

June 13, 2011 | By Kim Wenrick

UC San Diego Charts Significant Progress in Diversity Efforts During Its 50th Anniversary Year

From artwork to outreach, the University of California, San Diego continues to institute programs and policies aimed at enhancing campus climate and welcoming a diverse community. The Chicano Legacy 40 Años mural is now a permanent fixture on campus, the summer “Focus on the Future” program will be expanded to include students and teachers from three San Diego high schools in addition to participants from Compton High School, and the 2010-2011 freshmen and transfers and admissions for the 2011-2012 academic year yielded record increases in underrepresented student populations.

“I am very proud that our UC San Diego community continues to remove barriers to academic success for underrepresented students and carries on its work to ensure a positive and welcoming campus climate for everyone,” said Chancellor Marye Anne Fox. “I am pleased to see robust diversity-related efforts all across campus, from our administration to our classrooms to our university-wide celebrations.”

The inaugural Teaching Diversity Conference was held on campus Jan. 27. The conference brought together specialists from varying disciplines such as history, visual arts, psychology and linguistics to network, share ideas and learn about best practices. Participants discussed topics such as privilege and discrimination, celebration of cultures and the UC San Diego Principles of Community. Conceived and led by James Lin, professor of mathematics, the event was designed to show that many people at the university have been deeply committed to resolving diversity issues on campus for more than 20 years.

One of the signature events of the 50th Anniversary celebration was Innovation Day Expo and Symposia (IDEaS), held February 22-25. Featuring a series of presentations on social and cultural innovation, topics ranged from “UC San Diego’s Innovative Approach to Diversity and Social Justice” to “Who Are You? The Changing Face of America.”

Reviving an old tradition, the Native American Student Alliance (NASA) hosted a Powwow on campus on May 21, the first on campus since the early 90s. With the support of several sponsors, including the American Indian Faculty and Staff Association, Powwow brought together Native American and non-Native American people to dance, sing, socialize and honor American Indian Culture. The theme was “Kumeyaay: Past, Present and Future.”

This spring, the university took part in the national Diverse Learning Environments survey to poll students on their perceptions of a range of factors that contribute to campus climate. The survey was conducted through the Higher Education Research Institute at UCLA. The responses will assist UC San Diego in assessing its diversity-related progress and help refine future plans.

UC San Diego is committed to providing a diverse and welcoming campus climate for all students, faculty and staff.

In May, Melanie Cruz was appointed interim director of Development for Diversity to plan and implement strategies for the identification, cultivation, solicitation, negotiation and stewardship of major gift prospects. Significant progress has been made on fundraising for Chicano/a Latino/a Arts & Humanities Minor and African American Studies Minor, student-led yield initiatives and OASIS/Summer Bridge, which is designed to acclimate new students from economically disadvantaged backgrounds—many of whom will be the first in their families to attend college—to the academic, social and cultural life at the university. In addition, support for student outreach and access to historically underrepresented and lower-income transfer students from community colleges in the San Diego and Imperial Valley region are part of the director’s responsibilities. A diversity giving webpage has been launched to offer information to donors and access to easy online giving.

Following campus and community consultation, the position of vice chancellor for Equity, Diversity and Inclusion was established and a national search has begun for an experienced leader to guide the university’s diversity initiatives. The full-time vice chancellor position will have direct responsibility for a range of diversity offices and activities for faculty, staff and students. The shift to a full-time diversity leader comes as Dr. Sandra Daley, who has served as associate chancellor and chief diversity officer in addition to her half-time position as professor of pediatrics in the School of Medicine, concludes her three-year term as chief diversity officer June 30. The new vice chancellor will be supported by an Advisory Council representing campus constituencies and will be responsible for building on existing diversity plans to develop and implement a campus-wide strategy on equity, diversity and inclusion.

A new UC San Diego standing advisory committee on the diversity requirement has been formed and has been meeting to define and implement the requirement. A preliminary list of approximately 30 to 40 courses, already taught on campus, have been approved as fulfilling the requirement and existing and new courses will be reviewed in the future. In addition, the provosts have committed to boost their efforts to stress the value and importance of diversity during orientation. The provosts, alongside faculty, staff and students, have identified creative and engaging ways to make an articulate and forceful statement to our new students (both freshmen and transfers) during the orientation process about the critical importance of diversity, sensitivity and tolerance on our campus.

Fox added, “As we conclude our 50th Anniversary celebration and the academic year, we thank our graduates for their contributions to enhance our campus climate. We are a university that recognizes, in words and deeds, that incorporating a spectrum of backgrounds, interests and points of view into the fabric of campus life is essential to our success for the next 50 years.”

To view the progress that UC San Diego has made in addressing the diversity and campus climate initiatives, please visit the campus climate website.

UC San Diego’s [Studio Ten 300](#) offers radio and television connections for media interviews with our faculty, which can be coordinated via studio@ucsd.edu. To connect with a UC San Diego faculty expert on relevant issues and trending news stories, visit <https://ucsdnews.ucsd.edu/media-resources/faculty-experts>.