

UC SANTA BARBARA

# *THE Current*

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## **NATIONAL RELIGION AND PUBLIC LIFE CONFERENCE TO HONOR LEGACY OF UCSB PROFESSOR AND CONGRESSMAN WALTER CAPPS**

Former Nebraska Senator Bob Kerrey to give keynote speech During a 33-year career at UC Santa Barbara as a beloved professor of religious studies, the late Walter Capps advocated ardent but polite discourse as the proper road to problem-solving.

He was more at home leading discussion than delivering lectures.

He listened as respectfully and as thoughtfully as he spoke.

During his 10 months as U.S. Representative from California's 22nd Congressional District -- his term cut short by a fatal heart attack in October 1997 -- Capps showed an uncommon commitment to civility and duty. He made a distinction between politicians and representatives, and called himself the later.

In honor of Capps and what he stood for, UCSB's Department of Religious Studies and La Casa de Maria Retreat and Conference Centers have invited religious and political leaders from across the country to take part in "Acts of Service:

A Conference on Religion and Public Life."

The conference will run Thursday, May 31 through Saturday, June 2 and will change venues from the Lobero Theatre in downtown Santa Barbara to the UCSB campus to the Montecito grounds of La Casa de Maria.

A keynote address by former Nebraska Senator Bob Kerrey -- a Capps admirer -- will open the conference.

The conference grew out of broad-based community respect for Capps and belief in what he stood for, said organizing committee co-chairs Wade Clark Roof and Don George.

"The hope is to do two things," said Roof, chair of UCSB's Department of Religious Studies, where he was a longtime colleague of Capps.

"One is to keep alive the memory of Walter Capps and his concern for building a better society.

And the second is to raise the vision of how a permanent Capps Center might continue to address the great issues of our time in the community, the country and the world."

George, a director at La Casa de Maria, said that his organization -- where Capps served 10 years on the governing board -- is participating for similar reasons.

"This conference is reinforcing the ideal that La Casa de Maria and Walter Capps embraced," he said.

"That is the idea of servanthood lived out in the profession of religion and political life."

Kerrey's keynote speech, at 8 p.m. Thursday, May 31 in the Lobero Theatre in Santa Barbara, will touch on the ideals that defined Walter Capps.

Titled "The Ethics of Walter Capps:

From Popular Mechanics to The Beatitudes," Kerrey's remarks will entwine Capps's belief in the importance of dialogue in public life with the current national agenda.

A decorated veteran of the Vietnam War, Kerrey was a frequent guest speaker in Capps's celebrated class examining the effects of that conflict.

His involvement in that war has come in for intense public scrutiny following recent disclosures concerning some of his actions in Vietnam.

A Democrat, Kerrey served two terms as senator from Nebraska and one term as that state's governor and is currently president of New School University in New York City.

Tickets for the Kerrey talk cost \$7 and are available at the Lobero Theatre Ticket Office (805-963-0761) and at UCSB Arts and Lectures (805-893-3535).

All other events are free but, due to limited seating, require advance registration; call UCSB Public Events at (805) 893-4337.

#### ATTENTION EDITORS AND REPORTERS:

Kerrey will be available to the press immediately following his talk Thursday, May 31, behind the Lobero Theatre stage.

This will be his only availability to the press during his visit.

Additionally,

we invite your continued coverage of the "Acts of Service" conference, which will continue Friday, June 1 and Saturday, June 2 and feature talks and discussions by a variety of local and national political and religious leaders.

Included are:

The Reverend Dr. C. Welton Gaddy, executive director, The Interfaith Alliance, Washington, D.C.; president, Alliance of Baptists; member, Comm. of Christian Ethics of the Baptist World Alliance. The Reverend Eugene F. Rivers III, general secretary, Pan African Charismatic Evangelical Congress; Pastor, Azusa Christian Community, Dorchester, Mass.; co-founder, Ten-Point Coalition. The Reverend Carol Houston, pastor, Bethel Unspeakable Joy Church, Los Angeles. The Reverend Virgilio P. Elizondo, director, Mexican-American Cultural Center, San Antonio, Texas; director of programming, Catholic Television of San Antonio; visiting professor, departments of Chicano Studies and Religious Studies, UCSB; co-director, Pew Trusts project on Hispanic Churches in American public life. Bishop Kevin Mannoia, president National Association of Evangelicals. Lois Capps, U.S. Representative 22nd District of California, widow of Walter Capps. David Dreier, U.S. Representative, 28th District of

California. Jack O'Connell, State Senator, 18th District of California. Hannah-Beth Jackson, Assembly Member, 35th District of California. Kathleen Hall Jamieson, professor of communication, Walter Annenberg Dean, Univ. of Pennsylvania. Jim Wallis, editor-in-chief, Sojourners.

Conference schedule Thursday, May 31:

8 p.m., the Lobero Theatre, 33 East Canon Perdido, Santa Barbara.

Speakers:

Wade Clark Roof, professor and chair, Department of Religious Studies, UCSB.

Hal Conklin, chairman Board of Trustees, La Casa de Maria; president, California Centre for Civic Renewal; former Santa Barbara mayor.

Laura K. Capps, director government affairs, UC Berkeley.

Bob Kerrey, former senator and governor of Nebraska; president, the New School University.

Friday, June 1:

9:45 a.m. McCune Conference Room, Humanities and Social Sciences Building Room 6020, UCSB. "Religion and Politics:

Views from the Nation's Capital." Participants:

Richard Hecht, professor, Department of Religious Studies, UCSB.

U.S. Rep. Lois Capps.

The Rev. Dr. C. Welton Gaddy. U.S. Rep. David Dreier. 1 p.m.

La Casa de Maria, 801 Ladera Lane, Montecito.

Lunch and lecture.

Hal Conklin.

State Sen. Jack O'Connell. Speaker:

The Rev. Eugene F. Rivers III.

2:30 p.m.

"Acts of Service: Religion and Public Life -- Panel 1."

Kathleen Hall Jamieson.

Hal Conklin.

The Rev. Carol Houston.

Rabbi Stephen Cohen, Executive Director, UCSB Hillel.

The Rev. Richard Ramos, director, The Faith Initiative of South Santa Barbara County, past senior pastor of The Cornerstone Church of Santa Barbara. 4 p.m. Small group breakout.

6:30 p.m. Dinner lecture. Don George, director Casa Maria presiding.

Speaker: Jim Wallis, editor-in-chief Sojourners Magazine.

Saturday, June 2:

9 a.m.

La Casa de Maria.

"Acts of Service: Religion and Public Life -- Panel II."

Assemblywoman Hannah-Beth Jackson presiding.

U.S. Rep. Lois Capps.

The Rev. Virgilio Elizondo. The Rev. Anne Howard, associate rector, Trinity Episcopal Church, Santa Barbara. Bishop Kevin Mannoia.

W. Mitchell, author, TV personality and motivational speaker. 12:30 p.m.

Hal Conklin, John Wheeler, president and ceo, National Campaign for Hearing Health.

U.S. Rep. Lois Capps.

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**About UC Santa Barbara**

The University of California, Santa Barbara is a leading research institution that also provides a comprehensive liberal arts learning experience. Our academic community of faculty, students, and staff is characterized by a culture of interdisciplinary collaboration that is responsive to the needs of our multicultural and global society. All of this takes place within a living and learning environment like no other, as we draw inspiration from the beauty and resources of our extraordinary location at the edge of the Pacific Ocean.