

March 24, 2017 | By Grace Sevilla

Exceptional UC San Diego Faculty to be Honored by Chancellor's Associates

The 43rd Faculty Excellence Awards Recognize exceptional teaching, research and service

Among a community of distinguished faculty, they are standouts in their chosen fields. They are educators and scholars who are passionate about pushing boundaries as they seek to create new ways of thinking and inspiring the next generation of trailblazers.

The six winners of the 2017 Faculty Excellence Awards will be recognized by the UC San Diego Chancellor's Associates at a ceremony to be held Thursday, April 6 at the Scripps Institution of Oceanography, in the Robert Paine Scripps Forum for Science, Society and the Environment.

"All of this year's award recipients have distinguished themselves as extraordinary scholars and mentors who have enriched the UC San Diego community through their dedicated pursuit of excellence, service to their students and commitment to inclusion," said Chancellor Pradeep K. Khosla.

The recipients of the 2017 Chancellor's Associates Faculty Excellence Awards are:

- **Stephanie Mel**, associate teaching professor of molecular biology, for excellence in undergraduate teaching;
- **Grant Kester**, professor of visual arts, for excellence in graduate teaching;
- **Richard Arneson**, distinguished professor of philosophy, for excellence in research in humanities and social sciences;
- **Victor Nizet**, professor and vice chair for basic research, department of pediatrics and professor of pharmacy and pharmaceutical sciences, for excellence in research in science and engineering;
- **Patricia Rincon**, senior lecturer of theatre and dance, for excellence in community service;
- **Babette Mangolte**, professor of visual arts, for excellence in performing and visual arts.

Honorees are nominated by their academic peers for their exemplary contributions to the university with final selection by members of the Chancellor's Associates, a group of donors recognized for their annual gifts to UC San Diego which support faculty research through programs like the Faculty Excellence Awards and scholarship support for undergraduate students through the Chancellor's

Associates Scholarship program. Winners are selected based on their academic achievements, reputation and impact on students and the academic community. Each awardee receives a commendation and an honorarium in the amount of \$2,500.

About the 2017 Chancellor's Associates Faculty Excellence Awards recipients:



Excellence in Undergraduate Teaching

Stephanie Mel

Associate Teaching Professor of Molecular Biology

A believer in experiential learning, Stephanie Mel has been striving to involve her UC San Diego undergraduate students in authentic field research for many years. Research conducted by her students has ranged from DNA barcoding of invertebrates to soil microbiome analysis to gene annotation. One course

that she designed and taught, “Research Explorations in Genomics,” resulted in undergraduate authorship on a publication in a peer-reviewed scientific journal. Mel is also recognized for her efforts to increase diversity at the university and for her commitment to mentoring transfer students. Her students give her high ratings for creating an “amazing” learning environment by sharing her enthusiasm for science and accommodating different learning styles with many types of assignments and course activities. “Stephanie Mel pioneered the development of the first science based course on diversity, equity and inclusion at UC San Diego. We expect it will inspire similar courses on other campuses as it is increasingly critical that scientists consider the ethical and societal implications of their work,” said Kit J. Pogliano, chair of the molecular biology department.



Excellence in Graduate Teaching

Grant Kester

Professor of Visual Arts

An internationally recognized art historian and highly cited critic of public art, Grant Kester is also a committed educator. As the former chair of the visual arts department, Kester was a chief architect of the Ph.D. program. He has mentored many graduate students who have gone on to work as art producers,

historians, theorists, curators and critics. Students and colleagues praise him as an outstanding teacher who is devoted to giving his students feedback as well as overseeing their independent studies and doctoral work. He served as past director of the University Art Gallery and received a UC San Diego Academic Senate Distinguished Teaching Award in 2006.

“He represents the dream combination for many students in that he is able to teach from his cutting-edge research, allowing students to encounter and debate major new ideas,” said Kuiyi Shen, a visual arts professor who nominated Kester for the award. “He is notably engaged with graduate students, giving time for studio visits and consultations, taking on numerous independent studies, and serving on a staggering total of 20 Ph.D. committees.”



Excellence in Research in Humanities and Social Sciences

Richard Arneson

Distinguished Professor of Philosophy

Since joining the faculty in 1973, Richard Arneson’s research and teaching has focused on the social and political consequences of inequality. He is among the leading scholars on the

subject of distributive justice—the question of how resources and burdens are justly apportioned across persons, in one society and across societies. His concept of “luck egalitarianism”—which compensates for inequalities due to genuine luck but not those due to choice—has generated heated debate over the last decade. He challenges students to think critically about ethical issues and the meaning and practical application of justice, inclusiveness and diversity. Among the most prolific of philosophy scholars today, he has published more than 114 papers in highly competitive academic journals.

“It is hard to overstate how important Richard Arneson’s work on the just distribution of societal resources has been,” said Jonathan Cohen, philosophy professor and department chair. “His philosophical work has been influential in economics, political science, law and healthcare. His numerous fundamental contributions place him among the top handful or so of moral and political philosophers in the world.”



Excellence in Research in Science and Engineering

Victor Nizet

Professor and vice chair for basic research, department of pediatrics and professor of pharmacy and pharmaceutical sciences

A physician-scientist, Victor Nizet is recognized internationally as a leader in the fields of microbial pathogenesis, innate immunity and innovative approaches to infectious disease therapy. He heads

one of the largest research laboratories on campus. Since joining the faculty in 1997, Nizet has helped

put UC San Diego at the forefront of microbiome sciences, systems biology of infectious diseases and anti-infective drug discovery through strategic recruiting and by bringing together collaborators from multiple disciplines. He has mentored several dozen postdoctoral scholars and graduate students to advance in their careers to academic faculty positions or leadership roles. Among his many National Institutes of Health grants, Nizet is co-recipient with Bernhard O. Palsson, professor of bioengineering, of a \$9.5 million award to establish an interdisciplinary center on the systems biology of antibiotic resistance.

“Victor Nizet’s research has led to numerous industry collaborations and technologies advancing new antibiotic and immune-based therapies to combat drug-resistant pathogens. Major discoveries from his laboratory have inspired extensive media coverage and commentary in important scientific journals,” said Palsson.



Excellence in Community Service

Patricia Rincon

Senior Lecturer in Theatre and Dance

Bringing our region’s cross-border culture to light via dance has been Patricia Rincon’s passion since joining UC San Diego in 1976. Her teaching is enriched through her worldwide professional work as a choreographer, guest artist and lecturer. As artistic director of the Patricia Rincon Dance Collective, she is known for adventurous programming and cultural investigations using multi-media, live music and performance art. Her projects include the Blurred Borders International Dance Festival and the immigration documentary film series, “Latino Now: Landscape of Desire.” Her interest in K-12 education led to the research and publication of “Physical Activity in Youth Dance Classes” in the journal of the American Academy of Pediatrics. In 2016, she received the KPBS Hispanic Heritage Month Local Heroes Project Life Achievement Award.

“Patricia Rincon’s history as a teaching artist has deep roots,” said Allan Havis, a professor in the department of theatre and dance who nominated her for the award. “Developing outreach opportunities for our campus and department has been an important element of her vision. Professor Rincon has distinguished herself as a model artist, mentor, educator and community benefactor for cultural enrichment straddling international borders.”

Excellence in Performing and Visual Arts

Babette Mangolte

Professor of Visual Arts



As a trailblazing avant garde cinematographer and photographer, Babette Mangolte is one of the most celebrated artist film makers in academia. Her work intersects the worlds of dance,

performance art and experimental film. Since 1979, she has shared her deeply intellectual passion for film making and artistic collaboration with countless UC San Diego students and inspired many to continue their own visual arts careers. She has helped elevate the

graduate media program to among the top in the nation. Mangolte is one of the first women to be recognized as a major cinematographer. Her work is in the permanent collections of the Centre Pompidou in Paris, Tate Modern in London, Museum of Modern Art in New York and Instituto Inhotim in Brazil.

“Babette Mangolte is a film maker, cinematographer, installation artist and photographer of international importance,” said Jack Greenstein, professor and chair of the visual arts department. “She has not only enriched the medium of film itself, but by working as a cinematographer and editor, she has helped expand our understanding of film as the product of collaborative artistic activity.”

For more information on Chancellor’s Associates, please visit www.chancellorsassociates.ucsd.edu.

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