Chancellor recognized for efforts

Michael Drake honored for increasing diversity at UCI.

From growing up during the Civil Rights era to his experiences in medical school, UC Irvine's fifth chancellor, Michael Drake, is not a stranger to diversity issues. While in medical school, he was inspired to take action after noticing a disparity in disease outcome among poor and minority communities compared with other groups.

"A lot of my research and career over decades was looking at ways we could work to improve the quality of treatment to the most vulnerable segments of society," Drake said.

His commitment to quality also can be seen in his leadership at UCI. Drake will be recognized this week by the nonprofit OC Human Relations as a diverse community leader. He is one of five recipients honored this year for advocating for human or civil rights.

Founded in 1991, OC Human Relations develops and implements community human relations programs, often related to conflict-resolution and inter-group relations, and is known for its work in diversity around the county. Recently, the organization held a public forum and listening sessions after reports that a Yorba Linda family experienced a series of hate crimes and moved out of the community last year.

OC Human Relations Executive Director Rusty Kennedy and Deputy Director Alison Edwards said they award different "superstars" in the human relations arena each year, and are honoring Drake for his internal work of promoting free speech and a marketplace of ideas within the campus community.

Drake puts in "efforts he wouldn't necessarily have to, as part of his personal or individual goals," Kennedy said. "He does not take the easy path."

For Drake, promoting diversity is nothing new. He has seen the university gain a new medical school, law school and improvements in its academic programs during his tenure, and he emphasizes diversity as a major part of UCI's success. Since he was appointed chancellor in 2005, he has implemented various programs and platforms for faculty, staff and students.

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students to voice their concerns about their campus community and not only accept but embrace their different views.

Such programs include the Olive Tree Initiative, which shed light on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict; faculty workshops on diversity; and "What Matters to Me and Why" informal lunchtime series. Drake also received recognition in 2007 for his role in creating the Program in Medical Education for the Latino Community, a UCI School of Medicine program focused on improving health care for California’s Latino population. The program started in 2004 when Drake was vice president for health affairs for the University of California system. Drake said the program has carried over to five UC medical schools.

"When we think of diversity, it really means a wide variety of things from a wide variety of traditions," Drake said. "From our LGBT and immigrant communities to our athletes and our fraternities and sororities, our job is to allow people from any one of those groups to come here and to thrive.”

Drake said a thriving campus involves looking into whether communities broadly across California are represented on campus, along with measuring success by graduation rates and retention rates. He said he is proud of how his students respect each other and exchange ideas, even in circumstances of different traditions and different points of view.

One of the things Kennedy commended Drake for was his way of dealing with the volatile and high-profile "Irvine II" incident in 2010, when several Muslim UCI students disrupted a speech on campus by the Israeli ambassador to the United States. The Orange County District Attorney’s Office chose to prosecute the protesters on misdemeanor charges, and a jury found them guilty of disturbing a public meeting.

"He offered guidance through the incident and met with students, the police chief and (the UCI administration),” Kennedy said.

Drake noted that this month marks the 60th anniversary of Jackie Robinson joining Major League Baseball. He saw that day as an example of how diversity and inclusion make the best possible team. Still, he is not a fan of seeing diversity as adding something "extra" to UCI’s campus environment.

"It’s supposed to be normal,” Drake said. “When it’s normal that we are inclusive, then we are where we want to be.”

### Drake’s influence on UCI diversity

**2005**
- Michael Drake appointed as UC Irvine’s fifth chancellor.
- Since then, Drake has worked to increase the number of underrepresented minorities (African Americans, Chicano/Latinos and American Indians) on campus. That number has grown from 4,491 in Fall 2006 to 5,727 in Fall 2012, said Cathy Lawhon, director of media relations and community outreach at UC Irvine.

**2007**
- The Olive Tree Initiative is founded at UC Irvine. Its founding mission was to calm tensions between pro-Israeli and pro-Palestinian groups on campus through firsthand knowledge of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict gained through travel, academics, politicians, religious authorities, community leaders and activists. The program has since expanded to other campuses.
- Drake is a 2007 Champions of Health Professions Diversity recipient by The California Wellness Foundation for his role in creating the UC Irvine School of Medicine’s Program in Medical Education for the Latino Community, or PRIME-LC, in 2004.

**2007-2009**
- The Chancellor’s Advisory Committee on the Status of Staff focuses on diversity issues through town halls and workshops.

**2010**
- Gender-neutral restrooms established on campus as requested by the university’s LGBT resource center that same year. “Drake saw to it that it happened,” Lawhon said.
- Drake leads UC Irvine’s first Advisory Council on Campus Climate, Culture and Inclusion.

**2012**
- The informal lunchtime series, “What Matters to Me and Why,” is created for faculty from different backgrounds to speak about their values and motivations.
- UC Irvine’s ADVANCE program celebrated its 10th anniversary. The program, re-funded by Drake in 2012, seeks faculty gender equality and diversity through recruitment, retention and advancement opportunities. Lawhon said it increased women faculty members from 24.1 percent to 30.6 percent and new female hires from 33 percent to 41 percent.

**2013**
- Drake highly encouraged UC Irvine faculty, staff and students to participate in the UC-wide “Climate Assessment for Living, Learning and Working” survey in January, which gauged how student, staff and faculty view UC Irvine as a place to work, learn and live.