

Rallying Retirees to Get Legislators' Ears

When the University of California wants to make its case for additional funding or a particular issue in

Sacramento, it often calls on some of its most trusted supporters—retirees.

And in this high tech era, rallying the troops is mostly done electronically. For example, earlier this year when UC needed to convince legislators about the budget, it emailed advocates like Dick Jensen of Santa Barbara, who in turn emailed letters to his state assembly person and senator urging them to restore funding to UC.

Jensen, former assistant chancellor of planning and analysis at UCSB and then associate chancellor of planning and budget at UC Santa Cruz, participates in the University's advocacy program called UC for California.

It is a grassroots, electronic program advocating for the University in the state Capitol UC for California advocates for the University of California through electronic-advocacy, or "e-Advocacy," a new medium of communication which allows the University to engage advocates who in turn advocate on UC's behalf to elected officials. UC for California's eAdvocacy efforts uses emails, social networking websites and other high tech vehicles to notify

friends of UC about important issues affecting the University that are being considered by the California State Legislature. Currently more than 120,000 parents, students, faculty, staff, alumni and retirees advocate for the University through the UC for California program.

Jensen, also the former chair of the Council of UC Retiree Associations, believes the 45,000 UC emeriti and retirees

can be a great asset to the UC for California program. "We are a large group of people who have strong feelings about UC. Many of us have spent our entire career at UC. We want to see UC succeed," he said.

"We have seen first hand the health care, research, and education that UC provides and have a real awareness of the significant impact UC has made in the lives of people. And that's what we want the legislators to understand."

Here is how the UC for California program works: individuals sign up to be an advocate for the University. At critical points in the legislative process, the Advocacy staff sends an email to advocates notifying them of the important issue and asking them to write a letter to specific members of the California legislature. The

email includes a sample letter, a fact sheet about the issue and the email addresses of the targeted legislators. It takes the advocate about five minutes to send the requested email letter.



Occasionally the advocates are asked to call legislators, in which case phone numbers and talking points are included in the email. Advocates are also invited to the annual UC Day held each spring in Sacramento. On that day, advocates for the University visit legislators in person to lobby for the University. "We would have a general meeting with legislators to let them know we support UC's initiatives that they are currently considering," says Jensen, who has participated in several UC Days.

"It's important to engage our friends and natural allies to help personalize the statewide impact of UC through sharing their own UC story. This makes a huge impact on our advocacy efforts," says Brandon

UC Research of Interest

Hybrid Cars Harder to Hear

Hybrids offer environmental and perhaps economic benefits, but a UC Riverside study notes a downside: The cars are so quiet when operating with only their electric motors that they may pose a risk to the blind and some other pedestrians.

In some contexts, pedestrians may have only one second to audibly detect the location of approaching hybrid cars when the vehicles operate at very slow speeds, said Lawrence Rosenblum, professor of psychology. Those findings have implications for blind pedestrians, small children, the elderly, runners, cyclists, and others, he said.

In a project funded by the National Federation of the Blind, Rosenblum made audio recordings of hybrid and combustion-engine cars approaching from two directions at 5 miles per hour to assure that the hybrid car operated only with its electric motor. Subjects in a lab listened to the recordings and indicated when they could hear from which direction the cars approached.

"Subjects could correctly judge the approach of the combustion car when it was about 28 feet away," Rosenblum said. "But they could only judge the hybrid's approach direction when it was 7 feet away." This means that a pedestrian would not be able to correctly determine the hybrid's approach until it was



one second away, he said.

"We are not talking about major changes to the way automobiles are designed, but about slightly increasing their audibility when they are traveling slowly," said Rosenblum.

See: <http://www.newsroom.ucr.edu/cgi-bin/display.cgi?id=1803>

Quitting Smoking Good for Social Health, Too

Putting down cigarettes for good can have unexpected social benefits, according to new research. Smoking is bad not only for your physical wellbeing but for your social health, too—with smokers increasingly edged out to the margins of social circles.

The study also found that the decision to quit appears to be taken up almost communally, with whole clusters of spouses, friends, siblings and co-workers giving up the habit at about the same time.

The study, conducted by James Fowler of UC San Diego and Harvard researchers, analyzed changes in smoking behavior from 1971 to 2003 in a large social network of 12,067 densely interconnected people. It found that smoking behaviors are subject to similar social-network effects, at two and three degrees of separation, except that quitting smoking spread through the network not only like one domino knocking down the next, but also like a house of cards collapsing.

The findings speak both to the power of relationships and to the efficacy of public-health campaigns to reduce smoking.

Surprisingly, people quit roughly in tandem, with whole groups becoming nonsmokers. Those who continued to smoke, meanwhile, formed their own "cliques" that,



over time, shifted from the center of the social network to the periphery.

The findings point to possible policies for addressing other public-health concerns, such as obesity. "Network phenomena," write the researchers, "might be exploited to spread positive health behaviors," and targeting groups, not just individuals, might be more effective.

See: <http://ucsdnews.ucsd.edu/newsrel/soc/05-08QuitSmoking.asp>

You May Not Be What You Eat After All

A new UCSF study shows that increased eating does not necessarily lead to increased fat. The finding in the much-studied roundworm opens the possibility of identifying new targets for drugs to control weight, the researchers say. The worm, known scientifically as *Caenorhabditis elegans*, shares half of its genes with humans and is often a predictor of human traits.

The discovery reveals that the neurotransmitter serotonin, already known to control appetite and fat build-up, actually does so through two separate signaling channels. One set of signals regulates feeding, and a separate set of signals regulates fat metabolism. The signaling pathways are composed of a series of molecular events triggered by neurons in the brain that "instruct" the body to burn or store fat.

If the "separate-channel" mechanism is also found in humans, weight-loss drugs might be developed to attack just the fat-depositing channel rather than the hunger-dampening pathway, says Kaveh Ashrafi, PhD, assistant professor of physiology at UCSF and senior author of the study, which was reported in the journal *Cell Metabolism*.

See: <http://pub.ucsf.edu/newsservices/releases/200806032>

Kaiser Offers Wellness Health Assessment

Health assessment programs providing special incentives are now available to UC members of Kaiser Permanente under Kaiser's HealthWorks wellness program, and to those enrolled in UC's other medical plans under the StayWell wellness program. A health assessment is



the first step toward planning positive lifestyle changes.

Kaiser HealthWorks

All UC Kaiser Permanente members and their family members aged 18 and older now have the opportunity to take a Kaiser health assessment and to participate in quarterly drawings for valuable prizes, including \$500 gift certificates and iPods. Upon completing the questionnaire, participants receive a personal health guide.

Additional information is available at Kaiser's secure website, my.kp.org/ca/universityofcalifornia, and through mailings to members' homes.

StayWell

UC retirees and family members enrolled in other UC health plans continue to be able to complete a StayWell Health Assessment and receive a \$75 gift certificate to a merchant of their choice. Details are given at the StayWell website, uclivingwell.online.staywell.com.

StayWell has introduced a new website login format that no longer requires a participant's full Social



Medicare Corner

Will you or your spouse become eligible for Medicare soon? Here are two important reminders. UC retirees risk losing University-sponsored medical plan coverage if they do not follow Medicare rules regarding the assignment of Medicare benefits to UC Medicare Advantage plans and the Medicare restriction against duplicate enrollment in Medicare Part D (Prescription Drug) plans.

Assignment of Medicare Benefits to UC HMO Plans

This information applies to you if you're enrolled in a UC HMO Medicare Advantage Plan: Health Net/Seniority Plus, Health Net Medicare COB, Health Net Medicare Private Fee-for-Service, Western Health Advantage/WHA Care+, or Kaiser/Senior Advantage.

Medicare-eligible retirees enrolled in these plans **must assign their Medicare benefits to the UC plan and maintain that assignment or risk losing coverage under their UC plan.**

Upon assignment, Medicare pays a flat fee to the UC plan each month, and the UC plan agrees to assume full responsibility for your care in coordination with Medicare. Three months before your 65th birthday, UC will send you a packet of information regarding Medicare that includes the *Universal Medicare Advantage* form if you are enrolled in an HMO plan—this form is used to assign Medicare benefits to the plan.

The assignment process is highly regulated by Medicare and cannot be done retroactively, so it is critically important to complete and submit the form as instructed in a timely manner.

No Duplicate Part D Coverage

Now that Medicare Part D (Prescription Drug Plans) has been implemented and fine-tuned, Medicare is strictly enforcing the prohibition against duplicate Part D coverage. Under this rule, you can retain your UC-sponsored medical plan coverage which offers Part D only if you do not enroll in another non-UC Part D plan. Thus, if you cancel your UC-sponsored Part D coverage or enroll in a non-UC prescription drug plan, you will lose your UC-sponsored medical plan coverage.

For details about these reminders, see the *Medicare Factsheet for Employees and Retirees*, which is available online (atyourservice.ucop.edu—"Forms and Publications") or from the UC Customer Service Center. 📄

Security Number (SSN). Participants can now use only the last 6 digits of their SSN and date of birth the first time they log in. They then create their own unique ID and password for future logins. 📄

Your Mind and Your Body— An Important Partnership

Your mind and your body are very close partners. So are your UC health and welfare plans, which are designed to work together to provide total care—medical, pharmacy, behavioral health and wellness—to UC employees and family members.

The behavioral health portion of your medical plan is provided through United Behavioral Health (UBH) for most retirees. UBH has developed a new program called LifeSolutions—a program focused on improving overall health for individuals with chronic or acute medical conditions by assisting with the emotional strain and stress that often accompany such conditions. For example, a significant number of those with medical conditions such as heart disease, cancer, asthma, stroke, diabetes, hypertension and arthritis also struggle with depression. LifeSolutions can provide retirees and their family members with information and support to help them better understand stress, anxiety and depression, as well as offer ways to take an active role in maximizing health and wellness.

The LifeSolutions program includes:

- Helpful educational mailings
- Anytime access to exclusive web-based information
- A personal care advocate who works individually with a member
- Referral to clinicians with specialty training
- Referral to community-based resources

If UBH identifies you as someone that might benefit from this program, you will be offered assistance through LifeSolutions. Participation in LifeSolutions is, of course, completely voluntary and completely confidential. 🦋



Rallying Retirees continued from page 1

Kline, communications coordinator for the UC advocacy program. “Often they see items in the news about UC and if we share information with them, they can become important spokespersons for the University.

For more information about the UC for California program or to volunteer to be an advocate, visit the website at www.ucforcalifornia.org/ucforcalifornia/home. The website has links to campus advocacy websites for those who prefer to become involved locally. 🦋

Open Enrollment Starts October 30

Open Enrollment for 2009 UC Health and Welfare benefits will be from 8:00 am, Thursday, October 30 through midnight, Monday, November 24.

The October issue of this newsletter will provide a preview of the upcoming Open Enrollment. You will also receive a detailed Open Enrollment booklet with a summary of benefit plan changes. If you need to make any changes to your enrollment for 2009, you will use the Open Enrollment application on the At Your Service (atyourservice.ucop.edu) website. If you have forgotten your Username or password for At Your Service, click on the “Sign in to my accounts” link and either the “Forgot your Username” or “Forgot your Password” option. You may also contact the Customer Service Center at 1-800-888-8267 for a new password. 🦋

Important Dates to Keep in Mind

July 2008	2 percent COLA effective July 1 and paid starting in August 2008 check
October 2008	Open Enrollment materials mailed describing changes and retiree options for 2009 UC health and welfare benefits
November 2008	Period to make Open Enrollment changes online or by paper form (see article at right)
December 2008	Social Security annual cost-of-living adjustment
January 2009	Open Enrollment changes effective 🦋

Intriguing Adventures for 2009

Looking for culture, nature or history? Make plans now to travel with other UC retirees on any of the following marvelous adventures...for travel makes a world of difference!

Escape the winter blues by heading to **Peru: Ancient Land of Mysteries** February 11, 2009. You will have 13 days to enjoy a voyage through the Andes to Machu Picchu aboard the Vistadome train. Meet and learn about the lifestyle of the indigenous Indians of the floating islands of the Uros people on Lake Titicaca, and spend two nights in the Paracas National Reserve, Peru's only coastal wildlife sanctuary. Cost: \$3,799 Tour No. 318961

For a more serene vacation, start planning now for our 9-day **Springtime Tulip River Cruise** commencing May 1, 2009. You unpack once for a relaxing river cruise on the waterways of Holland and Belgium.

During your journey you will be able to admire Holland's windmills of Kinderdijk as well as explore the historic cities of Arnhem, Ghent and medieval Bruges. Cost: Approx. \$3,300-\$3,500 [tbd] Tour No. 318974

Want to stay close to home, but still experience a unique adventure? We have the trip for you! **Trains of the Colorado Rockies** are calling to you for summer fun starting July 25, 2009. Journey on the world's highest cog railroad to Pike's Peak; visit Estes Park, famous for its Stanley Hotel; and board the Georgetown Loop Railroad for traveling to and touring the picturesque Alpine village of Vail. Denver, Boulder, Georgetown, Grand Junction, Silverton and Durango are just a few of the exciting stops you will be making during this 9-day excursion. Cost: \$2,299 Tour No. 318997

No better way to end your summer than by enjoying the



photo by Kathy Kirkpatrick



Shades of Ireland for 10 marvelous days. Beginning September 9, 2009, you will experience the Emerald Isle's green hills, warm people, stately castles and rollicking fun. You will be visiting Limerick, Killarney, Dublin, Galway and many more sites where you will be able to enjoy Ireland's natural beauty, turbulent history and hospitable culture. Cost: \$3,169 Tour No. 319009

The cost for all tours is per person, double occupancy and includes round-trip airfare from LAX. To obtain more information and/or order a brochure for any of these tours, please contact Collette Vacations, Group Sales Representative, Michaela, at (877) 760-7653. Mention the tour number and that you are a University of California retiree.

Remember, these tours are not just for UC retirees. Feel free to invite your family and friends to join you or they are welcome to make their own travel plans for any of these UC tours. 🌟

Share Your Stories



In response to the call for stories about successful life in retirement, UC Berkeley retiree Carol Egan sent the following: “Shortly after retiring from UC Berkeley, my husband and I moved to Hawaii. My daughter had moved here soon after graduating from UC Davis and had convinced us to visit. One look and we were hooked, too. We’ve been here now over seven years, in which time my daughter married and had two children. They live a few blocks from us in Kailua. Soon after we arrived,

I began writing articles for the local newspaper, The Honolulu Advertiser. I am also writing my memoirs about my life in dance. My weekly schedule includes several Pilates classes, a tap class, French lessons and Hawaiian language. This past semester I also enrolled in three classes at the University of Hawaii, Manoa. Retirees can audit almost any class for free. What a bargain! Living in Paradise has certainly been good for us.” 🌺

Share Your Stories

We’d like to hear from you. Whether you have a challenging issue related to retirement or a story about the joys of your life as a retiree, write to us and we may share your story in *New Dimensions*. Please respond by email (NewDimensions-L@ucop.edu) or regular mail (UC HR/Benefits, New Dimensions editor, 300 Lakeside Drive, 12th Floor, Oakland, CA 94612).

Calendar for Individual Retiree Account Changes

Because of the processing time required to make account changes, the effective date of the changes depends on when you inform UC of the change.

For tax withholding and address changes:

If changes are made online or if UBEN 106 (*Tax Withholding Changes*) or UBEN 131 (*Address Changes*) are received by UCRP by the 10th of the month; changes take effect with benefit payment on the 1st of the following month.

For bank deposit changes:

UC must receive form UCRS 160 (*Enrollment, Change or Cancellation—Direct Deposit*) by the 15th of the month to allow the prenote to go to bank on the 1st of the following month; the first (or changed) direct deposit then takes place on the 1st of the month after that. (Example: UCRS 160 received by August 15 is prenoted September 1, and the first—or changed—direct deposit is on October 1.) 🌺

New Dimensions Now Available Electronically

Retirees now have the option of reading an electronic version of *New Dimensions* rather than receiving the paper version through the mail. To discontinue receiving the paper version, sign in to your personal account on At Your Service Online (atyourserviceonline.ucop.edu). Select “Newsletter” under “Stay Connected,” and choose “electronic notification.” When future issues of the newsletter are available, you will receive an email notice with a link to the new issue.

Please note that you must have an email address on file to choose this option. While signed in to At Your Service Online, choose “My Contact Information” and then “Personal Email” to add or update your email address. 🌺



New Dimensions

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In conformance with applicable law and University policy, the University is an affirmative action/equal opportunity employer. Please send inquiries regarding the University's affirmative action and equal opportunity policies for staff to Director of Diversity and Employee Programs, University of California Office of the President, 300 Lakeside Drive, Oakland, CA 94612 and for faculty to Director of Academic Affirmative Action, University of California Office of the President, 1111 Franklin Street, Oakland, CA 94607.

Retiree Association Contacts

Use this listing if you are interested in joining an association or to inform your association of an address change. If you have moved away from your home campus emeriti/retiree association, you are welcome to join the association where you live.

If you have questions about your UCRS retirement benefits, call the UC Customer Service Center at 1-800-888-8267 (8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. PT)

UC Berkeley Retirement Center
510-642-5461, ucbrc@berkeley.edu
Fax: 510-643-1460

UC Davis Retiree Center
Doreen Barcellona Strnad, Coordinator
530-752-5182, dastrnad@ucdavis.edu

UC Irvine Emeriti Association
949-824-6204, emeriti@uci.edu

UCI Retiree Relations Center
949-824-7769, retirees@uci.edu

LANL Retiree Association
Mary Mariner
505-672-1950
Chuck Mansfield
505-662-2115

LBL Retiree Association
Suzanne Stroh
510-524-1953, scstroh@gmail.com

LLNL Employee Services Association
925-422-9402

UCLA Emeriti/Retirees Relations Center
310-825-7456, emeriti@errc.ucla.edu

President's and Regents' Retiree Association
Patricia Pelfrey
510-528-4490, ppelfrey@berkeley.edu

Note to associations: To update a listing, write to Anne Wolf at *New Dimensions* (email: anne.wolf@ucop.edu).

UC Riverside
Dericksen Brinkerhoff
951-682-3293
dericksen.brinkerhoff@ucr.edu
Retirees: Cliff Wurfel
951-689-3885, falaise27@cs.com

UCSD Retirement Resource Center
Suzan Cioffi, Director
858-534-4724, RetireeLink@ucsd.edu
or Emeriti@ucsd.edu

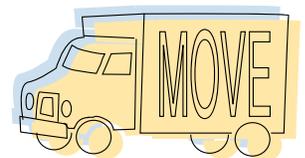
UC San Francisco
Emeriti: Ernest Newbrun
415-731-7421
Retirees: Frances Larragueta
415-776-7220

UC Santa Barbara Emeriti/Retiree Relations Center
805-893-2168

UC Santa Cruz
Emeriti: Stanley D. Stevens
831-475-9172, sstevens@library.ucsc.edu
Retirees: Lee Duffus
831-426-6960, duffus@cruzio.com

Are you moving?

If you want to continue to receive *New Dimensions*, be sure to notify UC of your change of address by submitting a *UC Benefits Address Change Notice* (UBEN 131). The form is available online (atyourservice.ucop.edu) or by calling the UC Customer Service Center (1-800-888-8267). 📞





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Inside:

- UC for California—page 1
- Research of Interest—page 2
- Kaiser Offers Wellness Health Assessment—page 3
- Retiree Travel—page 5
- and more...

Comments or questions?

Write *New Dimensions* at:
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Email: NewDimensions-L@ucop.edu

For benefits questions:

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