

UC IRVINE VOICES

Achievement and commitment were hallmarks in 2013

By TOM VASICH
UC IRVINE COMMUNICATIONS

As always, it was quite a year at UC Irvine. Here are snapshots of 2013.

STUDENTS

Disneyland may have dibs on “The Happiest Place on Earth,” but UC Irvine can claim to be the happiest campus – or at least right up there. According to the U.S. Department of Education, UC Irvine ranks 11th in the nation among public universities for student happiness based on freshman retention rates.

That might help explain why the number of freshman applications for fall 2013 hit an all-time high of 60,619.

Several Anteatr students earned prestigious Fulbright scholarships this year; two will conduct public health research in Jordan.

A group of 50 students skipped the beach and Las Vegas for spring break to do volunteer work in California and Arizona.

A weekly family law clinic run mostly by UC Irvine law students was recognized with a Pro Bono Service Award from the State Bar of California.

Speaking of the law, UC Irvine’s Mock Trial team has the best overall three-year record in the country, according to the American Mock Trial Association. The squad bested 600 others – including lineups from Harvard, Yale, UCLA and UC Berkeley – for the top spot.

In what’s becoming a Welcome Week tradition, students set another world record. This time 3,875 participants broke the Guinness mark for largest water-blaster fight. Last year, UC Irvine staged the world’s largest dodge ball game.

IN THE COMMUNITY

UC Irvine was the official host university of the inaugural XPO clean energy exposition, which took place in October alongside the U.S. Department of Energy Solar Decathlon 2013 at the Orange County Great Park. The XPO included the first-ever California Challenge energy-efficient race car time trials. Student-engineered vehicles from across the nation competed to go as far as they could in one hour on \$1 worth of energy from any source. Worth noting: UC Irvine’s natural gas-powered Delta, aka Old Faithful, won the California Challenge.

The School of Biological Sciences celebrated the opening of the Steele/Burnand Anza-Borrego Desert Research Center in March. The site creates a “living laboratory” for sustainability research in the vast Anza-Borrego Desert State Park.

To celebrate the 90th birthday of UC Irvine’s former chancellor, Aug. 29 was officially proclaimed “Jack Peltason Day” in Irvine by Mayor Steven Choi.

Vice Chancellor of Research John Hemminger addressed the congressional Subcommittee on Energy in October and called for increased support of fundamental science research to address an emerging innovation deficit in the U.S.

Chancellor Michael Drake was recognized May 2 at “Awards 42,”



FILE PHOTO: ED CRISOSTOMO, ORANGE COUNTY REGISTER

UC Irvine electrical engineering students and race team members Leonard Brazezinski, left, and Joy Mina check on the team’s compressed natural gas race car at the Orange County Great Park in October.

an Orange County Human Relations Commission event celebrating community members who have advanced human relations. The panel cited Drake’s commitment to the idea that all perspectives and opinions should be heard within academia.

UC Irvine autism experts addressed California’s Senate Select Committee on Autism & Related Disorders in November at the new location of the Center for Autism & Neurodevelopmental Disorders in Santa Ana.

UNIVERSITY NEWS

UC Irvine earned accolades for its energy-efficiency and sustainability efforts: It was named among the nation’s “Coolest Schools” by Sierra magazine; earned five more LEED Platinum certifications for the Verano Place graduate student housing complex; and raked in both state and international awards for its Smart Labs Initiative.

The American Heart Association designated the university a platinum-level Fit-Friendly Workplace.

UC Irvine became the country’s first campus to use Toyota’s new Scion iQ electric vehicles, which have been added to the Zero Emission Vehicle-Network Enabled Transport fleet.

Sandra Tsing Loh is partnering with UC Irvine to bring her popular radio show “The Loh Down on Science” to international public radio audiences.

DISCOVERIES

The 2013 Noble Prize in physics went to the two men who proposed the Higgs field theory, which explains how elementary particles acquire mass. UC Irvine scientists played a significant role in discovering a particle – called the Higgs boson – that confirms the theory. And they celebrated.

Infectious disease and chemistry researchers found that breath analysis may prove to be an accurate, noninvasive way to quickly determine the severity of bacterial and other infections.

Aiming to inform the heated national debate about gun control with actual facts, two mathematicians designed parameters to measure how best to prevent one-on-one killings and mass shootings in the U.S.

Engineering researchers fabricated a new infrared camouflage coating from squid protein.

After more than a decade of work, UC Irvine chemists developed a way to clearly identify clinically usable markers for prostate cancer in urine, meaning that the disease could be detected far sooner, with greater accuracy and at dramatically lower cost.

Biologist Michael Leon and a co-investigator revealed that children with autism showed significant improvement after six months of simple sensory exercises at home using everyday items such as scents, spoons and sponges.

Atmospheric chemists helped identify levels of contaminants higher than in some of the world’s most polluted cities downwind of Canada’s largest oil, gas and tar sands processing zone, in a rural area where men suffer elevated rates of cancers linked to such chemicals.

Can microscopic hairs on bean leaves trap bedbugs? Chemists found out.

Computer scientists created an app called GenoDroid that could allow secure storage of individuals’ DNA data on a smart phone.

Psychologist Sarah Pressman found that emotions do affect health around the world and may be more important to wellness in low-income countries.

HEALTH

In September, a gleaming new building for the Gavin Herbert Eye Institute opened on campus, establishing a research, teaching and patient services hub in Orange County.

For the 13th consecutive year, UCI Medical Center was named among “America’s Best Hospitals” by U.S. News & World Report, the only Orange County hos-

pital to make this esteemed list.

Breast cancer surgeons became the first in the country to use a new technology that makes surgery more precise and safe for patients.

The Center of Excellence on Elder Abuse & Neglect partnered with the Bay Area’s nonprofit Institute on Aging to develop a mobile app called 368+ Elder & Dependent Adult Abuse Guide for CA Law Enforcement.

ATHLETICS

Back-to-back champions! Led by new coach David Kniffin, the men’s volleyball team captured its second consecutive NCAA title and its fourth in the last seven years.

The men’s soccer team won the Big West Tournament championship in November, earning a spot in the NCAA tournament and advancing to the Sweet Sixteen.

The women’s water polo team nabbed its fourth Big West regular-season title, and a conference-high and program-record six players were named to the all-conference team.

Things are looking up for the men’s basketball team – they’re favored to win the Big West while fielding the tallest collegiate team in the country. Seven Anteatrs stand 6-foot-8 or taller, including 7-foot-6 freshman Mamadou Ndiaye, who quickly has become one of the most popular and beloved members of the UC Irvine family.

In club sports, members of the tae kwon do team raked up national tournament titles this summer, and the men’s rowing team took first place in the varsity eight-man event at the Western Intercollegiate Rowing Association championship.

HONORS AND ACCOLADES

Two acclaimed campus professors each received one of the highest honors in their fields. Ruben G. Rumbaut, professor of sociology, was elected to the National Academy of Education in February, and Wilson Ho, the Donald Bren Pro-

fessor of Physics & Astronomy and Chemistry, was elected to the National Academy of Sciences in May.

Education professor Greg Duncan, a leading scholar in the field of early childhood education, was awarded the 2013 Klaus J. Jacobs Research Prize for his groundbreaking work on the lasting effects of poverty on child development.

Aaron Esser-Kahn, Sunil Gandhi and Ali Mortazavi received highly selective 2013 National Institutes of Health Director’s New Innovator Awards, which support projects by early-career researchers that show potential to transform scientific fields and improve human health.

A plethora of honors were bestowed upon Henry Samuelli School of Engineering faculty members:

- Andrei Shkel was presented the Office of the Secretary of Defense Award for Exceptional Public Service by the U.S. Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency.

- The American Geophysical Union awarded Soroosh Sorooshian, Distinguished Professor of civil and environmental engineering, its 2013 Robert E. Horton Medal for his outstanding contributions to hydrology.

- Derek Dunn-Rankin received the A.K. Oppenheim Prize, which honors brilliant additions to the theoretical or interpretative aspects of combustion dynamics, from the Institute for Dynamics of Explosions & Reactive Systems.

- The Institute of Electrical & Electronics Engineers’ Ultrasonics, Ferroelectrics & Frequency Control Society honored Chancellor’s Professor Chen Tsai with its 2013 lifetime achievement award.
- And the president of India bestowed the 2013 Padma Bhushan on Distinguished Professor Satya Atluri. The country’s third-highest civilian award recognizes illustrious service of high order.

The School of Medicine’s iMed-Ed Initiative – UC Irvine’s innovative medical education program based on tablet computing – was designated an Apple Distinguished Program. It was the only American medical school to be named as such.

Mont Pelerin Capital chairman and CEO Charles D. Martin, Distinguished Professor of comparative literature Ngugi wa Thiong’o, and UC Irvine Foundation trustees Cheryll and Richard Ruszat received the UCI Medal, the university’s highest honor.

The School of Education continued to climb in the U.S. News & World Report graduate school rankings, placing 37th in the latest list, up 10 places from two years ago.

Arts graduate Edward Patrick Alva ‘10 worked as an assistant editor on a documentary film, “The Invisible War,” that was nominated for an Academy Award.

And history professor David Iglor received a stellar review in the Times Literary Supplement for his book “The Great Ocean: Pacific Worlds from Captain Cook to the Gold Rush,” a history of European and American scientific exploration, trade and empire-building via the world’s largest ocean.

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THE YEAR IN PHOTOS



MICHAEL GOULDING, ORANGE COUNTY REGISTER

UC Irvine students give up a primal scream on campus in September while breaking the Guinness World Record for the largest water pistol fight. They broke the record with 3,875 participants armed with colorful water guns for the wet-and-wild battle that made history. The previous record-holders hailed from the city of Valladolid, Spain.



EUGENE GARCIA, ORANGE COUNTY REGISTER

Michelle Khine, left, an associate professor of biomedical engineering, holds up a heat gun as her graduate students jokingly shrink wrap Himanshu Sharma in their lab. Khine worked with UCI's business and engineering schools to come up with a new graduate program that helps students design a medical device and commercialize it.



KEVIN SULLIVAN, ORANGE COUNTY REGISTER

Tina Chan, 18, from Rosemead, at right, got help from her parents Ming and Kitty when she moved into her freshman dorm at UC Irvine on Sept. 21. Chan was one of thousands of UC Irvine students who moved in that weekend before fall classes began. About 12,000 students live in on-campus housing each year.



KEVIN LARA, ORANGE COUNTY REGISTER

From left, students Aleksis Rae Ancheta, Stephanie Nakamae, Eric Tam and Li-Mei Situ sit together next to Peter the Anteater in May at the Student Center. In 2013, UC Irvine was named one of the happiest campuses in the U.S. in a CBS news report, based on freshman retention rates.

Seeing Yee Jr. of Fremont, a graduate of the UC Irvine School of Social Ecology, gets his photo taken atop UCI's mascot Peter the Anteater following the School of Social Ecology commencement ceremony at the Bren Events Center on June 14. More than 8,000 students earned degrees from UC Irvine in 2013.

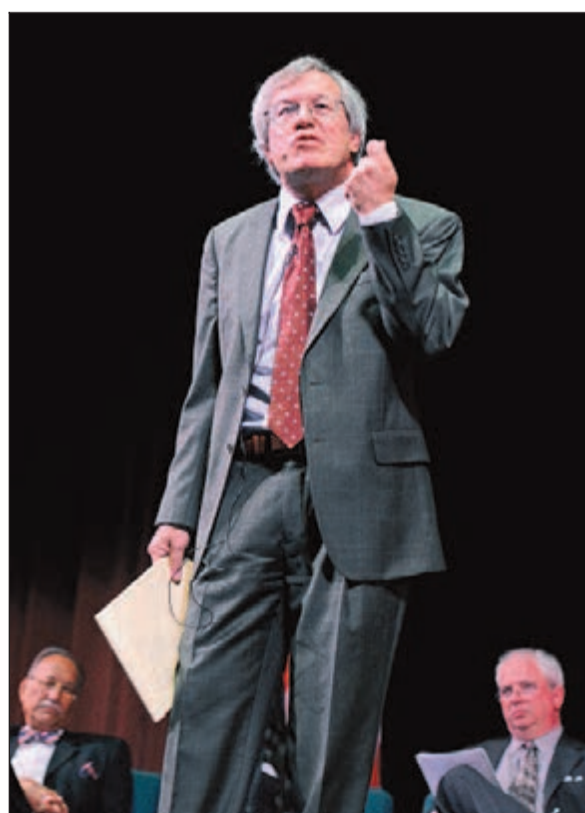


MARK RIGHTMIRE, ORANGE COUNTY REGISTER



CINDY YAMANAKA, ORANGE COUNTY REGISTER

Edward Thorp, a former mathematics professor, was honored with the UC Irvine Alumni Association's Extraordinarius Award in May. He gained fame by developing a card-counting strategy for winning blackjack and inventing a wearable computer to improve chances of success at roulette. He funded a \$1 million endowment for the mathematics program in 2003.



CHRISTINE COTTER, ORANGE COUNTY REGISTER

Erwin Chemerinsky, founding dean of UC Irvine's School of Law, makes a point while discussing the impact of the Supreme Court's ruling on same-sex marriage at a debate at Orange Coast College in Costa Mesa on Sept. 19. The debate held on Constitution Day focused on the Defense of Marriage Act and how the Constitution was used during the Supreme Court ruling.