

Faculty in the Skaggs School of Pharmacy Receive ‘Frontiers of Innovation’ Program Seed Funding

Large-scale efforts address global challenges of the future

As a key part of the Strategic Plan developed by faculty, administrators, postdoctoral scholars, graduate and undergraduate students, staff, alumni and other members of the UC San Diego community, Chancellor Pradeep K. Khosla and Vice Chancellor for Research Sandra A. Brown are committed to significant investments in scholarship and science that will keep the university at the forefront of socially beneficial research.

Some of these investments are taking place already; other programs will be announced in the months ahead. What they all have in common is a thoughtful cultivation of promising people and innovative projects that will strengthen the university’s record of problem-solving research.

One such initiative, led by the UC San Diego Office of Research Affairs, will help launch seven major projects on campus, all focused on advancing the university’s strategic research goals.

The “Frontiers of Innovation” program is a campus-wide effort to support the primary research initiatives of the UC San Diego Strategic Plan.

One component provides fellowships for undergraduate and graduate students as well as postdoctoral scholars. The other component provides funding to support teams of UC San Diego scholars from across campus in their efforts to launch large-scale, multidisciplinary research-center applications.

“Our support for these new centers reflects our strong commitment to the research goals articulated in the campus strategic plan,” said Chancellor Khosla. “The forward-looking Frontiers of Innovation program will help ensure our continued leadership in research well into the future. Vice Chancellor for Research Sandra Brown and the Academic Senate are to be commended for driving these investments in our faculty, our students, and their vital work.”

UC San Diego’s research enterprise, said Brown, is focused on four strategic avenues of inquiry: understanding and protecting the planet; enriching human life and society; exploring the basis of human knowledge, learning, and creativity; and understanding cultures and addressing disparities in society.

“We want to engage all campus members in research to answer basic questions and address the needs of our global society,” Brown said. “We were challenged by the large number of applications for this seed funding. However, the faculty review committee identified seven exciting efforts we can foster now.”

This year, the Frontiers of Innovation Center Development funds will go to the following centers:

“These creative and ambitious faculty efforts,” Brown said, “will help us take a bold step toward meeting the grand challenges facing the world today.”

UC San Diego Center for Translational Computer-Aided Drug Discovery & Project Management

Led by Rommie Amaro, James McKerrow
Research Area: Enriching Human Life and Society

UC San Diego Center for Compound Resources

Led by William Gerwick, Dionicio Siegel
Research Area: Enriching Human Life and Society

The newly formed UC San Diego Center for Compound Resources (UCCR) will provide the campus with a unified, well-curated and easily accessible resource of diverse natural products and other small molecules for testing in biological assays. Synergistic connection between these areas of campus expertise is a clear opportunity to discover and develop new molecules of significance to human health and the planet.”