

UC San Diego's Hellman Fellows Program: Stewarding Young Faculty Toward Tenure Track

December 8, 2005

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In 1995 with a gift of \$2.5 million, Chris and Warren Hellman generously funded a novel idea to help young faculty members at UCSD grow and succeed in their careers. Now in its 10th year, UCSD's Hellman Fellows Program recently named 13 assistant professors as Hellman Faculty Fellows, awarding a total of \$120,000 to support their research and creative activities.

The Hellmans fund similar programs at five other universities, but the very first Hellman Fellows Program was launched at UCSD. The program is designed to provide financial support and encouragement to young faculty who show capacity for great distinction in their research and other scholarly efforts in the core disciplines. With declines in state funding, private faculty research funds are important support in helping UCSD to attract and retain the nation's very best young professors and researchers.

"This fellowship made it possible for me to move forward with a project that I've had in mind for a number of years," said Hellman Fellow Shahrokh Yadegari, professor of Theatre and Dance in UCSD's Division of Arts & Humanities. "Our production opened in November at the Japan America Theater in Los Angeles. This very professional collaboration involving other faculty and a number of students wouldn't have happened without Hellman support."

"Building a strong junior faculty is a key priority at any university," said Warren Hellman, a graduate of UC Berkeley and chairman of Hellman and Friedman LLC, a private equity firm. "UCSD has done a wonderful job in fulfilling the mission of the Hellman Faculty Fellows Awards by stewarding its young faculty members toward the tenure track."

The program fills an important need in academia by providing UCSD faculty members support as they strive for tenure, including funds to pursue research that helps to build credibility. Thanks to Chris and Warren Hellman, funding is in place to carry the program forward for many years.

UCSD's program has named 106 Hellman Fellows to date. Of the award recipients, 47 Hellman Fellows have since received tenure at UCSD, while an impressive 96 percent have remained in academia.

Added Warren Hellman, "We are pleased to help these assistant professors succeed in their careers, and carry on UCSD's reputation for excellence."

"The Hellmans are wonderful people," said Yadegari. "Meeting them was quite inspirational. What they're doing really comes from the heart."

For more information about the UC San Diego Hellman Fellows Program, please contact Susan Shiomi-Cobas at (858) 53 4-7140, or Lynda Heaney at (858) 82 2-3041.

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