

President Napolitano's first year: Summary of activities and accomplishments

When Janet Napolitano became president of the University of California system on Sept. 30, 2013, she stated that her first priority would be to listen and learn by visiting UC campuses, national labs and other locations throughout the state — and to be a strong advocate for the university. Based on what she learned, President Napolitano launched initiatives to marshal the resources of the entire UC system, and took other actions to leverage opportunities and address a variety of challenges and needs. Here is a summary of her activities and achievements in her first year as UC's president.

LISTENING AND LEARNING

President Napolitano met with faculty, students and staff during visits to all 10 UC campuses, five medical centers, and three associated national laboratories. She also toured, on land and by plane, Central Valley areas affected by California's drought and supported by the activities of UC's Division of Agriculture and Natural Resources.

- Campus visits: Merced, San Diego, Los Angeles, Santa Cruz, Irvine, Riverside, Davis, San Francisco, Santa Barbara and Berkeley.
- National laboratory visits to Lawrence Berkeley, Lawrence Livermore and Los Alamos.
- President Napolitano also met with student interns working in Yosemite National Park, and visited the UCSF Fresno Medical Education Program, where she met with Doctors Academy students and physicians in training.
- Throughout the year, the president met regularly with faculty and representatives of the Academic Senate, with researchers and staff, and with a variety of student constituencies including transfer students, student veterans, undocumented students and student government representatives.
- President Napolitano engaged with students, staff and alumni via Google Hangouts, and a future Google Hangout is planned with faculty. She also has met with alumni at receptions across the state.
- The president established a Business Executive Council of senior leaders from major California companies across a range of sectors to build strategic relationships with the business community.

PRESIDENTIAL INITIATIVES

In order to capitalize on the collective strength of the UC system, President Napolitano launched several initiatives in her first year. These initiatives — which are in various stages of progress — will focus UC resources on local and global food issues; speed the translation of UC research into products and services; achieve carbon neutrality across the UC system by 2025; enhance community college transfers; stabilize tuition; strengthen UC's engagement with Mexico; provide financial support for undocumented students that puts them on equal financial aid footing with other students; expand opportunities for advanced degrees; increase support for new and future faculty members through post-doctoral fellowships; and improve services for student veterans.

- **UC Global Food Initiative:** The university held major kick-off events in July for the initiative at the Edible Schoolyard in Berkeley, the California State Board of Food and Agriculture in Sacramento, and at a student

garden at UCLA. A Global Food Initiative working group has been formed and began work around five areas (curriculum, operations, policy, research and service/outreach). The President's Global Food Initiative Student Fellowships were created, providing each campus \$7,500 for the fellowships. An additional \$15,000 in matching funds also has been donated by outside partners.

- **Technology commercialization:** The UC Innovation Council was formed and first met in August. UC Ventures, an independent fund to pursue investments in UC research-fueled enterprises, was approved by the UC Board of Regents in September. A new program has been approved for accepting equity from faculty startup companies in exchange for use of university facilities and services. And future discussions are planned about best practices in entrepreneurship, incubation and venture development.
- **Carbon neutrality:** The president created the Global Climate Leadership Council, which met in June, and UCOP has launched an Energy Services Unit. UC also registered as an Electric Service Provider (ESP) and signed a 25-year agreement to obtain a substantial amount of solar energy. A new Task Force on Sustainable Investing made recommendations to the regents in September about investing in climate solutions and integrating Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) factors. UC also became a signatory of the United Nations-supported Principles for Responsible Investment in September.
- **Transfer students:** The UC Transfer Action Team, convened by President Napolitano, presented its report in May, including recommendations for streamlining the transfer process, working more closely with the California Community College and California State University systems, enhancing UC's message to prospective transfer students, creating an inventory of available services, and identifying new areas of need.
- **Tuition:** At the president's direction, UC staff currently is examining several tuition models that fit with a long-range budget model for the university to ensure that a UC education is both affordable and accessible for California students.
- **UC-Mexico initiative:** UC officials have visited Mexico several times and have broadened relations with Mexican universities, government officials and agencies. The university entered into a Memorandum of Understanding with CONACYT, the Mexican National Council for Science and Technology, to increase research collaborations. Staff has been hired to oversee the partnership, and the UC-Mexico Initiative Advisory Council and working groups are being established.
- **Undocumented students:** President Napolitano committed \$5 million, to be distributed across the UC system, to enhance student services for undocumented students, expand their access to financial aid, and improve their retention and graduation rates. A systemwide resource website was launched, and more than 120 staff members across the system have been trained to better assist undocumented students. The President's Advisory Council on Undocumented Students met in the spring and will shape a 2014-15 UC summit on this issue.
- **Graduate students:** This two-pronged initiative is focused on enhancing the pipeline of underrepresented minority students who pursue Ph.D.s at UC. First, President Napolitano directed \$2 million to fellowships that will increase the enrollment of former UC-HBCU (historically black colleges and universities) interns in UC Ph.D. programs. These fellowships have facilitated the recruitment of seven interns who will begin UC Ph.D. programs this fall. Second, the existing Eugene Cota-Robles Awards have been supplemented with \$3 million in one-time funding, to be used at UC campuses over three years.
- **President's Post-doctoral Fellowship Program:** Start-up support has been awarded to three new faculty members hired into STEM fields at UC San Diego and UC Irvine. Future awards and activities are planned, including hiring incentive awards; systemwide memberships with the National Center for Faculty

Development and Diversity; an intensive coaching program; and diversity- and inclusion-focused leadership seminars for academic administrators.

- **Student veterans initiative:** President Napolitano has met with a group of student veterans to discuss issues they face at the university. The meeting resulted in the creation last winter of a systemwide advisory group on veterans' issues. UC also plans to launch a systemwide website with resources and information specific to student veterans.

In addition to formal initiatives, President Napolitano has taken other actions to respond to challenges facing the university and to enhance the UC experience for students.

- The president formed the Task Force on Preventing and Responding to Sexual Violence and Sexual Assault. The task force objectives include implementing strategies to support excellence in prevention, response and reporting; creating an environment where the campus community feels safe and supported; and improving current processes. The task force presented seven initial recommendations to the UC Board of Regents in September, forming the foundation for a systemwide model to effectively address sexual violence throughout the university.
- President Napolitano formed an advisory group that will focus on making UC a more welcoming and inclusive environment for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender students, faculty and staff. The group met for the first time this fall.
- As California experienced some of its driest weather on record, President Napolitano announced that the university would do its part to conserve and committed to cutting the university's water use by 20 percent by 2020.
- To spur private giving to UC, the president established a matching fund that could add 100 endowed faculty chairs to the UC system over the next five years.
- President Napolitano launched the UC Oakland Partnership in an effort to strengthen ties between the Office of the President — located in downtown Oakland — and the community by supporting local businesses and civic organizations. The partnership also awarded scholarships to six Oakland high school students who will attend a UC campus this fall and qualify for the university's Blue and Gold Opportunity Plan.

ADVOCACY

President Napolitano began building relationships with California Gov. Jerry Brown and key legislative leaders, among others, including a 25-member council made up of legislators who represent UC campuses and medical centers. As the chief advocate for UC's legislative agenda and state and federal funding for the university, Napolitano advocated for the Legislature and the governor to move forward to provide additional funding of 5 percent to UC's state budget base. The president also advocated for increased federal support, and pursued state and federal legislation that reflects some of her major initiatives and priorities, including:

In California:

- Creating a state-UC partnership to establish the DREAMer Student Loan Program (SB 1210).
- Streamlining UC business practices as a means of achieving substantial savings (SB 502 and AB 2726).
- Ensuring that all military veterans seeking access to UC receive financial assistance to do so (SB 1330).

At the federal level:

- Submitting testimony to the U.S. Senate, calling on the federal government to recommit to investing in research.
- Supporting the Bank on Students Emergency Loan Refinancing Act, which would allow struggling borrowers to refinance federal and private student loans at lower rates.
- Supporting the Survivor Outreach and Support Campus Act, which would ensure that colleges and universities have a single point of contact for survivors of sexual assault, and would provide survivors with ready access to the information and services they need.
- Participating in the White House Summit on Higher Education and College Opportunity, where the president spoke about UC's achievements in improving federal and institutional student financial support.
- Promoting strong gainful employment regulations to increase institutional accountability for federal student aid dollars.
- Working to ensure that any new college rating systems issued by the federal government include metrics that focus on quality and provide students and parents with information that is helpful in making decisions about their educational futures.

ADMINISTRATIVE ACTIONS

- **Efficiency review:** In fall 2013, President Napolitano announced an efficiency review of the Office of the President to improve operations and reduce costs. The review has led to a series of changes over the past year, including budget and staffing caps at current levels; restrictions on the use of outside consultants; implementation of cloud computing and video conferencing; and streamlining administrative processes. Additional improvements are expected in the future.
- **Labor contracts:** Over the past year, the university has signed 10 labor agreements with unions representing UC employees, including the California Nurses Association and the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees.
- **Reorganization of CFO and COO functions:** In March, following the departure of former CFO Peter Taylor, the Office of the President began a review of the Business Operations division and the Office of the Chief Financial Officer to determine the best structure for both moving forward. As a result of the review, Nathan Brostrom was named UC's new CFO. He also is serving as interim COO until fall 2015 or until a permanent appointment is made, whichever occurs first. Under the revised structure, all units involved in systemwide financial operations will come under the CFO umbrella, while all units involved in operational activity will report to the COO.