first online learning websites, lynda.com, in 1995. The company sold to LinkedIn in 2015, and is now called LinkedIn Learning. After an early retirement, Weinman chose to become a full-time artist, leading her to combine her technical skills and learn 3D printing using clay, plastic and resin. Her practice includes teaching and collaborations in a variety of mediums, with a focus on ceramics and digital fabrication.

Bruce Heavin is an artist, strategist and entrepreneur. As the chief creative officer & co-founder of lynda.com, his creative vision was integral to the company's success as a leader in online training. He created the company's iconic logo of his wife Lynda Weinman, designed many of the distinctive illustrations on the website and authored some of the site's first video tutorials in Photoshop, Illustrator, and After Effects. With an extensive background in illustration, photography and motion graphics, he has created illustrations for national publications as well as clients including Adobe, MSNBC and E! Entertainment Television.

Since 1960, UCSB Alumni has presented awards of achievement and recognition to outstanding alumni and friends of the university. Nominations are made by alumni, the Alumni Board of Directors, Valhalla, past award recipients, members of The UCSB Foundation, UCSB Deans and Department Heads and UCSB administrators. The nominee must be an alumnus, alumna or friend of UC Santa Barbara whose dedication and commitment has significantly enriched the substance and contributed to the reputation of UCSB as one of the nation's leading universities. The nominee must have attained significant professional or personal accomplishments;

demonstrated exceptional integrity and character; and must be able to attend the award ceremony.

The number of recipients varies from year to year depending on the pool of candidates and other circumstances. Past UCSB Alumni Award recipients include Rep. Lois Capps ’90, Steven M. Hilton ’74, and Jack ’97 and Kim Johnson ‘97.

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.