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Materials scientist and author Ainissa Ramirez to present on little-known inventors

Making complex scientific processes relatable is not easy, but done well, the experience is mesmerizing. Ainissa Ramirez does it masterfully.

The award-winning materials scientist, science communicator and author promotes a love of exploration in her books. Her most recent, “The Alchemy of Us,” showcases little-known inventors — particularly people of color and women — whose accomplishments are widely unknown.

Ramirez will discuss many of these contributions, from splicing beats (turn tables) to splicing genes (CRISPR), when she visits UC Santa Barbara as part of UCSB Arts & Lectures’ continuing series Justice for All. On Wednesday, Feb. 22, from 1–2 p.m. in 1010 Henley Hall, Ramirez will host a free pizza lunch and learn session on the topic “Diversity in STEM.” The following evening, Thursday, Feb. 23, at 7:30 p.m., in Campbell Hall, she will deliver a free illustrated presentation on the impact of women and people of color in science and engineering. Registration is recommended for both events.

Ramirez is the author of “The Alchemy of Us: How Humans and Matter Transformed One Another” and “Save Our Science: How to Inspire a New Generation of Scientists.” She also is co-author, with Allen St. John, of “Newton’s Football: The

Science Behind America’s Game.”

“We are delighted to have Ainissa Ramirez as part of our Justice for All programming initiative,” said Miller McCune Executive Director of Arts & Lectures Celesta M. Billeci. “She’s at the forefront of science communication and illuminates the hidden figures behind some of the world’s most important inventions from the perspective of a sophisticated materials scientist. Arts & Lectures expects that a broad range of students and faculty will benefit from hearing what this vibrant author and speaker has to say about creating opportunities for underrepresented people in science and engineering and ushering in a new generation of scientists.”

First launched in 2021, the Justice for All series centers ideas and insights about justice, broadening the campus’s examination of the topic. The series aims to confront inequalities and, through its presenters, to “advocate for a just, tolerant, open and socially inclusive world.”

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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.