

# 9 UC Berkeley faculty members elected to American Academy of Arts and Sciences

By Joy Ma | Apr. 28th, 2020

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Nine UC Berkeley faculty members from a wide range of departments were elected to the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, or AAAS, on Thursday.

As a 240-year-old organization, the AAAS honors its members and conducts independent research to address significant challenges, ranging from articulating the benefits of international collaboration to providing legal services to low-income Americans, according to a press release. The nine newly elected campus faculty are among 276 members elected this year and come from a variety of fields.

“Membership in the Academy is both an honor and a call to action,” said AAAS spokesperson Courtney McLean in an email.

McLean added that to be considered for election, candidates must be nominated by at least two existing members in the AAAS and go through four steps to become official members. Main criteria for election also include excellence in a candidate’s respective field.

Daniel Kammen, campus energy and resources professor, said he is “really excited” to be elected, but the highest accomplishment for him is the chance to mentor UC Berkeley students.

Another recipient, campus environmental and resource economics professor Edward Miguel, said the award was “unexpected” and that he is honored his

research on economic development issues in Africa is being highlighted.

“It is a very special opportunity to collaborate with other researchers and hopefully influence public debates about important issues using sciences and research to guide decision making,” Miguel said.

Marjorie Shapiro, campus physics professor, also said she is honored to be a recipient and looks to increase diversity efforts in the physics field with her research.

With the award and her dark matter and energy research, campus astronomy professor Chung-Pei Ma hopes to bring attention to the “power” of science.

“There are so many opportunities in the academy for mentoring the next generation of scholars,” said award recipient and campus education professor Kris Gutiérrez. “One of the most important contributions that I can make as a senior scholar is to really help nurture and support new generations of scholars, particularly those from underrepresented groups.”

Campus chemistry professor and award recipient Richmond Sarpong echoed these thoughts, adding that he hopes the award becomes a symbol for those with “humble beginnings” like himself to continue important conversations.

Kathleen Collins, campus molecular and cell biology professor, added that being an AAAS member will connect her to other researchers in her field and help continue her aging research.

UC Berkeley School of Law professor emeritus Malcolm Feeley said, for him, the award was “surprising,” adding that he plans to continue projects focusing on private entrepreneurial contractor contributions to the modern U.S. criminal justice system.

“Being a member of the academy requires me to continue doing original and brilliant work,” Feeley said. “It creates a sense of obligation for originality, simplicity and elegance.”

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