

June 18, 2014

TO THE CAMPUS COMMUNITY

Dear Colleagues,

After six years of dedicated service to our campus, Mark Massari, Director of Athletics, will be departing UC Santa Barbara on August 1, 2014, to take the Deputy Athletics Director position at Oregon State University.

I want to thank Mark sincerely for the leadership he has provided to our athletics department since 2008, and especially for his inspirational mentorship of our student-athletes and coaches. Mark has led the athletics department to reach an all-time high graduation success rate of 85% – second highest in the University of California system. Under his innovative leadership, UC Santa Barbara has established the Gaucho Fund, resulting in the largest number of annual donors to athletics ever, introduced the “Walk of Champions” plan as a conceptual road map to address capital project needs, introduced several marketing, outreach, and donor stewardship programs, and made major improvements to Harder Stadium and the Thunderdome. Through the Gauchos Give program, department and student-athlete outreach reaches 5,000 hours in community service each year.

We will be moving forward quickly to appoint a search committee to conduct a national search for our next athletics director.

I am pleased to announce that Dr. Gary Cunningham has graciously agreed to serve as our Interim Director of Athletics, effective August 1, 2014, while we are conducting a national search. Gary retired in 2008 after serving 13 years as our campus’s athletics director. In his retirement, he has remained active in athletics as the United States Head of Delegation for the World University Games. He serves on numerous boards, including the Special Olympics Leadership Council and the Santa Barbara Athletic Roundtable.

Please join me in extending our farewell to Mark on his many achievements, and thanking him for his service and leadership to our campus community. Congratulations to Mark on taking on this wonderful opportunity at one of the finest Pac-12 Conference athletics programs. We wish Mark and his family the best in this new opportunity. Please also join me in welcoming back Gary and thanking him for his willingness to help our campus by taking on this interim role.

Sincerely,

Henry T. Yang
Chancellor