

FACTS ABOUT THE UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA

Office Of Strategic Communications



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University of California in the San Joaquin Valley

For more than a century, the University of California has contributed greatly to the people and economy of the San Joaquin Valley. UC is engaged in valuable teaching, research and public service programs in the region, with a wide variety of educational, health care, and agricultural and extension activities throughout the Valley.

Moreover, the University of California is helping to better prepare Valley students for college and expand their access to an affordable UC education. Hundreds of Valley students continue their education at UC campuses each year, and the university's new campus at Merced opens the door even wider.

UC Merced, which opened in fall 2005, already boasts an incredibly diverse student population, almost half of which is made up of first-generation college students. The campus also is serving Valley students and residents through a variety of partnerships, including academic preparation programs and by offering UC summer session courses at its educational centers in Fresno and Bakersfield.

EDUCATION AND ACADEMIC PREPARATION

UC currently offers services in the San Joaquin Valley that include K-12 and community college academic preparation programs, summer courses, and professional development programs.

In particular, the university is making a concerted effort to improve the UC-going rates of Valley students. Since 1985, the number of San Joaquin Valley students enrolling in the University of California has more than doubled.

The University of California also has undertaken initiatives statewide to increase access for qualified students. Two of the initiatives are of significant benefit to Valley students who perform at high levels academically despite, in some cases, attending schools with few college preparatory courses or other enrichment opportunities.

- Eligibility in the Local Context – UC eligibility for the top 4 percent of students in each California high school.
- Comprehensive review – Admission based on full range of information that a student presents on the application.

UC MERCED

UC Merced, the 10th campus of the UC system and the first major research university to be built in the United States during the 21st century, opened in fall 2005 with nearly 900 students and is expected to reach a population of 25,000 undergraduate and graduate students within the next three decades. Nearly 9,000 students from California applied for admission to UC Merced during its opening year. Today, the campus serves roughly 1,300 of California's brightest young people.

The new campus is organized into three initial academic schools: engineering; natural sciences; and social sciences, humanities and the arts. UC Merced currently offers 18 undergraduate majors and eight graduate program emphases.

While construction continues at UC Merced, the library, classroom building, science and engineering facility, and campus infrastructure are currently serving students, faculty, staff and visitors. Campus planners have created a long-range vision for a vibrant campus and an associated community based on sustainable design principles and energy-saving standards. For example, the campus maximizes natural lighting while reducing the need for heating and cooling.

As part of the creation of the campus, UC Merced has set aside 25,000 acres of grasslands habitat in eastern Merced County.

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UC Merced currently employs 800 faculty and staff members

HEALTH CARE AND MEDICINE

Several University of California campuses – including Davis, Irvine, Los Angeles, San Diego and San Francisco – operate programs that play substantial roles in providing health care services to San Joaquin Valley residents and training medical professionals in the region.

For more than 30 years, the UCSF Fresno Medical Education Program has graduated approximately 60 resident physicians annually. In fact, UCSF Fresno has trained about one-third of Valley physicians currently practicing in one of seven specialties. In spring 2005, UCSF Fresno opened its new Center for Medical Education and Research in downtown Fresno. The three-story, 82,000 square foot state-of-the-art facility helps Fresno and the Valley compete for top physicians, faculty and researchers.

In addition, UCSF Fresno provides continuing educational opportunities for nearly 4,000 practicing physicians and health care professionals in the Central San Joaquin Valley each year. UCSF Fresno also offers academic preparation programs for students interested in pursuing careers in the health professions.

In 2002, UCSF established a Pharmacy Education Program in Fresno to help address the shortage of pharmacists in the Valley. The program brings fourth-year students in UCSF's top-ranked pharmacy school to the Fresno area to complete clinical rotations at hospitals, clinics, pharmacies and other organizations.

In association with the UCLA, UCSD and UCI schools of medicine, Kern Medical Center in Bakersfield trains more than 90 residents each year. About 35 percent of graduates stay in the area to practice. In summer 2004, a physician residency-training program in psychiatry was established with UCLA.

The UC Davis Network of Affiliated Family Practice Residency Programs consists of eight training programs, three of which are in the San Joaquin Valley: San Joaquin General Hospital in Stockton, Doctors Medical Center in Modesto and Mercy Medical Center in Merced.

AGRICULTURE AND THE ENVIRONMENT

Much of the Valley's agricultural success can be traced to the influence of the University of California's research and extension programs that began in the late 1800s. Four of UC's 10 research and extension centers are based in the Valley – along with 10 UC Cooperative Extension (UCCE) county offices from San Joaquin and Tuolumne counties in the north to Kern County in the south.

UC campus-based scientists and UCCE county advisers provide farmers and other agricultural professionals with science-based advice for improving production and quality of commodities. For instance, strawberry yields are more than 40 percent greater than 20 years ago thanks to UC research. UC research also helped increase cotton production in the Valley by 15 percent per acre and proved that blueberries could grow locally, contrary to popular belief.

The San Joaquin Valley is also home to two UC Davis veterinary programs that provide service and research that benefits Valley residents and consumers nationwide.

ALUMNI

More than 22,000 UC alumni live in the Valley. Alumni in the region make vital contributions toward increasing the number of Valley students who pursue higher education, particularly at a UC campus, through their involvement in student academic preparation programs.

UC alumni also play an important role as advocates for the university by working with elected officials when legislative issues regarding UC come up for consideration.

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