

Chancellor: Diversity Critical to Campus Success



Photos by Erik Jepsen/UC San Diego Publications

Diversity, inclusivity and community were the focal points of a reception Tuesday night in Southeast San Diego where Chancellor Pradeep K. Khosla was formally introduced to the rich culture and history of San Diego's African American community.

At the event—designed to explore ways to strengthen UC San Diego's ties with the community—Khosla served as keynote speaker and took questions from the audience, which included business leaders, community organizers, educators, students and local residents. The event was part of the Making Connections plan to introduce the Chancellor to the campus and community.

"I want to see our diversity improve—and not just numbers," he said. "I want our campus to be a more inclusive and welcoming place where every one of your kids and your neighbors' kids can imagine themselves belonging and succeeding at UC San Diego."



He added that any university, especially UC San Diego, plays a role to make the community a better place.

“Going forward, I want this relationship [with the community] to be stronger,” Khosla said. “I want the community to feel welcome and to come to UC San Diego.” Khosla also encouraged members of the audience to visit the campus to take part in our rich cultural and artistic programs.

Prior to the reception, Khosla toured the Elementary Institute of Science in Southeast San Diego with members of UC San Diego’s Black Student Union. The Institute is dedicated to providing K-12 students with hands-on experiences to stimulate appreciation and understanding of science, technology and the environment.

“What you do here makes our jobs possible,” Khosla explained to Doris Anderson, executive director of the Elementary Institute of Science.

Khosla and Anderson also discussed the importance of diversity in the classroom.

“We were established to serve the underserved,” Anderson said. “We want to make sure all students have a fair shot of getting an education here. Students need to see how society works...it’s not all one color.”

Following the tour, Khosla visited the Jacobs Center for Neighborhood Innovation, where the welcome reception was held. The center is a partnership with the Joseph and Violet Jacobs Family Foundation and residents of San Diego’s Diamond Neighborhoods, designed to build a stronger community.

“This is my first visit here, but I guarantee it will not be my last,” Khosla said. “I want to keep this dialogue going.”

Khosla discussed how he is in the initial stages of developing the campus’s strategic plan.

“The last 50 years have been spectacular,” he said. “We want to imagine who we are and where we want to be in the next 50 years...I want you to tell me how we should imagine what UC San Diego will be. We want this to be a partnership. I want you to look at UC San Diego and say that you had something to do with it.”



In response to a question from the audience about how UC San Diego can better prepare students for the workforce, Khosla discussed the importance of providing students with a comprehensive college education that integrates both the arts and sciences.

“By the time students graduate, they should be able to use the left and right brain simultaneously to solve problems and to work with people of all races and cultures—that is what we should strive for,” he said. “If we are a diverse place, students will have a better experience. Without that, we will fail.”



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