

— UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA —  
**UCMERCED**

**UC MERCED CAMPUS REPORT FOR CUCSA – September 2005**

**10<sup>TH</sup> UC CAMPUS OPENED ON SEPTEMBER 5, 2005!**



Photo By Hans Marsen

Aerial view of main campus: left L-shape building: Leo Kolligian Library; next to Library: Classroom and Office Building; Lower right: Science and Engineering Building; Further right: Central Plant/ Telecom and Tank



Photo By Hans Marsen

Aerial view: campus entrance from left to parking lots, then to Valley Terrace Apartments and Dining Complex, continue to Campus buildings

On September 5, 2005, with a tribute to its 137-year history and a message of hope for the future, the University of California officially opened its first new campus in 40 years - the University of California, Merced - and welcomed the inaugural class of students.

UC Merced becomes the 10th campus in the country's largest university system. It is the first UC campus ever built in the fast-growing San Joaquin Valley and the first American research university of the 21st century.

"You have aimed high and worked hard to reach this glorious day," UC President Robert C. Dynes told a cheering throng of faculty, staff, students, parents, community leaders, elected officials, donors and others attending the 90-minute convocation and opening ceremony. "This is a very proud day for our system and our state."

The opening of UC Merced comes 17 years after the UC Board of Regents first recommended adding a new campus to accommodate the state's rapidly growing population. Merced was chosen as the site in 1995, and groundbreaking began in 2002. The opening, originally scheduled for the fall of 2004, was pushed back a year as a result of the state's budgetary problems.

"UC Merced will help fulfill the promise of access to qualified students from all over the state," said Gerald Parsky, chairman of the UC Board of Regents. Noting that nearly one-half the students in UC Merced's inaugural class will be the first in their families to go to college, he added, "We look forward to this new campus to help inspire the educational dreams of young people and their families throughout the Valley and the rest of the state for generations to come."

Historically, college-attendance rates in the state's interior valleys have averaged about half that of the state as a whole, according to public records. The absence of a college-going culture is often cited as a root cause of the region's higher than average unemployment and poverty rates.

"Almost all of the industries in which California now leads the world grew out of university-based research," he said. "More than 1,000 California biotech, high-tech and other R&D-intensive companies put UC research to work every day."

UC Merced Chancellor Carol Tomlinson-Keasey, who has guided development of the new campus since her appointment in 1999, recalled the Gold Rush-era roots of the University of California and the conviction of the state's early leaders to create a university to serve the people.

"Beginnings like today offer great promise," she said. "We have seen the humble, rural beginnings of nine other UC campuses turn into millions of alumni leading the world, thousands of innovative ideas, and artistic creations that thrill the soul. UC Merced resolves to reach that same high standard."

"I hope each of you takes great pride in the students and faculty assembled here for they will turn this campus into a perfect 10," she added.

In his keynote address, Merced native Charles J. Ogletree, Jr., a professor at Harvard Law School and executive director of the Charles Hamilton Houston Institute for Race and Justice at Harvard, spoke of the transforming effects the college experience will have on the lives of UC Merced's inaugural class. Ogletree is a Merced High School graduate who went on to earn bachelor's and master's degrees from Stanford University and a law degree from Harvard Law School.

"As you pursue your education here at UC Merced, you will meet people, engage in serious debate, change your point of view, and ultimately grow intellectually and emotionally, in this rich and challenging educational environment," he said. "These experiences will profoundly affect you, today and tomorrow, and when you have a moment to reflect on your brilliant career, the time at UC Merced will be viewed as a crucial turning point in your life."

Symbolizing the pioneering spirit of the first class, three students - a first-year student, a transfer student from Merced College and a graduate student - rode to today's opening ceremony in a covered wagon. They were followed by a lengthy procession of students, parents, founding faculty and staff, donors, trustees and UC officials.

UC Merced will begin classes on September 6 with 55 founding faculty members recruited from some of the world's leading universities. Approximately 1,000 students, including 38 graduate students, will comprise the inaugural class. Nearly 600 students moved into brand-new university housing and christened the state-of-the-art dining facility over the weekend. The remainder will commute or live in off-campus housing.

The university expects to add approximately 800 students per year for the next 30 years, ultimately topping out at approximately 25,000 students.