

UC SANTA BARBARA

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In Memoriam: Marilyn Gevirtz

Marilyn Gevirtz, a longtime benefactor of UC Santa Barbara who was dedicated to education for students at all levels, has died.

“I am deeply saddened to share with you the news that our most appreciated philanthropist and dear friend Marilyn Gevirtz passed away peacefully yesterday morning at her home in Montecito after a lengthy illness,” said UCSB Chancellor Henry T. Yang. “Her vision and generosity, shared by her late husband, Ambassador Don Gevirtz, have made a tremendous impact on our campus, specifically our Gevirtz Graduate School of Education, and on public education as a whole. She will be deeply missed.”

A member of the UC Santa Barbara Gold Circle, Marilyn Gevirtz was also a trustee of the UC Santa Barbara Foundation Board since 1986, serving as secretary from 1989 to 1995. In 1996, she and Don Gevirtz received the UCSB Alumni Association’s Honorary Alumni Award.

“Marilyn has helped transform our campus into a flagship for innovative and collaborative approaches to educational research and teacher training,” Yang continued. “She and Don were committed to philanthropic support for education and related programs aimed at improving the wellbeing of all children. Over the years, they made many visionary and generous gifts to UC Santa Barbara to improve public education.”

In 1995, the Gevirtzes supported the establishment of the Gevirtz Research Center within UCSB's Graduate School of Education. The center became a test-bed for innovative education initiatives to improve public education and impact public policy. Marilyn Gevirtz was particularly involved in the center's Gevirtz Homework Project, as well as the national nonprofit Girls Inc.

In 2000, she and Don made a transformative gift to the UCSB Graduate School of Education, and the school was in their honor. Their significant investment has supported student fellowships, fostered the creative capacity of our faculty, and enhanced the school's stature as a nationally renowned leader in education.

At the time, Marilyn Gevirtz said, "We believe that educational access is critical to all children for the fulfillment of their hopes and dreams and for success in their chosen careers, whatever they may be. We have all had the experience of having a teacher who made a profound impact on our lives. Our goal is to support the Graduate School of Education at UCSB as it prepares teachers who will have that kind of impact on all their students and in that way fulfill their own dreams as well."

Added Yang, "Her hope was that Gevirtz Graduate School of Education would produce the very best teachers, those who could provide strong leadership in public education and ignite the joy of learning in their young students. GGSE embodies Marilyn's spirit of greatness, and her legacy will live on through the continued success of our school and our students."

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.