

UCSC Foundation Medal Description and Provenance

“From the Earth to the Stars...”

The UCSC Foundation Medal was designed in 2002 by Sean M. Monaghan M.F.A. (UCSC Alumnus, Kresge '83) as a response to participation in a series of committee meetings. The committee was composed of University and community members charged by the Foundation to create a medal that conveys the unique intellectual, social, cultural, environmental and educational qualities of UC Santa Cruz and its reach of influence.

The final design incorporates an actual piece of the UCSC campus: a limestone base, excavated from the campus quarries. The campus is home to a large deposit of metamorphosed limestone which is the result of millions of years of seashells being compressed over time into the abundant limestone found here today. The current location of the UCSC campus is due in large part to the productive Cowell Lime Works, the only National Register of Historic Places on any California campus. From the Gold Rush until well after the Great San Francisco Quake of 1906, limestone was quarried, hauled by horse-drawn wagon to kilns (such as those at the entrance to campus) and burned white-hot for eight days. The resulting lime was put in oak barrels, carted down to the wharf and shipped for use in cement, plaster and mortar all across the growing West. The Lime Works flourished from 1850-1920, preventing further development and preserving the picturesque Henry Cowell Ranch for the eventual founding of the UCSC campus in 1965.

Atop the natural limestone base is a bronze collar, signed and dated by the artist, which supports a horizontally-rotating 'yoke' which in turn holds a set of rings. These engraved rings house a lens which can be rotated vertically. All bronze components for this kinetic 'universal joint' are cast and assembled by the artist in his Santa Cruz studio, and allow the optical-quality lens to be turned in every possible direction. The medal may also be worn around the neck by separating the medal from the base and threading a ribbon through the wide center reveal in the bronze yoke that holds the lens.

The custom lens is a composite of three pieces of glass, laminated, ground and polished by David Hilyard, Chief Optician at UCO/Lick Observatory's Optical Lab at UCSC, which manufactures precise lenses for astronomical instruments all over the world. The clear elements are high-purity fused silica, made by Corning Glass Works for lenses in astronomical cameras and spectrographs. The amber/opalescent center wedge is made of Zerodur, a glass ceramic developed by Schott Glass in Germany. It is uniquely ideal for large telescope mirrors in open domes since it is unaffected by changes in temperature, critical for maintaining precise parabolic or hyperbolic contours. The golden Zerodur represents a ray of light emanating from the etched star, echoing *Fiat Lux* (Let There Be Light) from the original Regent's Seal, designed by Tiffany & Co. of New York in 1910.

The UCSC Foundation Medal “recognizes individuals of exceptionally distinguished achievement whose work and contribution to society illustrate the ideals and vision of UC Santa Cruz.” This hand-made art piece is a metaphor for the quest of Humanity to broaden its reach toward compassion and understanding in every endeavor.