

# FACTS ABOUT THE UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA

Office Of Strategic Communications



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## University of California, Merced

Chartered in 1868, the University of California is among the world's leading public institutions of higher education. Today, the university is expanding its presence with the creation of UC Merced, the 10<sup>th</sup> UC campus and the first U.S. research university to be built in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

With a population of nearly 70,000, Merced is located in the north central San Joaquin Valley – two hours away from Yosemite National Park, the San Francisco Bay Area and Sacramento.

The University of California system is building UC Merced to address these challenges: 1) Demographic trends in California call for the UC system to absorb an additional 60,000 students in the coming decade, and 2) The San Joaquin Valley region is the state's most populous area without a UC campus and is growing at a rate 60 percent higher than the rest of California.

UC Merced is important to improving educational opportunities for Valley students and to enhancing the economic development of Central California.

UC Merced has enjoyed strong bipartisan support. A new UC campus was conceived in 1988 during the Gov. George Deukmejian administration; the Merced site was selected in 1995 during the Gov. Pete Wilson administration; groundbreaking occurred in 2002 during the Gov. Gray Davis administration; and the campus will open during the Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger administration.

The new campus will open its doors to 1,000 students in fall 2005. It's expected to grow to serve 25,000 undergraduate and graduate students in the next three to four decades.

Already, UC Merced is serving the San Joaquin Valley by offering UC summer session courses, academic preparation programs and professional development programs for K-12 teachers and educators, to cite a few examples. In keeping with its special mission to meet the educational needs of residents in the Valley, UC Merced maintains educational outreach centers in Bakersfield, Fresno and Merced and another is planned for Modesto.

## ACADEMICS AND RESEARCH

When it opens, the campus will be organized with three schools: engineering, natural sciences, and social sciences, humanities and the arts. The divisional deans are currently recruiting faculty and developing a rigorous academic curricula. Guided by a broad set of academic principles, the schools will emphasize interdisciplinary collaboration and research.

Research opportunities will be available for both undergraduate and graduate students.

UC Merced has created the Sierra Nevada Research Institute, in collaboration with Yosemite, Sequoia and Kings Canyon national parks. The institute will study environmental, physical and social aspects of the Sierra Nevada and the San Joaquin Valley.

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The campus also has established a World Cultures Institute, a research center that will focus on understanding the changing demographics of California and resultant social and cultural trends.

Additionally, UC Merced's partnership with Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory, which is managed by the University of California, is creating many opportunities for collaborative research and faculty development.

## **LEADERSHIP, FACULTY AND STAFF**

Carol Tomplison-Keasey, a seasoned educator, researcher and administrator, was appointed UC Merced chancellor in 1999. A developmental psychologist, she has served in leadership positions at UC Davis, UC Riverside and the UC Office of the President. Tomlinson-Keasey was inaugurated as chancellor at UC Merced's Founding Celebration on Oct. 25, 2002.

UC Merced currently employs more than 30 leading scholars as part of its founding faculty and another 270 academic professionals and staff members. All are engaged in a variety of complex tasks necessary to the successful launch of a major university. These responsibilities include creating innovative academic programs and curricula, recruiting additional UC-quality faculty from around the world, building an admissions and student services infrastructure, supervising six challenging construction projects, and securing private and corporate gifts to fund student scholarships and support university development.

## **CAMPUS DEVELOPMENT**

UC Merced's main campus is currently under construction. Campus planners have created a long-range vision for a vibrant university campus and an associated community based on sustainable planning and design principles. For example, campus construction incorporates energy-saving techniques that maximize natural lighting while reducing the need for heating and cooling.

As part of the creation of the campus, the university already has set aside and protected from development nearly 25,000 acres of grasslands habitat in eastern Merced County.

The campus will use digital technology to create an educational network serving students and communities throughout the San Joaquin Valley at its educational and outreach centers in Bakersfield, Fresno and Merced.

## **ECONOMIC IMPACTS**

In addition to its educational mission, UC Merced is an important strategic investment in California's future economy. The new campus serves as an engine for economic growth throughout the San Joaquin Valley. Campus construction supports 1,500 new jobs, stimulates new business development and pumps millions of dollars into the local economy annually. Furthermore, faculty research projects have brought in more than \$10 million in grants and contracts since 2003, primarily from federal agencies, with another \$10 million pending.

For more information about UC Merced, please visit [www.ucmerced.edu](http://www.ucmerced.edu) or call (209) 724-4400.