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UCSB Communication Professor Receives Harold J. Plous Award

Karen Kroman Myers, an assistant professor of communication at UC Santa Barbara, has received the 2010-11 Harold J. Plous Award. One of the university's most prestigious faculty honors, the award is given annually to an assistant professor from the humanities, social sciences, or natural sciences who has shown exceptional achievement in research, teaching, and service to the university. The award, which is presented by UCSB's College of Letters and Science, was established in 1957 to honor the memory of Harold J. Plous, an assistant professor of economics.

Myers will have an opportunity to showcase her research when she delivers the annual Plous Lecture next spring.

"The Plous Award is a prestigious peer recognition of our exceptional colleagues," said UCSB Chancellor Henry T. Yang. "I am delighted to see this honor bestowed on Assistant Professor Myers for her exemplary contributions to the field of organizational communication, and for her truly remarkable record of research, teaching, and service since joining the UCSB faculty. We look forward to her exciting Plous Lecture next spring."

Noted Melvin Oliver, the SAGE Sara Miller McCune Dean of Social Sciences at UCSB: "Professor Myers is the epitome of what the Plous award represents -- significant scholarly impact in the early phase of an academic career, teaching and mentoring of the highest distinction, and professional and university service that makes a

difference. We are proud of Professor Myers being named the Plous award winner."

Myers, who came UCSB in 2007, received her Ph.D. in communication from Arizona State University. She has been recognized nationally and internationally for her research, which is grounded in organizational communication with a special emphasis on organizational knowledge as embedded in assimilation processes. Her work also focuses on how the media and secondary education programs socialize women and minorities to enter particular professions.

A hallmark of Myers's research is that while it is firmly rooted in theory, it addresses pragmatic issues and seeks to solve practical problems. Most of her data are collected in the field with the cooperation of

-- and service to -- real organizations. Her analyses help organizations and their members better understand how members are socialized, and how these processes may help or hinder optimal performance, while making theoretical contributions important to the scholarly study of these processes.

A gifted and popular instructor, Myers earns praise from her undergraduate students for the clarity and precision of her lectures, which combine theory and practical application, and for her enthusiasm and dedication. At the graduate level, Myers has received high marks for developing new courses on topics that include newcomer socialization and mixed-methods research. She also designed and taught a marketing management course for doctoral students in the physical and biological sciences and engineering.

Said Michael Stohl, UCSB professor and chair of communication: "It is wonderful that Karen Myers's extraordinary teaching, research, and service contributions have been recognized through the Plous Award. Her research makes important theoretical contributions, demonstrates significant methodological sophistication, and has been published in the best journals within our field. Her teaching is exceptional, and Professor Myers has increased the number and depth of our course offerings at both the undergraduate and graduate level. Her service to the department, university, and the wider discipline of communication has been exceptional."

Myers's contributions to the intellectual life at UCSB also involve a host of other activities, including developing a program to invite alumni to campus, creating a newsletter that provides summaries of research and key courses, and hosting workshops at which alumni share career opportunities with current students. In

addition, Myers created a set of 10 Alumni Career Panels that were part of the Communication Alumni Career Day that took place during last year's All Gaucho Reunion. With more than 300 students in attendance, the event proved so successful, it has become an annual All Gaucho Reunion event.

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.