

THE *Current*

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Grants Awarded to UCSB Faculty, Graduate Students for Pacific Rim Research

The University of California Pacific Rim Research Program (PRRP) has awarded grants totaling more than \$60,000 to UC Santa Barbara anthropologist Shankar Aswani, political scientist Kaewkamol Pitakdumrongkit, and film and media studies scholar Nicole Staroseilski. Located at UC Santa Cruz and funded by the UC Office of the President, the PRRP promotes the study of the Pacific Rim as a distinctive region.

The grant awarded to Aswani, associate professor of anthropology, will support his research project, "A Socioeconomic Analysis of Large Scale Environmental Disturbance: Implications of the 2007 Solomon Islands Tsunami for the Pacific Islands."

Pitakdumrongkit, a graduate student in the Department of Political Science, is studying "East Asian Financial Cooperation," while Starosielski, a graduate student in the Department of Film and Media Studies, is working on "Re-Mapping Transpacific Communication: The Cultural Geography of Undersea Cables in Fiji, New Zealand, and Guam."

The states and nations bordering the Pacific Ocean are densely linked by patterns of historical contact, geology, investment, international agreements and conflicts, migration, environmental and disease vectors, and the incessant flow of ideas and

cultural practices. The PRRP places priority on research that is new, specific to the region, and collaborative -- reaching across national boundaries and bridging academic disciplines.

Proposals may come from any discipline in the humanities, social sciences, natural sciences, public health, or some combination thereof. Research may focus on a variety of topics, including humans in relationship to the built or natural environment, transcultural and historical constructions of the human, human-nonhuman interactions, cultural geography, transnational migrations, economic expansion, regional agricultural development, and environmental health and human disease.

In all, 27 awards were given for 2010-11 by a committee of faculty members from across the UC system. They were divided into two categories: Initiative Grants and Research/Planning Grants. Four Initiative Grants -- in economics, anthropology, history, and sociology -- will support the work of faculty members on the topic "Responses to Crises in the Pacific Rim." Five Research/Planning Grants were awarded to faculty members in medicine, community health, sociology, anthropology, and history. In addition, 18 graduate students received Advanced Graduate Research Fellowships to support a year of research.

Related Links

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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.