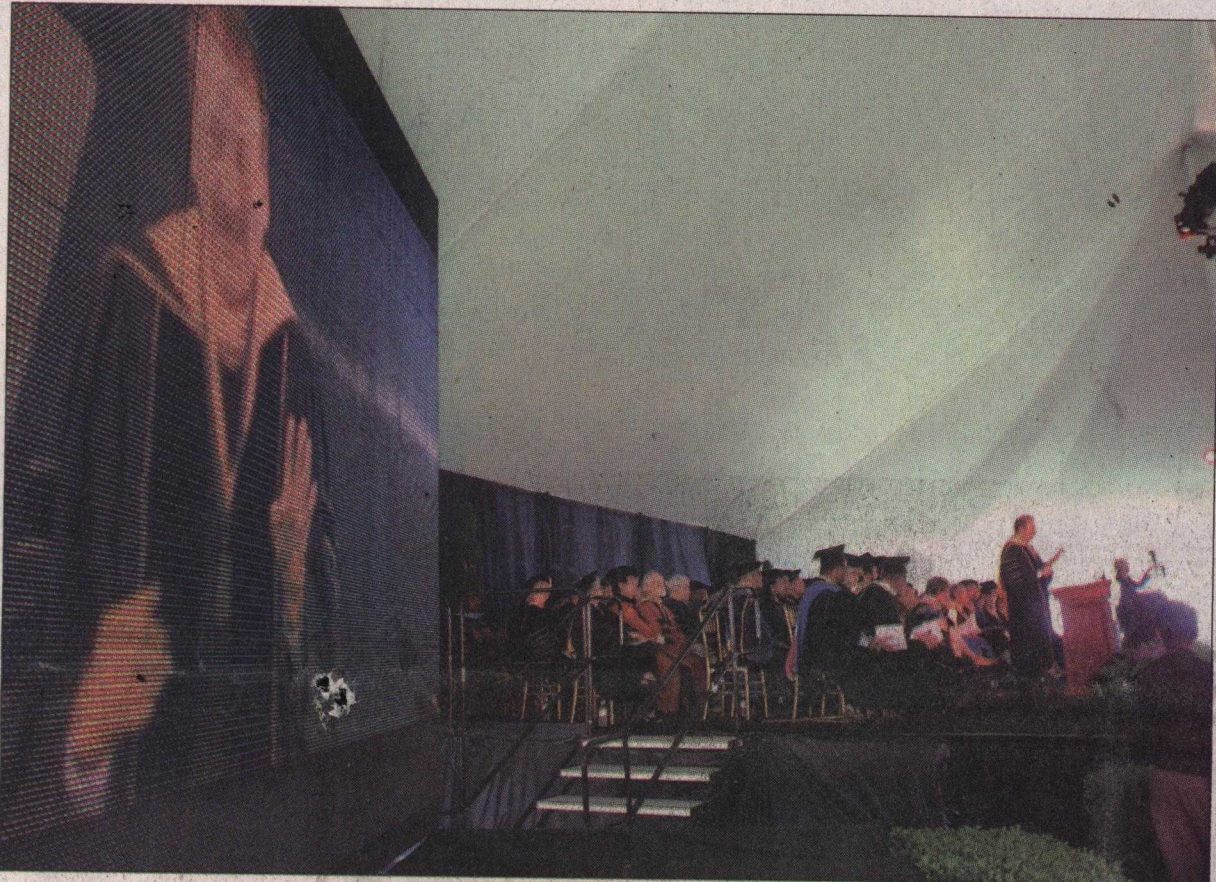


BLUMENTHAL INAUGURATION Pleas, praise for UCSC leader

UCSC CHANCELLOR'S APPOINTMENT MADE OFFICIAL AMID DEMONSTRATIONS OVER WORKERS' WAGES



Shmuel Thaler/Sentinel

The video image of George Blumenthal is presented on a giant screen as he delivers his inaugural address after being installed as the 10th chancellor of UC Santa Cruz Friday.

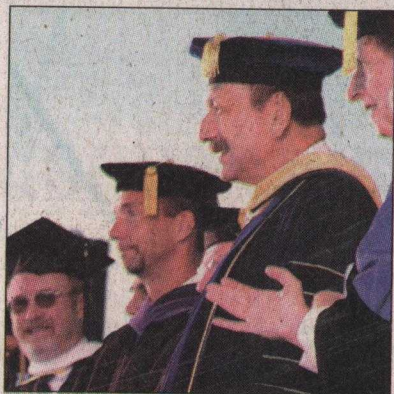
Mayor proclaims Friday as 'George Blumenthal Day'

By J.M. BROWN
SENTINEL STAFF WRITER

SANTA CRUZ — Amid a discordant backdrop that juxtaposed gushing populist praise from colleagues against boisterous disruptions from picketing workers, George R. Blumenthal was belatedly inaugurated Friday as UC Santa Cruz's 10th chancellor.

Dignitaries from the state, city and university heaped praise on the congenial astrophysicist and longtime faculty leader widely seen as a healing salve for the contention, distrust and tragedy that defined an earlier era. His unexpected ascension to the campus' top post came after the 2006 suicide of his predecessor, Denise Denton, and ushered in a comforting sense of stability.

But of 19 speakers at Friday's two-hour ceremony, it was 1999 alumna and Los Angeles school teacher Reyna Grande who tempered her exaltation with a charge to action. The Mexican-



Shmuel Thaler/Sentinel

UC Santa Cruz Chancellor George Blumenthal, second from right, is flanked by state Assemblyman and UCSC alum John Laird, Cabrillo College President Brian King and UC Regents Chairman Richard Blum during his inauguration Friday.

born author of the migration novel "Across A Hundred Mountains," which won the American Book Award, pleaded with Blumenthal to increase access for low-income students and intercede in the UC-wide battle over wages for 20,000 custodians, food service workers and health care providers on the verge of striking.

The daughter of a maintenance worker and flea market attendant, Grande recalled snaking a hair ball "the size of a rat" from a campus shower drain when she worked a student custodial job and sold hot dogs at the Boardwalk just to get by.

"Don't let students not pursue their dreams because they don't have the resources to do so," Grande told Blumenthal, whose post-inauguration reception was interrupted by a crowd of students and workers shouting "no contract, no peace" from behind a rope line guarded by police.

Workers calling for fair wages are "part of the UCSC family," Grande said.

Demonstrator Satya Chima said she did not feel bad about interrupting the East Field reception because she believed Blumenthal "isn't taking direct action" to increase wages.

"You can have your fancy events, but workers won't have these events," the second-year student said. "People are struggling not to live in poverty."

In a meeting with reporters after the ceremony, Blumenthal said he had recently used discretionary campus funds to raise the wages of the lowest paid workers but that it "is a matter of great sadness that the University

See INAUGURATION on PAGE A16

Inauguration

Continued from Page A1

of California is below market." He said labor negotiations continue on the universitywide level, but that, "I am very much concerned about paying fair wages to everyone that works on campus."

In the coming year, Blumenthal, 62, is certain to grapple with demonstrations over wages, as well as the debate over growth of the 15,000-student campus, perennial calls for increased student and faculty diversity, and the effect of state budget cuts. Blumenthal, whose July 2006 interim appointment was made permanent last September, is charged with balancing those challenges against his role as the top cheerleader for UCSC's

'I want us to be a learning community where we can communicate ideas and differences with tolerance, understanding and compassion.'

CHANCELLOR GEORGE BLUMENTHAL

renowned humanities programs and rising profile on the front lines of astronomy, genome research and other scientific innovation.

"I want us to be a learning community where we can communicate ideas and differences with tolerance, understanding and compassion," Blu-

menthal, who will soon launch UCSC's first comprehensive capital campaign, said during his address.

"Our founders asked us to be a university for the 21st century," he said. "Well, that is now, and we are already meeting that challenge every day. But I want more. And you should expect more."

Many speakers said Blumenthal, a former chair of both the campus and UC academic senates, is uniquely qualified to build consensus at UCSC, where he started working in 1972. Richard Blum, chair of the UC Regents, noted Blumenthal is the first UCSC chancellor to rise up through the faculty ranks.

"Your finest and best rising star is George," Blum said. "Everybody likes to work with George, even the Santa Cruz City Council."

Mayor Ryan Coonerty, who meets with Blu-

menthal regularly in ongoing mediation over concerns about campus expansion plans, appreciated Blum's humorous dig. Coonerty, who proclaimed Friday as George Blumenthal Day in Santa Cruz, joked that the council's enthusiastic support for Blumenthal might have done him more harm than good in some campus circles.

Michael T. Brown, chair of the UC Academic Senate, told Blumenthal, "You know how to bring a diverse constituency together. You are the faculty's chancellor, you are the students' chancellor, you are the staff's chancellor, you are the community's chancellor. And I'm hoping you become known as the donor's chancellor."

Contact J.M. Brown at 429-2410 or jbrown@santacruzsentinel.com.