

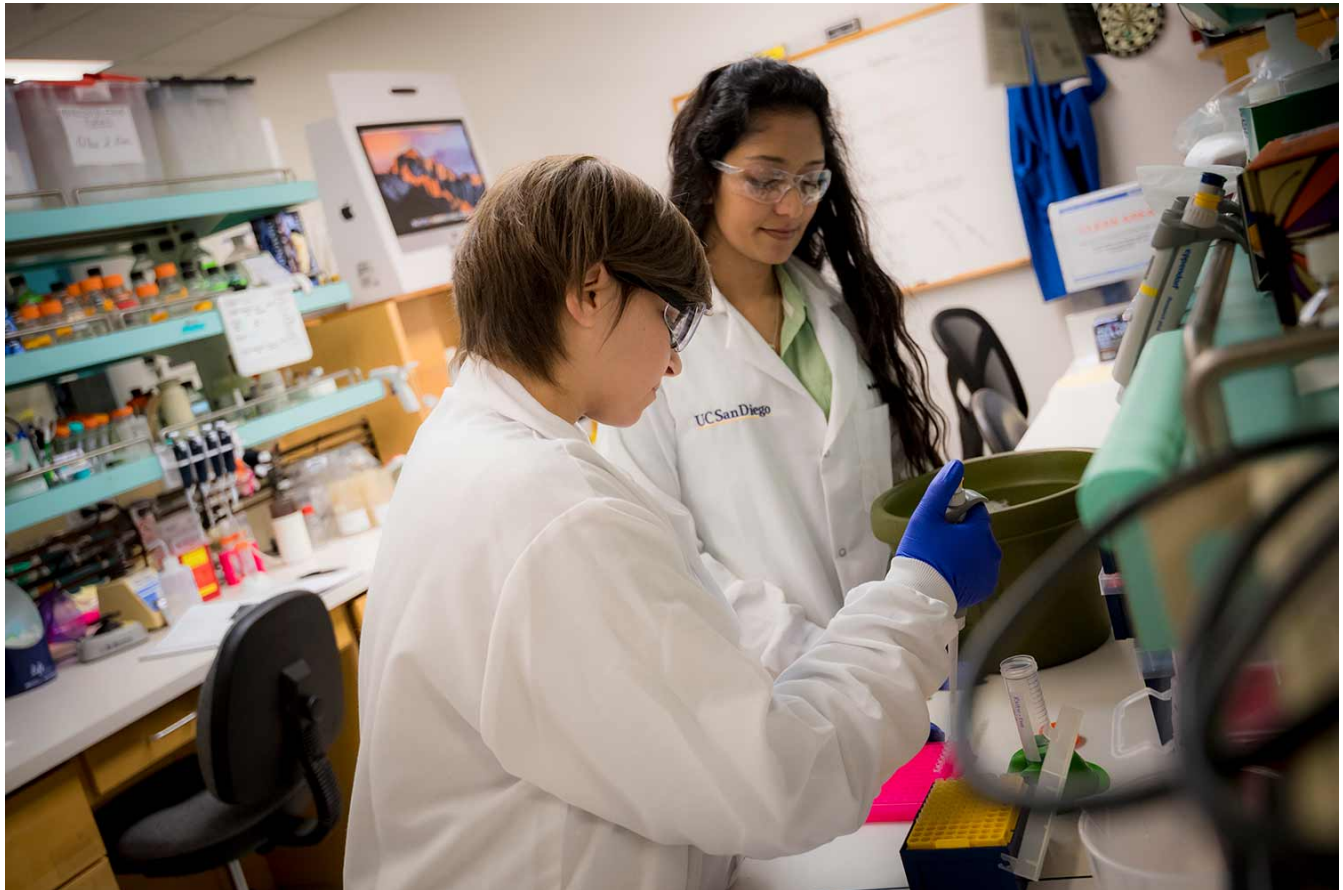
UC San Diego

# UC San Diego News Center

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By Judy Piercey

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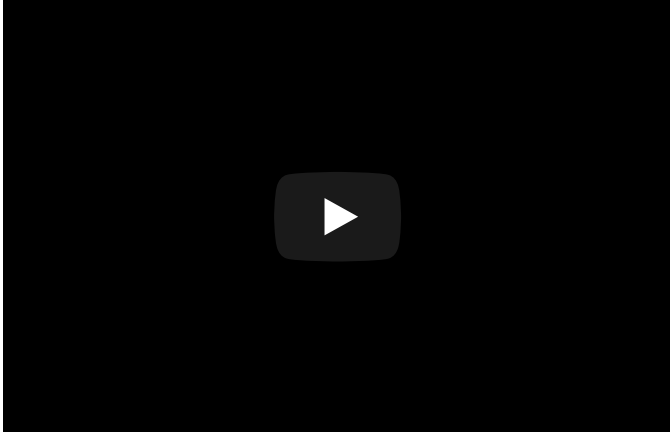
*UC San Diego is one of the world's greatest producers of technology, medical innovations and scientific knowledge. Photo by Erik Jepsen/UC San Diego Publications*

## UC San Diego Launches Institute to Address Ethics of Today's Innovation

**Designer babies, driverless cars and modified mosquitoes may be boundary-breaking, but moral quandaries these advances create can raise controversy**

To help close the gap between the pace of innovation and society's ability to deal with these advances responsibly, the University of California San Diego—one of the world's greatest producers of technology, medical innovations and scientific knowledge—has launched the [Institute for Practical](#)

Ethics. Loyal campus donors Joel and Ann Reed have committed to providing generous annual gifts to support the institute in the near term, and to create a \$1 million endowment for permanent support in the future. The gifts will be included in the Campaign for UC San Diego.



Hosted in the Division of Arts and Humanities, the mission of the Institute for Practical Ethics is to develop and promote cross-disciplinary research on ethical issues facing the public, with special emphasis on fostering deliberation amongst ethicists, scientists and policymakers.

“The Institute for Practical Ethics is an innovative initiative devoted to science for the common good,” said UC San Diego Chancellor Pradeep K. Khosla. “By leveraging our unique strengths in the humanities, natural sciences and social sciences, UC San Diego will become a leading voice on the ethics and social impact of cutting-

edge science.”

This initiative is of special interest to the Reeds. “As UC San Diego and other institutions move rapidly forward in medical, scientific and technological innovation, important ethical questions emerge,” said Ann Reed. “It is critical that scientists and humanists move forward together. Ethical questions should be investigated, and practical applications created as humans advance, so that the advancement will be ethical.”

In its inaugural year, the institute will lead engagement in the ethics and social impact of cutting-edge science, leveraging UC San Diego’s strengths in the humanities, natural sciences and social sciences. First up: researching the social implications of “active genetics,” in collaboration with the newly established Tata Institute for Genetics and Society.

“The Institute for Practical Ethics is not devoted to dictating outcomes; it is devoted to conversations about informed choice,” explained *Arts and Humanities Dean Cristina Della Coletta*. “How do we make the choices we make? What are the consequences of some of the actions we take? What are the outcomes, either intended or



*UC San Diego Biology Professor Ethan Bier is working with colleagues evaluating the social implications of active genetics in the newly established Tata Institute for Genetics and Society. Photo by Erik Jepsen/UC San Diego Publications*

unintended, that come out of amazing scientific and technological discoveries? These are some of the interesting and challenging conversations that the Institute for Practical Ethics hopes to address in the years to come.”

The Institute for Practical Ethics is devoted to developing socially responsible science. UC San Diego faculty members Craig Callender, a philosopher, and John Evans, a sociologist, are the inaugural co-directors of the institute. Callender has written extensively in the philosophy of science and has taught environmental ethics for more than 20 years. Evans focuses his research on how bioethical decisions are made, and the public’s views of medical and scientific innovation, particularly concerning human genetics.

The institute will host speakers, convene interdisciplinary research groups and create publicly available analysis of cutting edge ethical issues. Until the endowed gift is funded, the Reeds will make annual gifts each year to support some of the envisioned programs.



*The Reed family is providing generous support to the new Institute for Practical Ethics at UC San Diego. Credit: Provided by Ann Reed*

The Reeds have given to a variety of programs at UC San Diego over the years, including the endowment of a faculty chair in the Department of Music as well as supporting the Jacobs Medical Center, UC San Diego Student Foundation and the Stuart Collection, among other areas.

Why do they give? Ann Reed explains, “UC San Diego is a remarkable place, recognized globally as one of the world’s foremost institutions in numerous areas of scientific inquiry, development of technologies and creation of contemporary music. We believe it is hard to find better value for one’s philanthropic dollars.”

To learn more about the UC San Diego Institute for Practical Ethics, including giving opportunities, please visit the [website](#). Information about the Campaign for UC San Diego can be found [here](#).

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