



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

January 9, 2004

Contact: Patti Waid Istas  
Office of Communications  
(209) 724-4483 or (209) 658-4483  
e-mail: [pistas@ucmerced.edu](mailto:pistas@ucmerced.edu)

Or: Sheryl Wyan  
(209) 724-4408 or (209) 658-9101

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, MERCED  
4225 NORTH HOSPITAL ROAD  
BUILDING 1200  
ATWATER, CALIFORNIA 95301  
(209) 724-4400  
(209) 724-4499 FAX  
[www.ucmerced.edu](http://www.ucmerced.edu)

## GOVERNOR'S BUDGET INCLUDES FUNDING FOR UC MERCED

### *Campus to open in 2005*

*Merced, CA* – Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger's proposed budget for fiscal year 2004-05, which was released today (Jan 9<sup>th</sup>), includes \$10 million in one-time supplemental funds for UC Merced in addition to \$10 million in permanent funding.

Chancellor Carol Tomlinson-Keasey thanked the governor for his support during these very difficult fiscal times. "Access to higher education is critical to the overall health of the State, and we are enormously grateful that the governor values the importance of UC Merced in providing this access. In addition, his expressed support reflects an understanding of the role UC Merced is already playing in the economic development of the Central Valley that ultimately ties in with the economic recovery of the entire state. The construction of the campus is providing jobs to hundreds of workers throughout the region; the campus is spending millions of dollars with regional businesses; and the faculty is attracting millions of federal dollars to conduct research important to California."

The current plan to serve 1,000 students in fall 2005 requires \$20 million in one-time funding in fiscal year 2004-05 to fund faculty hiring, enrollment and student support services, library materials and operational expenses related to establishing a research campus.

"In order to meet the goal of opening next year, and in recognition of the funds provided in the governor's budget, we will need to undertake a thorough review of previously planned academic programs and services, and determine how to maintain UC-quality teaching and research with a reduced budget," said Tomlinson-Keasey.

The campus plans to open its doors in fall 2005, with a mix of undergraduate and graduate students. Planned undergraduate academic majors include: computer science and engineering; environmental engineering; biological sciences; earth systems sciences; social and behavioral sciences; and world cultures and history. Graduate programs are planned to include systems biology, environmental systems, and molecular structure and engineering.

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"UC Merced remains critical to expanding educational opportunity in the San Joaquin Valley and to UC's long-term ability to accommodate growing college demand statewide," said University of California President Robert Dynes.

The campus site is currently under construction and evolving daily as the buildings take shape. Construction funding has been provided over the past four years through a combination of bond, state and UC funds, and includes the construction of three academic buildings, student housing and dining, a recreation center, and campus site infrastructure.

Today's release of the governor's proposed budget is the first step toward a final State budget, which must be approved by the governor and the legislature – an event that is generally adopted in the summer.

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