




THE CASE FOR SUPPORT

5300 Social and Behavioral Sciences Gateway
Irvine, CA 92697
socialecology.uci.edu/give

BRILLIANT FUTURE
THE CAMPAIGN FOR **UCI**



***“We are a school dedicated
to creating a healthy,
just, sustainable and
compassionate future for
people around the world.”***

— Nancy Guerra, Dean



From eroding coastlines and flooding, to poverty, homelessness, miscarriages of justice and the mental health crisis, the School of Social Ecology is uniquely positioned to solve some of the most pressing social and environmental problems impacting Orange County, California, the nation and the world.

These challenges are alarming in our community, but they are solvable, and what we learn and do here will be salient and beneficial far beyond our own region. We have a remarkable opportunity to pioneer solutions to today's challenges and forge a brilliant future.

「let's drive solutions」

The School of Social Ecology is a leader in impact-driven scholarship. We bring together faculty and students from various disciplines — psychology, criminology, sociology, urban planning, public policy, anthropology, economics and law, to name a few — in departments and interdisciplinary research hubs.

Addressing the problems facing us today requires the social ecological approach pioneered by our school. This approach acknowledges that human flourishing depends on deeply interconnected social and natural systems. It produces scientific knowledge that can drive comprehensive solutions to complex challenges. This is why our guiding ethos is “Science Driving Solutions.”

We are focusing our UCI Brilliant Future campaign efforts on three targeted areas we believe best leverage our interdisciplinary expertise, address timely and acute challenges, and have the greatest potential for lasting impact: integrated behavioral health, compassion action and social and environmental justice.

improving mental health

Integrated Behavioral Health

Four of the 10 leading causes of disability in the United States are mental disorders, and it is estimated that depression alone costs the U.S. economy \$44 billion annually in lost days at work. In Orange County over the last 10 years, hospitalization for depression has risen by 28 percent and suicide deaths have increased by 12 percent. According to a recent UCI Community Health Needs Assessment, mental illness is Orange County's No. 1 identified healthcare need.


The predictors of mental illness are numerous and often involve biological, environmental and social factors. Social Ecology is ideally suited to tackle this critical issue. Not only are we passionate about preventing and treating mental illness, but also improving mental health by taking an interdisciplinary perspective and holistic approach to science-driven solutions.

Because mental health is often linked with physical health, we are partnering with the Susan and Henry Samueli College of Health Sciences and Department of Psychiatry and Human Behavior to build an integrative system that addresses both.

We strive to:

- Make our new Ph.D. program in clinical psychology — to start in 2021 — a leader in the state and nation. California is suffering from a severe shortage of qualified clinical psychologists. UCI will become the fifth major research university in California and the only one in Orange County to offer this in-demand degree. Our students will benefit from close collaboration with the Department of Psychiatry in the UCI Medical School, and have access to numerous, cutting-edge research opportunities and specialty clinics, focused initially on healthy aging, PTSD and trauma, sleep disorders, substance abuse and mood disorders.

- Enhance UCI Health Newport — Birch Street clinic's outpatient services, making it a hub for several research labs on site. This will bring the strengths of UCI to the community and serve the full spectrum of mental health needs.
- Develop a new and innovative Wellness Initiative in Social Ecology (WISE) to serve our students, who are confronted with a range of challenges from anxiety and depression to nutrition and stress. This initiative will focus on systemic issues impacting student mental health and well-being, develop and promote a series of wellness undergraduate courses, establish a minor in mental health and wellness, and stimulate relevant research across campus.



*It is estimated that depression alone costs the U.S. economy **\$44 billion annually** in lost days at work.*

Embracing our common humanity

Compassion Action Project

In the face of myriad local and global challenges and conflicts, we are recognizing the importance of kindness, empathy and compassion — skills that foster action for the common good while providing clear benefits to the individual. We must focus beyond our allies or preferred groups to embrace the notion of our common humanity. The Compassion Action Project addresses central questions: How can we leverage our research to design solutions for the greater good? Can we design a more compassionate justice and correctional system? Can we increase social impact in the private sector? Can we mobilize policy makers to end sex trafficking and bonded child labor? Can we teach students to practice compassion in their lives, work and communities? Can we reduce compassion fatigue in the fields of healthcare and humanitarian action?

Our Compassion Action Project is mobilizing university and community resources to answer these questions.

- **CompassionU** — We seek to infuse compassion into the research, curriculum and extracurricular activities of universities. We are launching and evaluating a broad range of projects, including the Global Service Scholars, a one-year academic and service-learning program. Undergraduate students study the science and practice of compassion and incorporate what they learn into international service projects at sites across the globe. Our Small Change, Better World initiative funds students to design, implement and evaluate problem-solving projects locally and abroad. And, our innovative online science and practice of compassion course, available to all UC students, is in high demand and growing.
- **Social Impact** — There is a growing movement in social entrepreneurship and social enterprise. A healthy balance between business and charity involves leveraging market forces and business practices to develop innovative and sustainable approaches to creating a more fair and just

world. Utilizing lessons gained from our signature field study service-learning program, the School of Social Ecology is well-positioned to develop workshops and programs to increase corporate social impact. These products will ultimately provide a sustainable source of funding for our student- and community-centered programming.

- **Children's Compassion Network** — In partnership with the UNICEF Office of Research on Child Rights and Protection, we are creating a network that will bring together leaders from around the world to find ways to improve the lives of marginalized, abused and neglected children. For example, we are preparing a report on the economics of human trafficking in Orange County to support programs and policies aimed at eliminating this tragic problem.





「fostering vibrant communities」


Social and Environmental Justice

With the largest coastline in the United States and environments ranging from the Sierra Nevada to the Salton Sea, as well as an economically and ethnically diverse population, California faces nearly every environmental and social challenge imaginable. Major threats, human and natural, continually endanger communities. From the erosion of our coastlines to miscarriages of justice, to the availability of affordable housing, citizens and policymakers are looking to researchers to help find viable remedies. We are applying our new discoveries by:

- Initiating and providing leadership for a campuswide effort to develop an innovative and accessible bachelor's degree program for California prisoners — a bold step in preparing them for successful re-entry into our communities.

- Leveraging our deep academic knowledge base and building on our decades-long expertise in community engagement and urban development to create a new “Livable Cities Lab.” The lab will promote interdisciplinary scholarship relevant to planned communities and cities of the future, prepare white papers and policy briefings on key factors impacting livability across multiple sectors (health, crime, housing, etc.), and work with local agencies and communities to benefit the future of Orange County and beyond.

*Social Ecology researchers are finding **viable solutions** to ensure the health of our communities.*

- 
- Developing and evaluating, through a randomized trial, the Orange County Young Adult Court. This innovative court recognizes the developmental needs of young people, ages 18 to 25, are unique. The Young Adult Court is a supportive program to help young people with felony convictions turn their lives around and become productive members of society.
 - Gaining new perspectives on the intersections of environment, crime, business, transportation and housing in Orange County and the region through the Metropolitan Futures Initiative and the new Spatial Analysis Laboratory for Teaching and Research (SALTR), by mining multiple big data sets using GIS mapping as well as longitudinal and spatial statistical analyses.
 - Facilitating seamless collaboration between campus researchers and community agencies through Water UCI to design science-based policy and promote solutions to the mounting pressures of providing clean and accessible water. Current initiatives include fostering urban water resilience, sustainably managing regional groundwater resources, and enhancing water education in public schools and community colleges.
 - Addressing the complex challenges of poverty and inequality that have become acute in California through community-engaged research in areas of urgent concern such as flood-risk mitigation through the Blum Center for Poverty Alleviation, which connects the School to the vast resources of the entire UC system.





「let's build a future together」

The solutions we seek are unique, widely salient and are stitched together by one common thread: your support. By joining us on this path to a brilliant future, your gift to the School of Social Ecology will empower faculty and students to tackle and solve these problems.

Student Support

Scholarships and fellowships help us ensure that the best and brightest students can take full advantage of all Social Ecology has to offer. Annual gifts from \$5,000 and up or endowed gifts, beginning at \$100,000, make their dreams possible.

Faculty Support

From the lab to practitioners on the ground, faculty research support is the foundation of our search for solutions. Endowed chairs beginning at \$3 million allow us to recruit and retain the best academic minds in the country in perpetuity.

Program Support

Transformative efforts like Integrated Behavioral Health, Compassion and Social and Environmental Justice require significant investments — investments that will reap untold benefits for our communities and the world.

The needs are great, but the rewards are much greater.

