

UCSD Selected to Participate in Car-Sharing Program for Undergrads

August 23, 2006

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The University of California, San Diego is one of six universities across the country selected to participate in a new program which offers car sharing to students under age 21, a group which comprises the largest portion of campus populations but is limited in the ability to rent cars or secure on-site parking for privately owned vehicles.

The pilot "Flexcar for Undergrads" program, operated by Flexcar, will begin at UCSD Sept. 1 with four vehicles placed on campus for students 18 to 20 years old to use whenever needed. Noted Brian D'Autremont, director of Transportation and Parking Services, "the program allows students to forget car payments, oil changes and parking fees. Instead, they get insurance, unlimited miles, gas, 24-hour assistance and a reserved parking space on campus.

"Approximately 42 percent of all commuters to UCSD use some form of alternative transportation, including bikes, train, buses or vanpools," said D'Autremont. "We see this program as helping to further reduce emissions, ease congestion and decrease the need for more parking spaces."

Other participants in the program include UCLA, UC Berkeley, the University of Portland (Ore.), University of Maryland and Emory University.

UCSD partnered with Flexcar in April to provide a car sharing service for faculty and staff, and in only three months, D'Autremont said, the program has been a phenomenal success. Under the program, UCSD Transportation and Parking Services provides employees who do not have a parking permit and have signed up for the service up to six hours per month of free Flexcar usage.

The University of California, San Diego is a leader in the implementation of green practices across all levels of campus operation-from energy management programs that apply cutting edge technology to alternative transportation programs that dramatically reduce air pollution levels on campus and in the region. To underscore its commitment to reducing its carbon footprint and encouraging a conservation ethic, UC San Diego established the Environment and Sustainability Initiative (ESI) in 2005 to both organize and facilitate the university's substantial research focused on environmental challenges and issues and harness this academic prowess to enhance campus sustainability.

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