

UC San Diego

UC San Diego News Center

By Erika Johnson and Judy Piercey

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(Left to Right) Cristina Della Coletta, dean of UC San Diego's Division of Arts and Humanities; Seth Lerer, UC San Diego professor of literature and recipient of the Alexander the Great Award from the Hellenic Cultural Society of San Diego; and Thespine Kavoulakis, Associate of the Chancellor, UC San Diego (spouse of UC San Diego Chancellor Pradeep K. Khosla).

UC San Diego's Division of Arts and Humanities Launches Center for Hellenic Studies

Anonymous donor gives \$1 million, hopes to inspire others to support the center

To deepen understanding and advance scholarship on Greek history, literature, archaeology and culture, UC San Diego's Division of Arts and Humanities has launched an academic Center for Hellenic Studies—a modern forum where local and international faculty, researchers and students can collaborate and study the Hellenic world. The Hellenic Cultural Society and its members have contributed to the center, including \$25,000 from the organization and a \$1 million gift from an anonymous donor to encourage and inspire additional support.

The new program is anchored by endowed faculty chairs in Ancient, Byzantine and Modern Greek history; UC San Diego is one of the first campuses in the nation to possess teaching and research positions for distinguished scholars in all three major Greek eras. The local Greek community was an instrumental force in garnering support—totaling \$1.5 million—to establish the Gerry and Jeannie Ranglas Chair in Ancient Greek History (2005); Alkiviadis Vassiliadis Chair in Byzantine Greek History (2005); and the Nicholas Family Endowed Chair in Modern Greek History (2008). In addition, the Hellenic Cultural Society donated more than 2,000 volumes of historical documents to the UC San Diego Library.



(Left to Right) Cristina Della Coletta, dean of the Division of Arts and Humanities; Carol Vassiliadis, member of the Hellenic Cultural Society of San Diego; and Thespine Kavoulakis, Associate of the Chancellor, UC San Diego (spouse of UC San Diego Chancellor Pradeep K. Khosla).

“The UC San Diego Center for Hellenic Studies will offer a unique way to examine the history, culture and physical remains of over 3,000 years of Greek history,” said Edward Watts, co-director of the center and holder of the Alkiviadis Vassiliadis Chair in Byzantine History at UC San Diego. “The new center will enable scholars to uncover a much deeper understanding of how Greeks lived and how Greek culture has developed over the millennia. In so doing, the center will become one of the preeminent tools to study the development of Western civilization.”

Added Thomas Gallant, co-director of the center and holder of the Nicholas Family Endowed Chair in Modern Greek History at UC San Diego, “By building on our unique scholarly research collections, the new center will draw together faculty, postdoctoral fellows and visiting professors from UC San Diego and around the globe, creating a vibrant academic community. Home to the largest Greek history graduate program in North America, UC San Diego is the ideal location for bridging the lay and academic communities locally and forging partnerships across the globe.”

Working collaboratively with the Hellenic Cultural Society of San Diego and other groups, the center will host seminars and conferences with local and international scholars as well as build upon the innovative work of faculty and students currently being done at UC San Diego.

“This year, we have become an official affiliate, and from now on everything we do will directly benefit the center,” said Alexia Anas, a UC San Diego art history alumna and president of the Hellenic Cultural Society of San Diego. “It is great to see UC San Diego dedicate a center where students can learn about the art, literature, architecture and history of the Hellenic world.”

An interdisciplinary space housed in the Arts and Humanities’ department of history, the center will serve as the nucleus of all teaching and research related to Greek studies at UC San Diego, connecting undergraduate students with pre- and postdoctoral researchers as well as faculty and visiting scholars. Students can enroll in courses covering topics such as religion and society in Early

Byzantium, the formation and development of Modern Greece, women in antiquity, the works of iconic philosophers like Plato, and more. The center will also host numerous graduate seminars as part of its international doctoral program. In addition, students at all levels can explore Greek history and archaeology at the center's summer program in Athens.

The Center for Hellenic Studies will feature an expansive digital archive detailing Greek history, people and settlement dispersion. Once completed, scholars will have access to high-definition renderings of Greek inscriptions, historical manuscripts, oral histories, archaeological surveys and more. The collection will be digitized and made public, allowing all who are interested in learning about the Hellenic world the opportunity to explore by date and region.

To help support UC San Diego's Center for Hellenic Studies, please [give now online](#), or contact Arts and Humanities Director of Development Michele Palma at (858) 534-9043 or mipalma@ucsd.edu.



Paul and Alexia Anas, UC San Diego art history alumna and president of the Hellenic Cultural Society of San Diego.

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