

# New chancellor seen as unifier of UCSC, city

UCSC - Faculty

LED CAMPUS SINCE DENTON'S DEATH

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DAVIS — After 14 months of commuting from Monte Sereno to his temporary gig at UC-Santa Cruz, acting Chancellor George Blumenthal has finally been handed the keys to the chancellor's residence.

University of California regents on Wednesday unanimously selected the popular Blumenthal to be the 10th chancellor of the University of California-Santa Cruz, then gave him a standing ovation.

Blumenthal, an astrophysicist, had gained the respect of students and faculty when he stepped in to unite the campus after the devastating suicide of Chancellor Denise Denton, who leaped from a San Francisco skyscraper in June 2006.

"He has done a great job,



**Blumenthal**  
Physicist to try to raise UCSC's stature, boost work at its Silicon Valley Center.

## SANTA CRUZ

and we had high hopes he would be named," said John Leopold, an alumnus who now works as a campus fundraiser.

"He is authentically trying to build a relationship with members of the community," Leopold said. "That's what you get with George — a real authenticity. What he says he is, that's who he is. That is refreshing. It is nice that the Office

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# CHANCELLOR | UC regents appoint acting leader to permanent post

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of the President recognized the value of that."

Santa Cruz city leaders were just as enthusiastic about his appointment. Mardi Wormhoudt, a former Santa Cruz County supervisor, called it "a very positive step for town-gown relationships."

Wormhoudt has led the charge against UC's plan to expand the university's size in this once-sleepy, left-leaning coastal burg.

Longtime City Councilman Mike Rotkin, a UCSC community-studies instructor, called Blumenthal "an honorable person and a straightforward person who listens carefully."

Added Rotkin: "We don't have illusions that we will have our way. But within the limits of his authority, he is a very good person to administer the university. He will serve us well."

As a scientist, Blumenthal's appointment will further fuel UCSC's ambitions to raise its stature as a major research university. At a news conference at the regents meeting in Davis, he promised to strengthen that role — specifically, boosting work at its Silicon Valley Center, based at the NASA/Ames Research Park at Moffett Field.

## UCSC veteran

"I have spent more than three decades at this campus, and I love it dearly," said Blu-

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— COUNCILMAN MIKE ROTKIN, A UCSC INSTRUCTOR

menthal, who will earn \$310,000 a year in his new job. "I have watched UCSC evolve from its innovative, pioneering roots to a vibrant nationally ranked research university, and the campus has done this without losing its distinctive, personalized focus on undergraduate education. . . . I will plan strategically and act boldly to continue, and indeed accelerate, UCSC's upward trajectory."

Blumenthal, 61, also promised to work with the city of Santa Cruz on the contentious growth issue, saying he was sympathetic to some of the city's concerns.

UC regents want to increase the size of UCSC's student body — now at 15,000 — by 30 percent over the next 12 years. They also want to boost building square-footage by 66 percent and add three new professional schools.

"We have interests in common that exceed our differences. The key thing is communication," Blumenthal said at a news conference following his appointment.

Blumenthal said the university contributes to Santa Cruz by helping to create new start-ups in the city based on its cutting-edge research,

thus strengthening its tax base.

"The university serves as an incubator," he said.

Among his favorite projects, he said, are the school's fledgling Department of Technology and Information Management, its Bio-Info-Nano Research and Development Institute and the University Affiliated Research Center.

He also said he wants to make the campus more "family-friendly."

He favors a loan program to help faculty buy homes and said he welcomed the opening of the long-awaited Ranch View Terrace subdivision for faculty and staff. A boost in faculty salaries, to be voted on by UC regents today, would help, he said.

He also aims to build partnerships with local schools to create more affordable child care. If that fails, "we'll go it alone," he said. "This is an enormous issue — child care for faculty is inadequate. I'm embarrassed we haven't done more."

## Family man

Blumenthal was accompanied at the news conference by his wife, Kelly Weisberg, a

professor of family law at UC-Hastings College of the Law in San Francisco who taught class on Wednesday morning before rushing to join him. Their son is attending UC-Berkeley; their daughter just started at Harvard.

Blumenthal has been a faculty member since 1972, teaching and conducting research into theoretical astrophysics. The Wisconsin native earned his B.S. degree from the University of Wisconsin-Madison and his doctorate in physics from UC-San Diego.

Before being named acting chancellor, Blumenthal worked with the regents to provide UC access to the top 12.5 percent of high school graduates, as well as ease transfer of community college students to the 10-campus system.

UC President Dynes praised Blumenthal's wide-ranging intellect and leadership abilities.

"We are choosing a person who has contributed significantly to UCSC's richly deserved reputation for producing world-class research and student-focused instruction," he said. Blumenthal's "thoughtful, collegial and constructive leadership style will solidify UCSC's stature as one of the premier research universities in the nation."

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