

May 16, 2013 | By Laura Margoni

UC San Diego Energy Leader to Help Develop Sustainable Resources on the Island of Lānaʻi

The University of California, San Diego and Lānaʻi Resorts, LLC, announced today that Byron Washom, director of Strategic Energy Initiatives at UC San Diego, will lead a new initiative to transform the Hawaiian island of Lānaʻi into a model for sustainable energy. In his role as chief architect, Washom will work with Lānaʻi Resorts, LLC, to oversee development of an electricity microgrid that will be powered by renewable energy sources and a desalination plant that will augment the island's supply of fresh water.



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UC San Diego has granted Washom a 40 percent reduction in his appointment for nine months so that he may pursue this opportunity. While his time at the university will be reduced, Washom will continue to oversee the entire portfolio of funded research activities on the microgrid at UC San Diego, which generates more than 90 percent of the campus' electricity.

"This is a terrific opportunity for Byron to share his expertise and experience to make his home state of Hawaii more sustainable," said Gary Matthews, vice chancellor of Resource Management and Planning. "The work he has done here building up the UC San Diego microgrid will translate directly to what he will be doing in Lānaʻi."

The renewable energy and desalination initiatives are part of Lānaʻi Resorts' and the Lānaʻi community's comprehensive approach to managing and conserving energy, water and land resources and help to ensure a sustainable future for its residents.

The UC San Diego microgrid self-generates more than 90 percent of the campus' electricity using the world's largest commercially available fuel cell and 1.5 MW of solar panels. The microgrid has contributed to a number of awards for the university including:

- EPA Energy Star Award for achieving 66 percent efficiency for combined cooling, heating and natural gas power plant;
 - 1st Annual Climate Leadership Award for Institutional Excellence from the American College & University Presidents' Climate Commitment Group;
 - Gold STARS Rating from AASHE – UC San Diego was the first California university and the tenth university in the nation to receive the award from the Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education;
 - State Leadership In Clean Energy (SLICE),^(PDF) from Clean Energy States Alliance awarded to the California Energy Commission for funding clean energy projects at UC San Diego.
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