

UC Santa Cruz

Graduating Banana Slugs give back

Recent grad writes about importance of 'Class of 2013' gift

September 19, 2012

By [Mitchell Bates \(Cowell '12, politics\)](#)

At UC Santa Cruz, students don't sit around and wait for things to change. We stand up and fight for what's right. We challenge the status quo and embrace the alternative.

In 1980, when Chancellor Robert Sinsheimer chose the sea lion to be our mascot, the student body collectively shouted "Fiat Slug!" In 2003, years before Al Gore's *An Inconvenient Truth* made "being green" hip and cool, UC Santa Cruz students passed Measure 9 to support environmentally sound practices on campus. And last year, while students around the state moaned and groaned about budget cuts, UCSC's Class of 2012 raised almost \$10,000 to ensure that our fellow students would receive the support they needed.

As the new school year begins, organizers for the Class of 2013 are carrying on this uncommon tradition by asking all graduating seniors to make a gift of \$20.13 to the Senior Legacy Fund.

The Senior Legacy Fund has been used for a variety of different purposes over the years. However, beginning in 2011, graduating seniors chose to utilize the fund to create the only student-supported, student-run, and student-distributed scholarship on campus. For the past two years, returning students who exemplified the four S.L.U.G tenets—Spirit, Legacy, Unity, and Giving—have had the chance to receive this unique scholarship from the class before them.

"It's incredibly fulfilling to be recognized by my peers for my participation and leadership in the UCSC community," said 2012 Senior Legacy Scholarship winner Sarah Cohen (Stevenson '13, sociology). "I've grown to truly appreciate UCSC for the academic and personal education it has afforded me, and this scholarship has inspired me to continue to give back to the campus."

This year, the Class of 2013 hopes to raise \$12,000 for the Senior Legacy Fund, a \$2,000 increase over last year's efforts.



2012 Senior Legacy Scholarship winner Sarah Cohen (Stevenson '13, sociology)



2012 Senior Legacy Scholarship winner Hilary Van Hoose (Porter '13, film and digital media)

2012 Senior Legacy Scholarship winner Kelsey Grimsley

"Every dollar makes a difference," said Kresge sophomore Hannah Klass, a fundraiser for student philanthropy organization Slug 2 Slug and the Class of 2013. "We're fundraising for a good cause, and if we stick to it all year I definitely think we'll hit our goals."

However, the Class of 2013 isn't only interested in fundraising. They're also working to build a sense of community among graduating seniors. Senior-exclusive events, class T-shirts, and monthly meetings all help to bring UCSC seniors together.

"This program helps to cultivate the next generation of philanthropic leaders," said Class of 2013 staff advisor Shayna Kent. "We're trying to support students, and eventually young alumni, who are going to stay connected to UCSC and continue to give back after they graduate."

To UCSC students, the Banana Slug isn't just a mascot; it symbolizes a way of life.

"As a UCSC student, I am a representative of the institution and the values for which the Banana Slug stands," said Senior Legacy Scholarship winner Hilary Van Hoose (Porter '13, film and digital media). "My actions, my very presence at this school, influence what the term 'Banana Slug' will mean to future generations of students."

Make a donation, come to an event, or, at the very least, grab a trendy "Giving is Sexy" temporary tattoo. Let's make the phrase "Banana Slug" synonymous with giving. The more students get involved, the more we can help students in need.

For information, contact Student Giving intern [Austin Wilson](#) or [Shayna Kent](#), director of alumni and student outreach and development.

Mitchell Bates previously worked as the Student Giving Intern for UCSC's University Relations office, and is currently spending his summer working as the Alumni Engagement and Development Intern.

