

# Regents pick UCSC chancellor

UCSC - Faculty

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**Denice Denton, 45, has background in teaching, engineering**

By JONDI GUMZ  
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**DENTON**  
Opportunity to represent UCSC 'a real pleasure'

SANTA CRUZ — Growing up in Texas, Denice Denton learned from her mother, a math teacher and a single parent, that she could pursue whatever career she wanted.

er career she wanted.

She picked electrical engineering and entered academia. She won a slew of teaching awards and became the first woman in the nation to lead an engineering college of a major research university.

Now Denton, 45, will bring her drive and mentoring expertise to UC Santa Cruz, starting in February.

Her appointment as chancellor, with a salary of \$275,000, was announced Tuesday at a press conference at the UC Office of the President in Oakland. The vote by the UC Regents was unanimous.

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"It's a real pleasure to be taking on this opportunity," said Denton, describing the Santa Cruz campus as a place with "great people" and "on the move."

UC President Robert Dynes, introducing Denton, took time to praise acting Chancellor Martin Chemers for "leading with confidence and optimism" over the past year. Many faculty had hoped Chemers would get the job on a permanent basis.

Denton has been a rising star at the University of Washington since she became the engineering dean in 1996.

She changed recruiting practices and hired more women, and won a presidential award in May for mentoring in science, math and engineering.

At 39,000 students, the University of Washington is more than double the size of UCSC, which has 14,500 students and is contemplating growing to 21,000.

Asked about her vision for the campus, Denton said she planned to "get out to colleges and get a sense of the goals and aspirations of the faculty."

She expects the biggest challenge to be the fiscal climate in California, which has resulted in state funding cut-

backs at a time of escalating enrollment.

"I want to find a way to bring in the resources to take Santa Cruz to the next level," she said.

Denton has experience in fund raising, working on the \$72 million Paul G. Allen Center for Computer Science & Engineering, which opened last year.

"It's good to live in a town with guys named Bill and Paul," she quipped, referring to Microsoft's co-founders.

See **CHANCELLOR** on **BACK PAGE**

## Denice Dee Denton

**EDUCATION:** Four degrees in electrical engineering from MIT, including a doctorate; summer internship in Silicon Valley.

**CAREER:** Dear of engineering at the University of Washington since 1996, overseeing 225 faculty, 300 staff and 3,000 students with operating budget of \$155 million; nine years as faculty member at University of Wisconsin.

**ACCOMPLISHMENTS:** Diversifying hiring as faculty members won National Science Foundation awards, pioneering center to improve teaching, doubling federal research funding, opening \$72 million complex for computer science and engineering named for Microsoft co-founder Paul G. Allen.

**FAMILY:** Partner of seven years Gretchen Kalonji, materials science and engineering professor at University of Washington.

**RECOGNITION:** Presidential Award for Excellence in Science Mathematics and Engineering Mentoring, May 2004; five awards for teaching; National Science Foundation Young Investigator Award, 1987.

**QUOTE:** 'I want to find a way to bring in the resources to take Santa Cruz to the next level.'

## Quotes from UCSC screening committee

### ■ Ken Doctor, UCSC alumnus:

'What stands out immediately is a level of energy and accomplishment, which is unusual in academic circles. Alums value UCSC its commitment to undergrads. It's a difficult balance for a research university, but she has won a bunch of awards for her teaching and mentoring.'

### ■ Don Rothman, lecturer in writing, 32 years at UCSC:

'I have such mixed feelings. Marty Chemers brought something unique to the position, even in the brief time he's been acting chancellor, but I'm open to discovering who the new person is ... The school of engineering has attracted a first-rate faculty. How the rest of the campus can benefit from that success remains to be seen.'

### ■ Max Waxman, student representative on long-range development plan committee:

'I was hoping it would be Martin Chemers, but it will be interesting to have a new perspective. I hope the new chancellor will explore the forest as a new student does and learn the perspectives that are here. The new chancellor has to dovetail her work with the work Martin Chemers started with the community and with the students.'

### ■ Becky Klein, financial assistant at UCSC's engineering school; president of Coalition of Union Employees:

'This woman's got a lot of work ahead of her. Morale is at an all-time low. We've had layoffs and they're eliminating positions. CUE, AFSCME and most of UPTe don't have a contract. It will be interesting to see how she deals with all these challenges.'

## Chancellor

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She also mentioned the importance of cultivating alumni support by "providing students with great experiences on campus" and "ensuring that we stay in touch after they leave."

She is most proud of her efforts at Washington to recruit and retain a diverse student body and faculty. Of the 220 faculty, 16 percent are women, she said, compared to 4-8 percent at other campuses. Three are black, admittedly a small number, she said, but other campuses often have none.

The engineering college also has a higher percentage of female students than is typical, and created a partnership with tribal schools, she said.

That sort of outreach will "absolutely" happen at UCSC, she said, sharing an example of mentoring that was key for her future.

Encouragement by her high school teachers in physics, math and chemistry — all women — led her to consider engineering.

One teacher urged her to attend a summer program in engineering at Rice University.

Asked to describe Santa Cruz in three words, she said: "Sun, sand and surf," prompting laughs.

She explained that she visited Santa Cruz as a university student participating in a summer work co-op program in Silicon Valley. At 19, she was designing memory chips at Fairchild.

"You might imagine where I spent my weekend," she said. "I'm pleased to be coming back."

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