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NOAA

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**NOAA HONORS UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA AT SANTA BARBARA
AS FIRST TSUNAMI READY UNIVERSITY IN NATION**

The Commerce Department's National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's (NOAA) National Weather Service (NWS) recognized the University of California at Santa Barbara (UCSB) as the first higher level, college community in the nation to receive the dual recognition of "TsunamiReady" and "StormReady."

UCSB joins the growing number of communities that have met the stringent criteria of the StormReady program in preparing for severe weather and protecting citizens. Officials from the NWS office in Los Angeles/Oxnard presented certificates and signs to university staff during a ceremony held on the campus of UCSB.

"Today we are making history by recognizing the University of California at Santa Barbara as the first higher learning TsunamiReady institution in the country," said Meteorologist in Charge (MIC) Dan Keeton, who supervises the Los Angeles/Oxnard NWS forecast office. "Preparing each coastal community for any number of possible weather related hazards, including the unlikely event of a tsunami, directly addresses the National Weather Service's mission of protecting lives and property."

The TsunamiReady and StormReady programs are voluntary preparedness programs that establish guidelines for communities to follow for tsunami and severe weather readiness. TsunamiReady and StormReady communities have adopted the requirements set by the NWS in the areas of communications, warning reception and dissemination, public outreach and awareness programs and administrative planning.

To receive the "TsunamiReady" and "StormReady" designation, the University of California at Santa Barbara successfully met the readiness criteria and was approved by an advisory board made up of local county emergency managers, representatives from the California Office of Emergency Services and the NWS.

There are more than 740 StormReady locations in 47 states. Within California, Santa Cruz and Santa Clara Counties as well as the community of Encinitas have been

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recognized as Storm Ready. The community of Crescent City has received the dual designation of StormReady and TsunamiReady but UCSB is the first university to achieve this same dual recognition.

Vickie Nadolski, NWS Western Region director, emphasized the key safety message is awareness. "Preparation and advance warning are vital factors in tsunami readiness," Nadolski said. "Extending our TsunamiReady communities to include college campuses such as UCSB will only broaden the public and emergency management's overall awareness of the dangers associated with tsunamis."

Larry Parsons, Director of Environmental Health and Safety for the University of California at Santa Barbara, has collaborated with campus personnel and emergency responders from the local community to plan and prepare for all types of natural and man-made emergencies. "Over the past several years, UCSB has experienced many natural emergencies--from fires and earthquakes to severe storm conditions," Parsons said. "We are grateful to the National Weather Service for providing their assistance in helping UCSB to become TsunamiReady and StormReady."

Without StormReady program, many communities would not be as prepared to handle severe weather. Approximately 90% of all presidentially declared disasters are weather related, leading to around 500 deaths per year and nearly \$14 billion in damage. StormReady, a program started in 1999 in Tulsa, OK, helps arm America's communities with the communication and safety skills needed to save lives and property-- before and during the event.

NOAA's National Weather Service is the primary source of weather data, forecasts and warnings for the United States and its territories. The National Weather Service operates the most advanced weather and flood warning and forecast system in the world, helping protect lives and property and enhance the national economy.

The Commerce Department's National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) is dedicated to enhancing economic security and national safety through the prediction and research of weather and climate-related events and providing environmental stewardship of our nation's coastal and marine resources.

For more information on the TsunamiReady program, please visit <http://wcatwc.arh.noaa.gov/tsunamiready/tready.htm> and for more information about the "StormReady" program please visit <http://www.stormready.noaa.gov>. Each NWS forecast office posts daily forecasts and severe weather warnings on their Web pages. Links to NWS offices across the country are available through <http://weather.gov>

Editor's Note: Logos for the StormReady and TsunamiReady programs are available at <http://www.stormready.noaa.gov/signs.htm>