

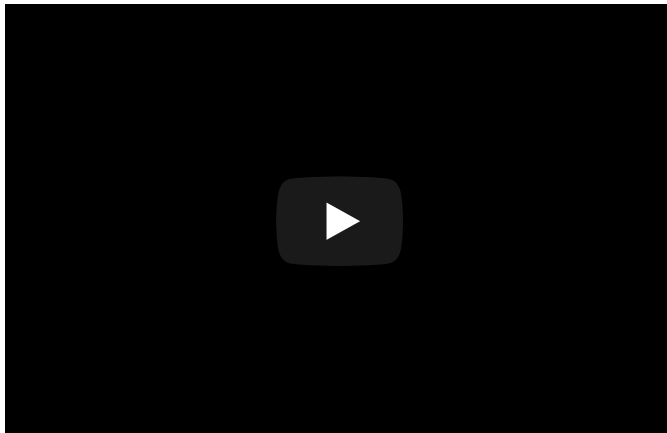
Out to Change the World

UC San Diego to Host Ashoka U Exchange in 2019

UC San Diego leaders recently embarked on a “changemaking” mission to Boston, accepting the campus’ official designation as a Changemaker Campus by Ashoka, the world’s largest network of social entrepreneurs. The designation ceremony was hosted by Babson College as part of the annual Ashoka U Exchange.

Following the designation ceremony, where Executive Vice Chancellor Elizabeth H. Simmons accepted the award on behalf of the campus, Ashoka announced that UC San Diego will host next year’s Ashoka U Exchange, one of the largest international gatherings on social innovation in higher education, from Feb. 21 to 23, 2019.

As part of the Ashoka U Exchange, hundreds of educators, students, entrepreneurs and philanthropists from around the globe will convene to share ideas on how to turn colleges and universities into hubs of social innovation.



“We are honored to welcome fellow changemakers from around the globe as part of next year’s Ashoka U Exchange,” said Chancellor Pradeep K. Khosla. “Driving positive change and social innovation is part of our DNA at UC San Diego, so hosting the annual international gathering is an ideal fit for our campus.”

Because UC San Diego’s faculty, staff and students are constantly seeking to push boundaries and spur change that will make the world a better place, UC San Diego was selected by Ashoka as one of only 43 universities worldwide to be a Changemaker

Campus. We are the only campus in the UC system with the honor.

From research to solve the world's biggest problems to creating organizations that address important social issues, here what just a few of our campus changemakers are doing:

Jennifer Burney

Jennifer Burney, an environmental scientist and assistant professor at UC San Diego's School of Global Policy and Strategy, focuses her research on simultaneously achieving global food security and mitigating climate change. Her research examines the way in which climate impacts the food ecosystem and the ways in which food production, consumption and processing in turn impact the climate.

Burney designs, implements and evaluates technologies for poverty alleviation and agricultural adaption, and studies the links between "energy poverty"—the lack of access to modern energy services—and food or nutrition security. Much of her current research focuses on the developing world, with a special interest in short-lived climate pollutants (SLCPs) and the role that mitigation of these compounds can play in meeting both climate and food security objectives.



"To me, being a changemaker is being able to communicate my findings to those who are in positions to make important policy decisions, and to those in the next generation, who will ultimately become stewards of our planet," said Burney.

Sadaf Chaudry

A senior undergraduate student studying human biology, Sadaf Chaudry co-founded Homeless Health and Empowerment Across Learning (Homeless HEAL), a nonprofit student organization that delivers health education to the homeless. While volunteering in emergency departments, Chaudry recognized a pattern of homeless families frequently coming in to hospitals for chronic diseases and other non-emergency health concerns. They were often discharged back into the same circumstances without the resources to properly manage their health.



With this in mind, Chaudry established Homeless HEAL with co-founder Omar Sahial, who graduated from UC San Diego last year. The organization's mission is to empower the homeless community with the education they need to make better health decisions and improve their health outcomes.

The organization trains college students to become educators who can help provide those in need with knowledge—both from a scientific and cultural perspective—that will help them make better decisions related to their health and well-being.

“By training student educators, we will continue to help the underserved while creating opportunities for service and leadership to students who are interested in making a difference in the community,” said Chaudry, who will go on to attend UC San Diego School of Medicine next year.

Cliff Kapon

Chemistry doctoral candidate Cliff Kapon combined his passions for science and surfing with the Surfer Biome Project. As part of a nine-month expedition, the native Hawaiian collected hundreds of chemical samples from surfers across five continents.

The data Kapon collected is now part of the American Gut Project, the world’s largest crowdsourced citizen science project, which is based out of the lab of Professor Robert Knight, who also serves as director of the [UC San Diego Center for Microbiome Innovation](#) (part of the White House’s National Microbiome Initiative).

Microbiome research undertaken at UC San Diego has helped establish that the bacteria living in and on our bodies are critical contributors to human and environmental health.

“I hope that through the Surfer Biome Project, we will be able to understand more about our relationship to a specific place based on the types of bacteria and chemicals found on our bodies from that area,” said Kapon.

Food allergies, obesity, colon cancer and many other conditions have been linked to alterations in the human microbiome. Growing evidence suggests gut microbes also influence the brain, potentially affecting mood, behavior and psychiatric illnesses such as schizophrenia.

To learn more about UC San Diego’s changemaking efforts, visit changemaker.ucsd.edu.



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