

Students Say Thank You at Annual Hearts and Scholars Dinner Feb. 17

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When Diamant Shaw began her senior year at the University of California, San Diego, she made it a personal goal to find a niche on campus where she could make an impact. She found it in a unique research project that combines environmental studies and neighborhood after-school programs. The research allows her to work one-on-one with UC San Diego faculty members and teach K-12 students-enhancing her own education and positively impacting the local community. Thanks to generous scholarship support, Shaw has been able to continue this research for almost a year now.

Currently, Shaw is planning and implementing the "Environmental Stewardship Hub" curriculum for an after-school program in Vista called La Clase Magica. This includes an array of hands-on activities, from working with kids in an organic community garden to creating a website where students can participate in collaborative online learning activities.

"I love gardening and am passionate about the environment," said Shaw. "One of my favorite things about this research is that I get to share my passion with the kids while engaging them in larger environmental issues."

On Thursday, Feb. 17, at UC San Diego's annual Hearts and Scholars dinner, Shaw will have the opportunity to meet the person whose generosity has supported her research, and whose legacy has made it possible for her to establish her own.

Shaw is a recipient of the *David Marc Belkin Memorial Undergraduate Research Scholarship* -one of the very first undergraduate endowments at UC San Diego. Established in 1978, the fund honors alumnus David Marc Belkin, who died in a backpacking accident shortly after graduating in 1978. Belkin's friends and family remember him for his adventurous spirit and his passion for nature. To honor his memory, David's parents, Gerald and Rebecca Belkin, established an endowment (a fund to exist in perpetuity) to support undergraduate study in environmental and ecological issues.

"When my wife and I established the endowment, programs to support undergraduate research didn't really exist," said Gerald Belkin, M.D., a physician and member of the UC faculty. "It's very gratifying to see the program so successful, and to be able to meet some of the students and hear about what they are doing."

Since its inception, the Belkin scholarship has helped generations of students, like Shaw, advance their understanding of critical environmental issues, preparing them to take on society's most pressing ecological problems-and train future generations for the task.

"Receiving the Belkin Scholarship has really had a broad impact," said Shaw. "Not only have I learned a lot and gained a lot from the research experience, but I've been able to impact the education of dozens of children." Shaw continued: "I'm excited to meet Dr. Belkin at the Hearts and Scholars dinner and share with him what I've been doing in my research and the progress we've made."

The annual Hearts and Scholars dinner is an opportunity for donors and scholarship recipients to meet face-to-face and share their stories. In celebration of the university's landmark 50th Anniversary, this year's Hearts and Scholars dinner will honor the continuing legacy of four founding scholarships at UC San Diego: the *David Jay Gambia Memorial Scholarship*, in memory of UCSD student David Gambia; the *David Marc Belkin Undergraduate Research Scholarship*; the *Errett Bishop Scholarship*, honoring founding faculty member Errett Bishop; and the *Ray and Betty Ramseyer Scholarship*, honoring Ray Ramseyer, who is credited with initiating the private giving program at UC San Diego. Established decades ago, these scholarships continue to support undergraduate students today, and will continue to provide much needed support for promising students in the future.

Hearts and Scholars is an opportunity for students-and the university as a whole-to thank the legacy of private support that has helped UC San Diego achieve the extraordinary over the past 50 years. Given the state of California's current economic crisis and the threat of additional budget cuts to the University of California, private support is increasingly critical to ensuring that UC San Diego remains a world-class institution based on access, affordability and excellence. To learn more about supporting students at UC San Diego-and creating a legacy of impact for generations to come-please visit www.InventtheFuture.ucsd.edu.

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