

UC San Diego

UC San Diego News Center

By Jade Griffin

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Tata Institute for Genetics and Society Advances with Building Naming, Inaugural Chair Holders



Chancellor Pradeep K. Khosla welcomes audience members to the Sept. 12 dedication of Tata Hall for the Sciences, a new building for the Divisions of Biological and Physical Sciences. Photos by Erik Jepsen/UC San Diego Publications

UC San Diego celebrated the dedication of a new building for the divisions of Biological and Physical Sciences on Sept. 12 with a special announcement. The cutting-edge science building will bear the name Tata Hall for the Sciences, or Tata Hall, in recognition of a

\$70 million gift from the Tata Trusts, which was committed last year to create the binational Tata Institute for Genetics and Society.

The Tata Institute for Genetics and Society, established as a collaborative partnership between the university and research operations in India, will occupy the fifth floor of Tata Hall. The institute's mission is the advancement of global science and technology through socially conscious means to develop solutions to some of the world's most pressing challenges, from public health to agriculture.



Ratan Tata (center) celebrated the building's dedication with Chancellor Khosla and members of the new Tata Institute for Genetics and Society.

“It is my privilege to dedicate this building in recognition of the Tata Trusts’ leadership and collaboration with UC San Diego, and the Tata family’s pioneering philanthropy and singular impact to bring about societal change,” said UC San Diego Chancellor Pradeep K. Khosla. “Tata Hall exemplifies UC San Diego’s tradition of non-tradition, inspiring cross-disciplinary collaboration among researchers and the next generation of innovators. This building will embody the spirit of the many shared values of UC San Diego and the Tata Trusts to benefit our global society.”

Trustees of the Tata Trusts were on hand at the dedication of Tata Hall and participated in the ceremonial signing of a beam that will be incorporated into the construction. The building is slated for completion in 2018.



Ratan Tata, chairman of Tata Trusts, puts his signature on a construction beam that will become part of Tata Hall, slated to be completed in fall 2018.

“I am very proud of being associated with this great institution,” said Tata Trusts Chairman Ratan N. Tata, who recounted his thoughts from when he first visited UC San Diego. “I realized that here in San Diego, I had seen a gold mine of intellectual capacity and enthusiasm. I kept feeling that there is something happening at UC San Diego that would make a difference in the years ahead. What we are doing is a big thing for mankind in our part of the world ... and I look forward to this involvement as just a first part of what we can do together.”

New Faculty Chair Holders Announced

Further underscoring the growing impact and scope of the Tata Institute for Genetics and Society, UC San Diego also announced the four inaugural chair holders of the Tata Chancellor's Endowed Professorships. These chairs are the first in a series of 10 endowed faculty chairs that were established by UC San Diego to attract and retain top scientists and faculty focused on research that aligns with the institute's goals.

The inaugural chair holders include:

- **Suresh Subramani**

Tata Chancellor's Endowed Professorship in Molecular Biology

A distinguished professor of Molecular Biology at UC San Diego, Suresh Subramani holds the Tata Chancellor's Endowed Professorship in Molecular Biology. Subramani serves as the global director of the Tata Institute for Genetics and Society. In that role, he is working to advance the

infrastructure of the binational institute, a role that includes recruitment of scholars, staff and postdocs, as well as working with the government in India on policies related to the institute. He also represents UC San Diego on the UN Convention on Biological Diversity to discuss and shape international policies governing gene drive technologies.

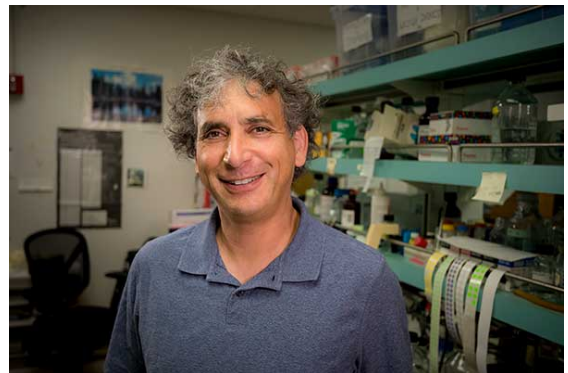


- **Ethan Bier**

Tata Chancellor's Endowed Professorship in Cell and Developmental Biology

Ethan Bier is a professor of Cell and Developmental Biology at UC San Diego and holds the Tata Chancellor's Endowed Professorship in Cell and Developmental Biology. Bier and Valentino Gantz pioneered the

development of the gene-editing technology termed "active genetics," which has the potential to become a powerful tool in controlling vector-borne diseases, improving pest-resistant crops and enabling new forms of cell therapy. As active genetics is a key research focus of the Tata Institute of Genetics and



Society, Bier is tasked with overseeing the scientific efforts within the Tata Institute of Genetics and Society at UC San Diego. He also will serve in an advisory role for the collaborative work taking place in India.

- **Karthik Muralidharan**

Tata Chancellor's Endowed Professorship in Economics

Karthik Muralidharan is an associate professor of Economics at UC San Diego, where he now holds the Tata Chancellor's Endowed Professorship in Economics. Muralidharan is a development economist whose research focuses on improving education, health, and the design and delivery of anti-poverty programs and policies in developing countries, with a focus on India. He is also actively involved in translating evidence into policy and serves as an Honorary Advisor to the Government of India. As a Tata Chancellor's Endowed Chair holder, Muralidharan will help to design socially and ethically prudent approaches to deploying the outputs of active genetics research in real-world settings.



- **Anita Raj**

Tata Chancellor's Endowed Professorship in Medicine

Holder of the Tata Chancellor's Endowed Professorship in Medicine, Anita Raj is director of UC San Diego's Center on Gender Equity and Health in the Department of Medicine. She is also a professor of Education Studies in the Division of Social Sciences. Trained as a development psychologist, Raj has worked in global public health for over two decades, with a focus on public health issues in India for more than 10 years. Raj's work will support the Tata Institute for Genetics and Society, providing and fostering an understanding of India's public health system and epidemiology related to vector-borne diseases in the country. She will also help develop social, behavioral and public health scientists in India in the areas of measurement and evaluation, epidemiology, and social and behavioral theories and their application to public health.



To learn more about the Tata Institute for Genetics and Society, visit tigs.ucsd.edu.

