

UCSD awards and honors in natural sciences

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UCSD SCIENTIST HONORED BY AMERICAN CHEMICAL SOCIETY

K.C. Nicolaou, professor of chemistry and biochemistry at UCSD, was honored by the American Chemical Society for his work in developing compounds from nature into promising pharmaceuticals. The 1996 Ernest Guenther Award in Chemistry of Natural Products, sponsored by Givaudan-Roure Corp., was presented to him March 26 at the society's annual national meeting in New Orleans.

Nicolaou, a synthetic organic chemist at UCSD and the Scripps Research Institute, currently studies several molecules that demonstrate therapeutic potential. Among the chemicals he's studied are calicheamicin, a compound first extracted from bacteria in rocks that is active against cancer; and rapamycin, found in bacteria from Easter Island, which may be useful in preventing rejection seen in organ transplants.

His lab also has worked out a synthesis for taxol, reducing the need to strip the bark of the Pacific yew tree for this anticancer substance; his group also has designed a water-soluble, less toxic version of taxol that is now being developed by a pharmaceutical company.

SLOAN AWARD GIVEN TO UCSD PHYSICIST

Vivek A. Sharma, an associate professor of physics at UCSD, has received a 1995 Sloan Research Fellowship.

The Sloan Research Fellowship was established in 1955 to encourage research by young scholars. It is awarded each year to scientists and economists in the early stages of their careers who have promising futures in research. Fellows are awarded an unrestricted grant of \$35,000 to support their research.

Sharma, an Indian citizen, received his B.S. and M.S. in India before being awarded his Ph.D. in physics at Syracuse University in New York.

A high-energy experimentalist, Sharma is seeking to find answers to the important question of the origin of the matter-antimatter asymmetry observed in the universe.

UCSD MATHEMATICIAN AWARDED PRESTIGIOUS PRIZE FOR GEOMETRY

Richard Hamilton, a professor of mathematics at UCSD, has been awarded one of the most prestigious prizes of the American Mathematical Society--the Oswald Veblen Prize in Geometry.

The award is delivered only once every five years for the best research in the fields of geometry and topology during the preceding five years. The co-winner of the 1996 Veblen Prize is Gang Tian, a mathematics professor at MIT, who was a graduate student at UCSD from 1984 to 1987.

Earlier Veblen Prize winners with UCSD connections are S.T. Yau and Michael Freedman.

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